
Finance Process Improvement Training Course: Order-to-Cash, Procure-to-Pay and Record-to-Report

12 – 16 April 2027
Barcelona





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Programme Summary

Finance process improvement, across order-to-cash, procure-to-pay and record-to-report, is the subject of this one-week training course for finance directors, financial controllers and heads of shared services at a managerial level, ending in an improvement plan for one finance operation. Finance teams often carry manual steps, rework and uneven controls that nobody has measured end to end. The programme moves from principles and process mapping, through diagnosis of delay and control gaps, to design of standard work, automation and indicators, then to application. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in finance process improvement.

The Business Case

Finance operations carry cost every time a transaction is touched twice, queued without an owner or corrected after the event. Leaders who map the work end to end can see where time and effort go, decide what to standardise or automate, and show the board how control and speed improve together. Measured results also give shared services a basis for service levels.

- Cycle Time: Shortens as handoffs, queues and approvals are removed or standardised.
- Error and Rework Rate: Falls as exceptions are traced to causes and prevented at source.
- Control Effectiveness: Improves as controls are built into the process rather than added afterwards.

Principles and Evidence Base

- COSO Internal Control Integrated Framework: It guides the control matrix and approval rules designed in Session 3.
- Lean thinking, covering waste, flow and standard work: It structures the process diagnosis in Session 2 and the standard work designed in Session 3.
- Pareto analysis: It ranks error and delay causes so that effort in Sessions 2 and 5 goes to the few that matter most.

Intended Participants

- Finance directors who set priorities and funding for process change.
- Financial controllers who own the close, reconciliations and control environment.
- Heads of shared services who run transaction processing and agree service levels.
- Process owners in receivables, payables and general accounting who must apply the changes.

The programme serves banking, manufacturing, healthcare and public bodies.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate the efficiency and control strength of a finance process from end to end.
2. Participants will be able to diagnose delay, rework and control gaps using process maps and error data.
3. Participants will be able to construct standard work and a control matrix for a chosen process.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise automation candidates by effort, risk and benefit.
5. Participants will be able to design indicators and service levels for a finance operation.
6. Participants will be able to justify an improvement roadmap to a finance director.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Finance Process Improvement Principles and Process Landscape

Which finance processes matter most, and how should their performance be judged?

- Finance Process Inventory
- Order-to-Cash, Procure-to-Pay and Record-to-Report Scope Map
- COSO Control Components Review
- Lean Waste Categories
- Service Model Options Comparison

Day 2: Diagnosing Process Flow, Delay and Control Gaps

Where do transactions wait, return for correction or escape control?

- Process Map Walkthrough
- Cycle Time and Touch Count Analysis
- Exception and Rework Log
- Pareto Analysis of Error Causes
- Control Gap Assessment

Day 3: Designing Standard Work, Automation and Controls

How are steps simplified, automated and controlled without slowing the process?

- Standard Work Instruction
- Automation Candidate Screen
- Control Matrix Design
- Approval and Segregation Rule Set
- Exception Handling Routine



Day 4: Performance Indicators, Service Levels and Governance

How is performance measured, agreed with the business and kept improving?

- Process Indicator Scorecard
- Service Level Agreement Template
- Shared Services Governance Model
- Continuous Improvement Cadence
- Benefits Tracking Sheet

Day 5: Applying Finance Process Improvement in One Operation

Is the improvement plan ready for a finance director to approve and fund?

- Applying the Session 2 Cycle Time Analysis to the Chosen Process
- Testing the Session 3 Control Matrix Against the Gap Assessment
- Checking the Session 4 Scorecard on Live Process Data
- Sequencing the Improvement Roadmap
- Completing the Finance Process Improvement Plan

Methodology

The programme uses structured exercises on anonymised process maps, transaction samples and exception logs from banking, manufacturing and public sector finance teams. Participants work in small groups as process owner, controller and sponsor, and each take one process from current-state map to a costed, controlled and agreed future design for review.

- Suggested activity: Mapping a payables cycle from invoice receipt to payment and marking every wait and handoff.
- Suggested activity: Ranking the causes of invoice exceptions and choosing the two to remove first.
- Suggested activity: Drafting a service level agreement between a shared service and a business unit.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a finance process improvement plan for one finance operation. It holds a current-state map, a cause ranking, standard work, an automation shortlist, a control matrix, an indicator scorecard and a sequenced roadmap. The plan is used to brief a finance director, seek funding and guide the first improvement cycle.



Frequently Asked Questions

Is finance process improvement suitable for finance managers who do not run a shared service?

Yes. Finance process improvement is set at managerial level and assumes you own or influence finance processes, not that you manage a shared service centre.

Which frameworks does finance process improvement rest on in this training?

Finance process improvement rests on the COSO Internal Control Integrated Framework for control design, Lean thinking for waste and standard work, and Pareto analysis for ranking causes.

How is the plan from finance process improvement used at work?

You use the finance process improvement plan to brief a finance director, seek funding for changes and guide the first improvement cycle on your own process.

How does finance process improvement differ from a programme on financial reporting?

Finance process improvement centres on how transactions flow, are controlled and are measured, while a financial reporting programme centres on preparing statements and applying accounting standards.