

Document Processing Workflow Planner

Use the completed example to understand the decisions, then fill in pages 3 and 4 for one document workflow. This planner defines a pilot; it does not certify a system for production.

The company, invoice and timings below are fictional. They show how to complete the worksheet, not measured client results.

Define the outcome

Receive supplier invoice PDFs in one shared inbox, prepare checked fields for an accounts payable reviewer, then create a draft accounting record after approval.

Decision	Completed example
Intake and scope	One shared inbox; simple supplier invoice PDFs. Register each file with an intake ID and keep the original.
Owner and destination	Accounts payable lead; draft record in the accounting system. Review the queue each working day.
Outside this pilot	Payments, bank-detail changes, contracts, credit notes and invoices with additional adjustments.
Access and retention	Approved storage and extraction service; access limited to finance staff and the service account. Finance owner sets retention before live use.

Specify the fields

Field	Sample value	Check before approval
Supplier	Example Supply Co	Match an existing supplier; review unknown or ambiguous matches.
Invoice number	DEMO-1042	Required; check supplier and invoice number for duplicates.
Invoice date	2026-09-01	Valid and unambiguous; retain the original date text.
Currency	CAD	Explicit on the document; do not infer from \$ alone.
Subtotal	200.00	Readable numeric value.
Tax shown	26.00	Readable numeric value, including explicit zero if applicable.
Total	226.00	Subtotal plus tax equals total for this simple invoice.

Keep the source text and extracted value together. Record missing fields as missing. Checking the arithmetic does not establish the correct tax treatment or authorise payment.

Review and test the example

Set the review rules

Condition	Owner and required action
All stated checks pass	Accounts payable reviewer still approves every invoice during the pilot.
Duplicate DEMO-1042	Reviewer compares the earlier record. Hold any conflicting version; do not create a second record.
Invoice number missing	Reviewer requests a corrected invoice. Keep the item on hold.
Total reads 286.00	Reviewer compares the original: $200.00 + 26.00 = 226.00$. Correct extraction or ask the supplier to resolve the document.
Destination write fails	Workflow owner retains the approved item, checks for an existing destination record and retries without duplication.

Reviewer actions: approve, correct, reject, request information or escalate. Record original value, correction, reason, reviewer, decision time and destination reference. Payment approval stays in the existing process.

Write expected test results before running the pilot

Test input	Expected result
Complete DEMO-1042	Extract the seven fields; await approval; create one draft record.
Same invoice arrives again	Flag possible duplicate; create no second record.
Invoice number absent	Flag missing field; hold for corrected document.
Total 286.00, other amounts unchanged	Flag arithmetic mismatch; hold for review.
Unreadable scan or wrong document type	Visible exception with owner; no approved record.
Destination failure then retry	Approved item remains traceable; at most one destination record.

Measure and decide

Illustrative monthly baseline: 300 invoices x 6 handling minutes / 60 = 30 hours. At 2 minutes after the pilot: 10 hours. Potential capacity released: 20 hours before maintenance. These assumptions are not a savings forecast.

Pilot gate: all listed exception tests stop correctly; every correction is traceable; retries create no duplicate record. Test representative layouts too. Finance owner reviews results before approving any wider use.

Plan your document workflow

Choose one document type. Replace the prompts below with decisions your team can test. Add rows in the editable version if your process needs more space.

Document type and outcome

Decision	Your answer
Where documents arrive	
Owner and review deadline	
Approved destination and final status	
Outside this pilot	
Who can access files and which services may receive them	
Storage and retention owner	

Required fields and checks

Name each field, a sample value, and the rule for missing, invalid or conflicting data.

Field	Example value	Validation rule

Which actions always require a person

Test and measure your workflow

Define the expected action first. Run the test, record what happened, and resolve failures before expanding the pilot.

Review and recovery rules

Trigger	Owner and action
Missing or unreadable field	
Possible duplicate or conflict	
Destination unavailable or retry	

Pilot test record

Test case	Expected result	Actual result or fix
Normal document		
Duplicate		
Missing field		
Conflicting values		
Failed handoff and retry		

Baseline and pilot measurements

Measure	Before	After pilot
Documents per month		
Average active minutes per document		
Documents needing correction / total reviewed		
Typical elapsed time to approval		
Monthly maintenance hours and operating cost		

Monthly handling hours = documents x average handling minutes / 60. Subtract remaining handling and maintenance from the baseline. Capacity released is not automatically a cash saving.

Pilot acceptance criteria: _____

Decision: proceed / revise / stop Owner: _____ Date: _____