

# Job Aid: Procedural Task Analysis

## Basic Steps

1. Write down the objective of the task and keep in front of you when recording the performance sequence.
2. Adopt the point of view that the main overall performance needed to accomplish the objective is composed of simpler parts, each of which is a genuine component of the main performance.
3. If all the procedural steps are overt ones, observe the performance in action (e.g., starting up a piece of machinery, focusing a camera). Attempt the procedure yourself and observe your own performance.
4. If the procedure is intellectual and has covert steps, question persons as they rehearse the procedure (e.g., subtraction of two-digit numbers, selecting a sales approach). If possible, try it yourself and record observations.
5. If some aspects of a procedure appear to be performed unconsciously, infer what kinds of simpler processes would be required to perform the act—as though it were done by a computer. Test to see if the inferred individual steps work.
6. Represent the procedure as a flowchart. Use the symbols on the next page as indicated. The chart should show the sequence of events, including alternative sequences.

## Information Gathering Techniques

- Observation
- Individual interview
- Think aloud
- Do the task yourself with expert advising and audiotape

The above procedure and list of information gathering techniques are a slight modification from the procedural task analysis technique described in the book by: Jonassen, D.H., Tessmer, M., & Hannum, W.H. (1999). *Task Analysis Methods For Instructional Design*.

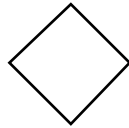
# Basic Flow Chart Symbols



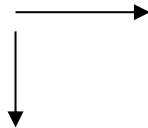
Start and End



Actions or Mental Operations



Decisions



**For Sequence  
Direction**

If you are new to making flowcharts, I suggest you do a search on "Flowchart Standard Symbols" to see more about how they are used. Examples are also provided.