# Drive Innovative Decision Making Through Process Improvement (Finding the "Aha")

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## Can process improvement methods be applied to Research Management?

Critical decision making in Research Management rely on the speed and accuracy information can be provided and processed.

This poster reflects the results of implementing a basic process improvement method to work smarter, collect reliable data, lower cost and knowledge share.

❖ **Identify:**
Is there a need, and if so what is that need? Can you define it or determine what results you are looking for? Who are the stakeholders that utilize order data in order to make informed decisions.

❖ **Apply:**
Where do I even start is often the question. Ask questions as you identify the issues and get to the root causes of why that issue exists. Proceed with using a method in collecting information from stakeholders.

❖ **Approach:**
What tool(s) will be used to implement new process based on feedback from your stakeholders.

❖ **Measure:**
What is the tool to measure success and for how long?

❖ **Sustainability:**
What if I win the lottery? Will others be able to continue the success of the improvement process?

### Smart Aim

**Access and disseminate order information in order to be more efficient, effective and readily available to all stake holders.**

Moving from a paper-based system to an online order management system which allows for sharing as well as extracting critical information to make informed decisions related to quantity, historical pricing, and financial forecasting.

### Acknowledgements

*Thank you:*

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**Step 1 – Identify**

**Step 2 – Apply**

**Step 3 – Approach**

**Step 4 – Measure**
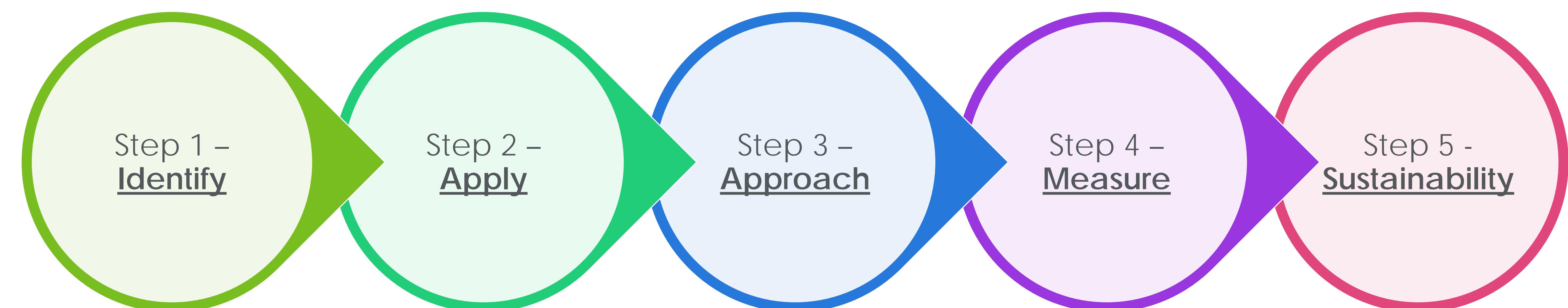
**Step 5 - Sustainability**

Order record keeping was previously filed based on one individual with no distinguished method such as alphabetically by vendor, product name or GL. Result was inconsistent method of filing order sheets. Took several staff time and effort to look for one order sheet which equated to $78/hr. wasted resources.

Interviewed key individuals within the organization for input on the Five 'W's regarding what data they are needing to perform their duties (i.e. department director – to understand what is being ordered; supervisors - who need to ensure product is available for use for their staff; buyer – know what was previously ordered and how much is needed; staff to ensure product will be available; AP – was the order requested and delivered before paying vendor invoice; accountant – forecast expenses and develop budget.

After much feedback a tool that was to be utilized was to be cheap and manage data in order to meet each stakeholder's needs. The application Quartzy was chosen due to it's database application. An online laboratory management system designed for research labs at pharma, biotech, and academic institutions and organizations. Quartzy is based in Palo Alto, CA, United States. Quartzy helps research labs manage their lab inventories, submit orders, and purchase lab items through its marketplace.

Stakeholder can run reports to see data and drill down to the details. Reconciliation with institutional reports can occur real-time with historical data in order to identify areas of expenditures, forecast, plan, and set goals. Stakeholders can have input related to costs associated with services the service center offers. Live data for in a timely manner.

Garbage in garbage out. Understand the data that you are collecting. Understanding how it's organized.

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## Results

**What records looked like prior to electronic database.**
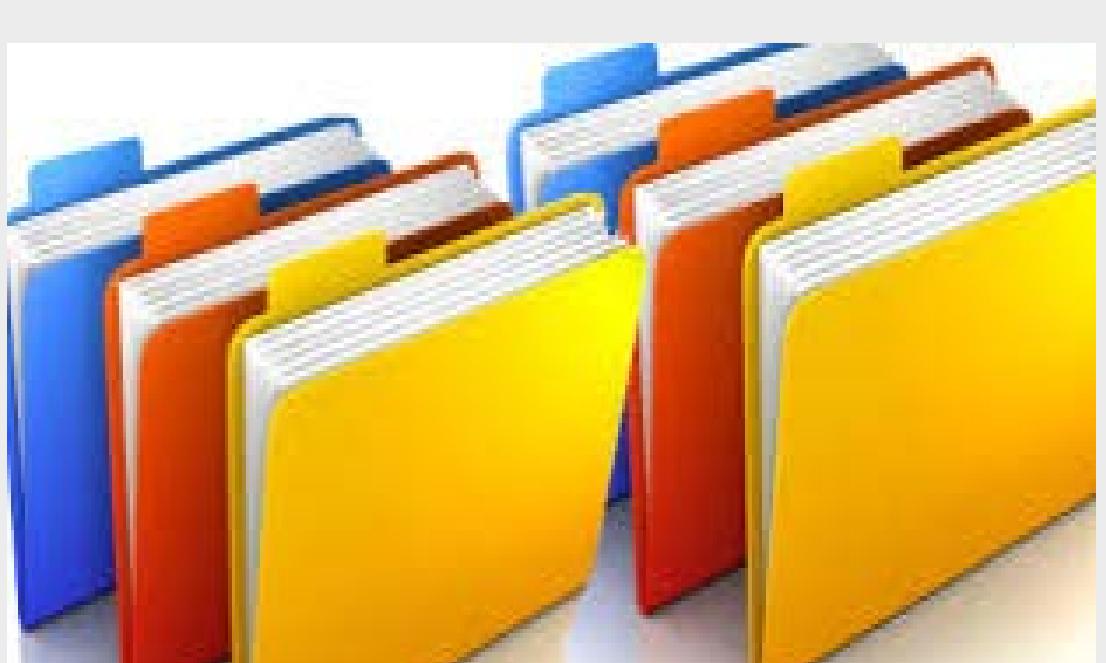


**Putting records into an electronic database answered the following questions.**



**Organized Records**

- Was the item ordered?
- Who ordered it?
- When was it ordered?
- What vendor did we order from?
- Transparency.



**Financial Management**

- How much did the item cost?
- What's still 'In The Order Process' vs. What was 'Received'.
- What was the previous price?
- Transparency.
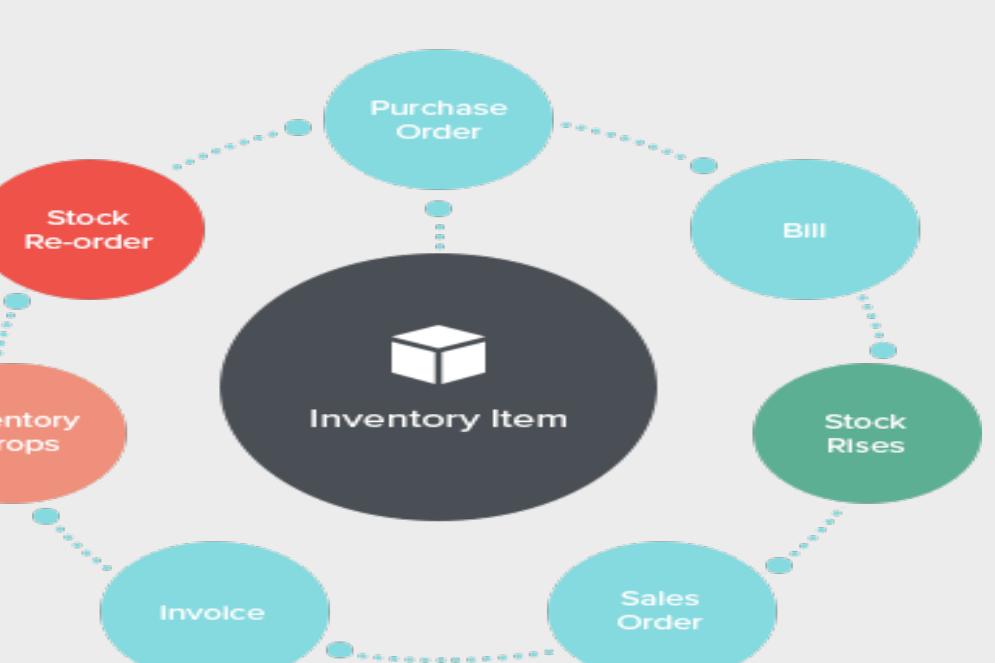


**Inventory Management**

- How many do we still have?
- Reordering the item with the same specifics.
- Reduces amnesia.
- Transparency.