

Writing Tip: Make Your Procedure a Thing of Beauty— Use an Appropriate Format (Example 2)

Adapted from *Writing and Polishing Effective Procedures (WPEP)* seminar

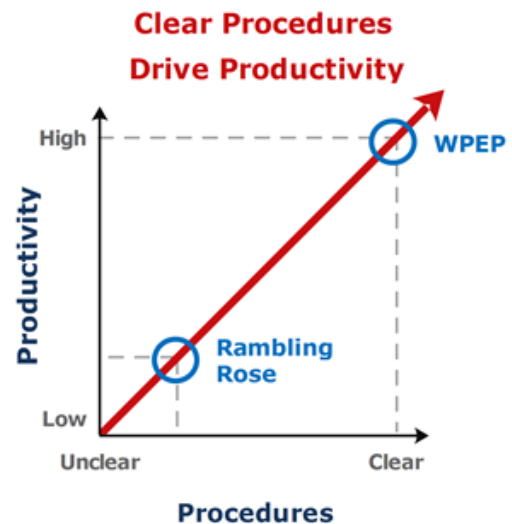
A well-written procedure is a thing of beauty when the writer uses the appropriate format to show—rather than tell—the user what to do. One essential component of format is whether the process is linear or non-linear.

A Linear Example

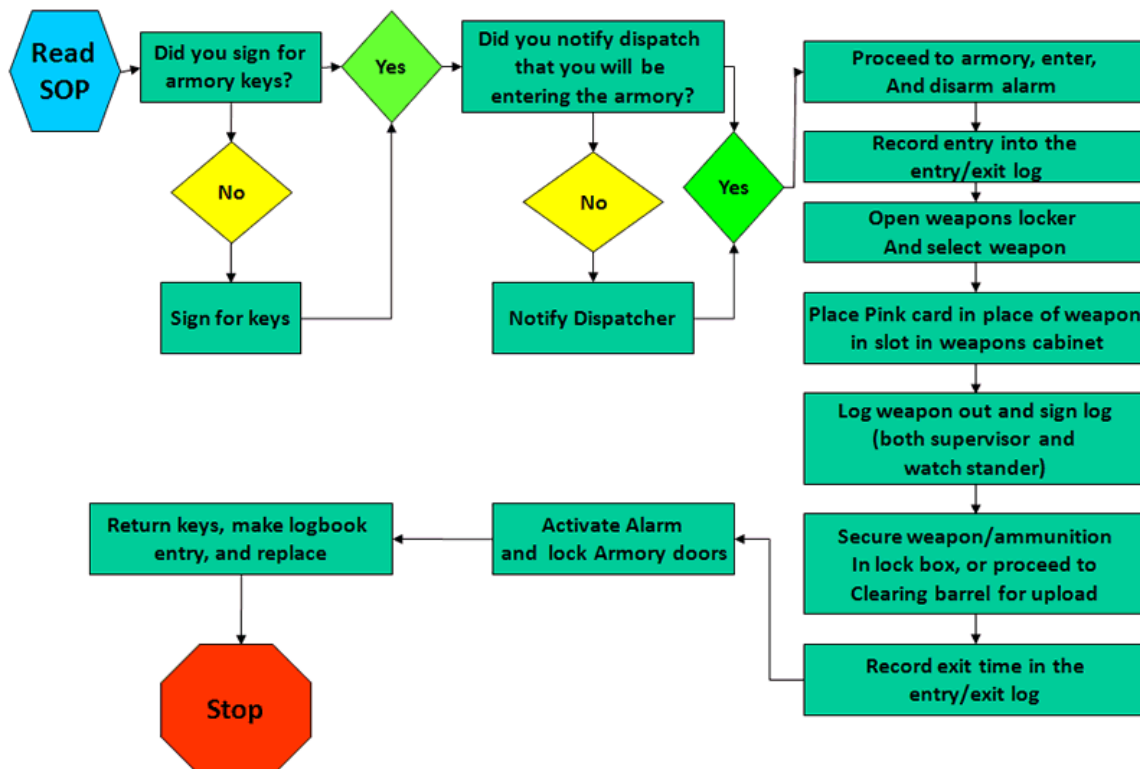
The playscript format in last month's *Business Writing Tip* illustrates how you can make a complex procedure easy to complete. It's a great solution for a linear process (sequential steps) with multiple doers interacting to complete a task.

A Non-linear Example

Here's an example of a nonlinear process (conditions embedded within sequential steps) made easy to complete by using the flowchart format. Mike Hanson, Anti-Terrorism Services Branch, Port Hueneme, wrote this procedure.



Procedure for Issuing Weapons to Armories



Remember, paragraph formats are great for writing essays, stories, and reports. But for procedure writing, it's important to make the organization visually apparent by using the appropriate format. This is a thing of beauty to the eyes of a user who is relying on your procedure to get things done.



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Stan Berry

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