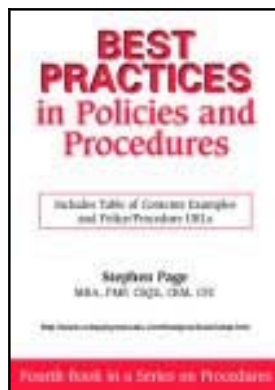


Best Practices in Policies and Procedures

Includes Table of Contents Examples
and Policy/Procedure URLs



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Printed Version

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Introduction

I started writing policy and procedure books in 1983. Up to this time, I had worked in various positions on business processes, policies, and procedures. Being a researcher, I was frustrated with the lack of books in my career field. My mother had just written a book so I decided it was time to write my first book based on my current experiences. The first book was called "*Handbook of Business Policies and Procedures.*" This book focused on setting up a system of policies and procedures for printed manuals only.

I continued working in the policies and procedures field and greatly increased my experience through projects like ISO 9000 Quality Standards, Capability Maturity Model, Malcolm Baldrige Award, Six Sigma, or Value Engineering. Around 1997, I decided to rewrite my first book to include network and web formats. I did extensive research and added two chapters; the book was renamed, "[*Establishing a System of Policies and Procedures.*](#)"

In 2000, I had been working at a telecommunications company and our department set up a quality department that focused on measuring every process and procedure for a software engineering department. This job inspired me to write "[*Achieving 100% Compliance of Policies and Procedures.*](#)" This book uses a real life case study (based on a labor-intensive procedure from an earlier job) to show how a procedure is written, published, communicated, trained, and measured to make substantial improvements to publish a new procedure.

In 2001, I wrote, "[*7 Steps to Better Written Policies and Procedures.*](#)" My readers had been pestering me to write an entire book on the writing format, a method of writing that has become central to any system of policies and procedures. This book is an extension of Chapter 4 from my first book, "[*Establishing a System of Policies and Procedures.*](#)"

In 2002, I wrote this book, "[*Best Practices in Policies and Procedures.*](#)" a book that focuses on an important element missing from my existing books, namely, a proven method for determining **content**, one of the most difficult tasks in the policies and procedures field.

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VOICE: (614) 323-3617

ORDERING INFORMATION

Individual Sales: This book may be ordered through the author's website (<http://www.companymanuals.com/bestpractices/index.htm>) or through the above address.

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data
Page, Stephen B. (1949 -)

Best Practices in Policies and Procedures. Includes figures, tables, and workflow diagrams, table of contents examples, and policy/procedure URLs.

ISBN 1-929065-08-6

Published: June 2002

Electronic Version: November 2002

Although I have extensively researched all sources to assure the accuracy and completeness of the information contained in this book, I assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or other inconsistencies. Any slights against people or organizations are unintentional.



About the Author

Stephen B. Page is the author of six books, five of which focus on process improvement, business processes, policies, and procedures. Stephen holds a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) in Management from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). He is certified as a project manager (PMP), software engineer (CSQE), records manager (CRM), and forms consultant (CFC).

His employment record contains an impressive list of multinational companies including Nationwide Insurance, Atos Origin, Compuware, Qwest Communications, Boeing Aircraft, Eastman Kodak, and Litton Industries. Stephen has more than 30 years experience in researching, writing, editing, publishing, communicating, training, measuring, and improving business processes, policies, procedures, and forms. He has written more than 250 company manuals in both printed and electronic formats and 6000 policies and procedures. He has designed 4000 forms and has set up manual and electronic form management systems. He has delivered policies and procedures in printed, network, web, CD-ROM, and video formats. He has first hand experience with the application of ISO Quality Standards, the Capability Maturity Model (CMM), Six Sigma, and the Malcolm Baldrige Award. Stephen has trained thousands of people in the art of writing effective policies and procedures.

Stephen has written many trade journal articles. His three most recent articles included two articles in 2001 on ISO 9000:2000 Quality Standards published in [American Society of Quality's](#) (ASQ's) *Quality Progress Journal* and in the [QualityWorld](#) magazine; and one article in 2000 published in ASQ's *Quality Progress Journal* on "Research: The Key to Quality Policies and Procedures." Stephen is a skilled presenter, facilitator, and team leader. He has participated on hundreds of team projects. He has presented seminars on the subject of printed and electronic policies and procedures, business processes, process improvement, and forms management.

Stephen has worked in various industries including consulting, manufacturing, telecommunications, financial banking, and retail. He has received dozens of awards for Total Quality Management (TQM) suggestions.



Books by Stephen B. Page

PRINTED BOOKS			
Title	Publisher	©	URL (http://)
Best Practices in Policies and Procedures ISBN: 1929065-07-8	Process Improvement Publishing	2002	http://www.companymanuals.com/bestpractices/index.htm
7 Steps to Better Written Policies and Procedures ISBN: 1929065-24-8	Process Improvement Publishing	2001	http://www.companymanuals.com/writingformat/index.htm
Achieving 100% Compliance of Policies and Procedures ISBN: 1929065-49-3	Process Improvement Publishing	2000	http://www.companymanuals.com/compliance/index.htm
Establishing a System of Policies and Procedures ISBN: 1929065-00-0	Process Improvement Publishing	1998	http://www.companymanuals.com/index.htm
For electronic (ebooks) books in PDF format, go to any website to access these books. At this website, you can find both electronic and printed books.			

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Preface

This book focuses on the best practices for finding content for policies and procedures through your own efforts and from examples. You will be able to reduce your up front research and development time by knowing how to quickly identify and find content examples for policies and procedures. The phrase *best practices* has come to mean the “best ways to do tasks or efforts” according to recognized practitioners or authors. For this book, *best* comes from six sources: (1) the best methods for defining vision, strategic direction, and core processes; (2) the best methods for identifying topics for tables of contents and policies and procedures; (3) the best methods for setting up teams and executing the processes for transforming problems into policies and procedures; (4) the best methods for searching the Internet for table of contents and policy and procedure examples; (5) the best sources for finding table of contents examples and policy/procedure URLs; and (6) the best concepts and principles from my three current policy and procedure books:

- ◆ [*Establishing a System of Policies and Procedures*](#)
- ◆ [*7 Steps to Better Written Policies and Procedures*](#)
- ◆ [*Achieving 100% Compliance of Policies and Procedures*](#)

The first book focuses on setting up a system, or an environment, for the successful operation of a policy and procedure system. A proven writing format is introduced. The second book is a workbook that focuses on the writing format. This book is an extension of Chapter 4, “Writing Format,” of the first book. The third book provides methods and tools for ensuring the published policies and procedures are followed, applied, measured, and improved.

This new book integrates the principles of my books and best practices from authors and practitioners by giving you step-by-step guidelines for aligning policies and procedures to the vision, strategic plan, and core processes of an organization. You will learn to:

- ◆ Understand the basics of vision statements and strategic plans.
- ◆ Identify core processes that support the vision and strategic direction of your organization.

- ◆ Identify policies and procedures that are needed to support the core processes.
- ◆ Identify methods and techniques for assuring management commitment and sponsorship.
- ◆ Build table of contents pages that can be used for the development of policies and procedures.
- ◆ Use five methods for finding content for table of contents pages and for policy and procedure documents.
- ◆ Set up cross-functional teams to define a problem statement, select alternatives, choose a solution, and transform the solution into a policy or procedure document.
- ◆ Write policies and procedures using a standard, consistent, and tested writing format.
- ◆ Write policies and procedures that align to the vision, strategic plan, and core processes of an organization.
- ◆ Use 15 table of contents examples and more than 150 URLs that point to thousands of examples of policies and procedures and related resources for finding content for policies and procedures.
- ◆ Use the Internet to research best practices for writing policies and procedures for any topic in any industry.

Knowing where to start on a problem, topic, or subject area is one of the toughest problems facing anyone who wants to find a solution to a problem. For example, when a procedures analyst is asked to write on the subject of nepotism (issue of employing two or more related employees), often a little guidance to the meaning of this word and a sample policy or procedure is a blessing. One of the goals of this book is to point you to table of contents and policy and procedure examples that could give you some clue as to the actual content of policies and procedures! This book starts to solve this problem of “finding content” by providing you sources, search techniques, and best practices for finding content and background information to guide you in the research and development of policies and procedures. This book emerged from comments of

readers who requested examples for policies and procedures for specific subjects such as purchasing, accounting, personnel, or specialty manuals such as childcare or hotel management. In the past, each time readers asked me to provide content for their policies and procedures, I would reply:

I cannot give you policy and procedure examples because the actual content of your policies and procedures depends on your industry; environment; culture; and existing processes, policies, and procedures. You may become dependent on examples and not do your own research. You must identify your own processes and use analysis and problem-solving techniques to derive content for policies and procedures.

While I believe that you must do your own analysis and build an effective team to develop policies and procedures, I have found that there are a number of sources that can make the life of a procedures analyst easier because he does not have to “re-invent the wheel” every time he wants to write a new policy or procedure. Many U.S. government agencies, universities, consulting firms, and specialty organizations publish policies and procedures in accessible websites. This information can be useful because it provides examples of industry-specific tables of contents and policies and procedures to help the procedures analyst better understand a topic. This book accelerates the procedures analyst’s process of identifying appropriate content to begin developing policies and procedures using best practices from various industries.

The real treasure of this book is Chapter 5, “Table of Contents Examples and Policy/Procedure URLs,” because the chapter contains table of contents examples and URLs that point to real-life policies and procedures. The procedures analyst can use this information as “starting points” or “discussion points” for interviews with appropriate managers and employees who support, or have knowledge of, functional areas such as sales or marketing. These examples can be used for reference purposes when researching problems or topics that will eventually be transformed into policy or procedure documents. Without these “starting points,” the procedures analyst faces the dilemma of not knowing *what* policies and procedures should go into a specific company manual or *what* information goes into specific policies and procedures.

Complete table of contents examples **and policy/procedure URLs** are contained in Chapter 5. These examples and URLs highlight more than 2000 processes, policies, and procedures.

Regardless of your current job situation, knowing where to begin or what business processes or topics to explore is challenging. Whether you are new to writing policies and procedures or a professional with many years of experience, it can be a frustrating task to find a starting point. With the concepts presented in this book, you no longer have to be concerned about where to start each time you write a new or revised policy or procedure. Either the answer will be clear as to where you want to start working on policies, procedures, or company manuals, or you will know where to find that answer!

Readers should find this book beneficial for several reasons. Some will find that the examples of common policy and procedure topics are invaluable because they help to reduce the amount of up front research and development time. Others will benefit from the detailed chapters on actually building tables of contents and developing policies and procedures using a cross-functional team. Still others will benefit from the 150+ URLs that point to thousands of useful resources and policy and procedure examples. As you move from organization to organization and from job to job, this book can become your bible for helping you get started in any procedures job.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

CHAPTER 1: *Vision and Strategic Direction.* Chapter 1 addresses the importance of the alignment of policies and procedures to the vision, strategic plan, and core processes of your organization. This alignment is critical for assuring management commitment and sponsorship. To enhance the knowledge of the procedures analyst, definitions and general guidelines are given for the vision, strategic plan, and core processes of an organization. Techniques are presented for using core processes to derive company manual titles. The company manual title is used to begin building table of contents pages.

CHAPTER 2: *Building Table of Contents Pages.* Chapter 2 addresses the first most difficult task of the procedures analyst, namely, finding the topics that form the basis for new policies and procedures. These topics become your table of contents or the listing of policy and procedure titles that are the basis of a company manual. These topics are used as “starting points” or “discussion points” for those individuals and teams selected to research and write specific policies and procedures. Five methods are presented for selecting topics that are suitable for the initial table of contents. The importance of Chapter 2 is to build a list of possible topics, policy and procedure titles, and problem statements that support the core processes identified in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 3: *Developing Policies and Procedures.* Chapter 3 addresses the second most difficult task of the procedures analyst, namely, developing content from the topics, subject areas, problem statements, or policy and procedure titles in the table of contents. A cross-functional team is introduced as the preferred team type for the development of policies and procedures. Extensive methods and tools are included for (1) conducting team meetings to define the problem statement, diagramming alternative solutions, and selecting a single solution, and (2) starting the policy or procedure documentation process with a proven and standard writing format used by thousands of organizations worldwide.

CHAPTER 4: *Writing Policies and Procedures.* Chapter 4 addresses the process by which the selected solution identified in Chapter 3 is documented using a standard writing format. This chapter is an overview of the principles and concepts of the writing format from my current books on policies and procedures. A five-step writing process for document preparation and publication is presented as a framework by which policies and procedures are developed and written.

CHAPTER 5: *Table of Contents Examples and Policy/Procedure URLs.* This chapter contains more than 50 table of contents examples (15 complete tables of contents and over 40 table of contents URLs) and more than 150 policy/procedure URLs that represent the best practices for developing and writing policies and procedures from various industries and organizational departments. These sources, all found on the Internet, consist of topics, policy and procedure titles, problem statements, and URLs that point to examples of tables of contents, processes, policies, and procedures. Additional URLs with a “ton of information” are provided to guide the procedures analyst with the research and development phases for writing policies and procedures. Refer to <http://www.companymanuals.com/bestpractices/links.htm> for a website that contains the most current URLs of the websites referenced in this book. While this chapter should have been a part of Chapter 2, I thought that it was too lengthy to be placed early in the book and too important to be an appendix.

TERMS USED in BOOK

1. **PROCEDURES ANALYST:** For the purposes of this book, the person responsible for writing policies and procedures for an organization is called a *procedures analyst*. A procedures analyst in a department such as personnel or accounting is only responsible for that area.

2. **HE:** The traditional *he* is used because it is generally accepted in literature. However, every attempt is made to use gender-neutral terms. The term *procedures analyst* is preferred and will be used wherever possible.
3. **ORGANIZATION:** This term is used to denote a company, firm, or enterprise. Instead of mixing terms, I have selected to use *organization* when referring to an entire corporation or company. I use *department* for those functional areas (for example, accounting, payroll, human resources, or sales) that make up the entire organization. There can also be departments within departments.
4. **SENIOR MANAGEMENT:** The term *senior management* is used to denote the management that reports directly to the President or Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of an organization. Other terms include top management or executive management.
5. **CONTENT:** The dictionary definition of the term *content* is “something contained.” In the context of this book, content refers to (1) topics in the table of contents, (2) policies and procedures contained within a company manual, and (3) words and paragraphs that form the basis of a policy or procedure document. Put another way, content in this third point is the information, diagrams, tables, and processes of a policy or procedure, or anything placed within the body of a policy or procedure document.
6. **COMPANY MANUAL:** A *company manual* can be either printed, as in a physical binder, or displayed electronically, as on a network or on an Intranet or Internet website. While a company manual can be “virtual,” for the purposes of this book, the term will refer to a physical binder with printed policies and procedures. I chose this usage because although the majority of organizations publish policies and procedures in a variety of formats, the physical manual is still the most prevalent format.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book contains theoretical and practical experience, with the emphasis on practical. The purpose of this book is to help you understand the importance of policies and procedures to your organization and to provide easy ways to develop content. You can apply this book in several ways:

- ◆ Start with Chapter 1 and apply the principles as you move through each chapter.
- ◆ Start with Chapter 5, study the table of contents examples, open the URLs in your browser, and study the content in the policy and procedure examples.
- ◆ Pick and choose which principles and concepts you like and add them to your skill set.

USING THE CONTENT IN CHAPTER 5

Chapter 5, “Table of Contents Examples and Policy/Procedure URLs,” contains examples, 150+ URLs, and instructions that can be used to help you find the “starting points” for writing or revising policies and procedures. More than 60+ URLs reference several thousand policy and procedure examples from a variety of industries. While I believe that these examples, URLs, and actual policies and procedures will be a great time saver, these materials are not “silver bullets” and you cannot expect to use them without change. Your industry, culture, environment, management viewpoints, and current ways of doing things might be different, and your employees might have their own ideas and opinions. These materials will be helpful as you integrate them with your own set of ideas and experience. I am giving you a head start; so make good use of this book! Get started now.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MANUALS REFERENCED

Accounting	Administrative Policies and Procedures	Airport Policies and Procedures
Auditing	Banking	Child Care
Church	Comptroller’s Office	Computer and Network Usage
Computer Security	Continuity Planning	Cost Accounting
Credit Union	Criminal Justice	Department of Public Safety
Desktop Standards	Elections	Emergency Services
E-Services	Facilities	Financial Administration
Fiscal Management	Grant Accounting	Hotel Management

Information Technology	Infrastructure	Insurance
Intercollegiate Athletes	Library Services	Medicare & Medicaid
Nursing	Patient Handbook	Payroll
PC Standards	Personnel	Power Plant Billing
Project Management	Property Control	Purchasing
Records Management	Risk Management	Social Services
Software Engineering Process Handbook	Telecommunications	Training
Travel & Business	University Governance	University Handbook
Various Manuals	Web Accessibility	

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks go to the readers who asked for this book. The information contained herein will answer many questions and provide insight into (1) best practices for developing and writing policies and procedures, (2) identification of content for tables of contents and policies and procedures in a variety of industries and organizational departments, and (3) Internet search techniques for locating content and reference materials for the development of new or revised policies and procedures.

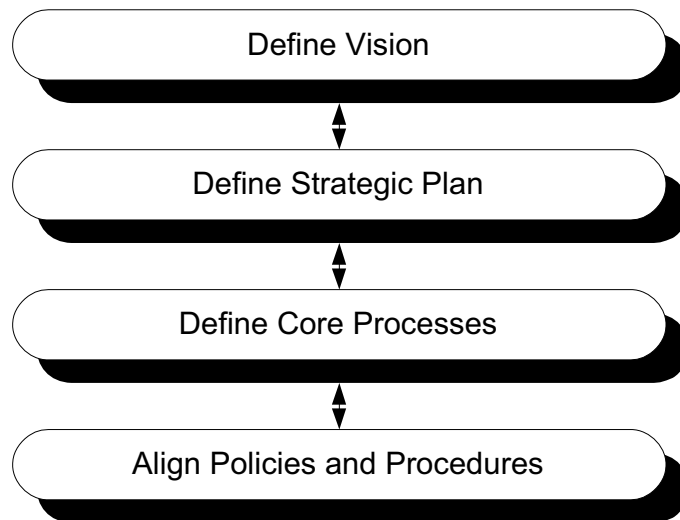
Many thanks go to Mike Tarrani, an IT consultant, who specializes in process improvement and IT policies and procedures. He provided ideas that made their way into this book. Mr. Tarrani makes available a wide array of resources from his website at <http://www.tarrani.net>. Many of these resources directly or indirectly support the approach taken in this book.

I wish to thank Lisa Rosenberger for taking the time to edit this book. I believe that her editing has greatly improved its content and readability. Lisa is a technical writer in the Department of Zoology at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio). She holds an advanced degree in technical and scientific communication, with a special emphasis in the environmental sciences.

Thanks go to my wife, who has given me endless support to write yet another book.

Chapter 1

Vision and Strategic Direction



CHAPTER FOCUS

This chapter focuses on the alignment of policies and procedures with the vision, strategic plan, and core processes of an organization. Each component of this *alignment continuum* is explained to demonstrate the importance for the procedures analyst to gain a foothold in the vision creation and strategic planning processes. This alignment continuum is crucial because it can guide the procedures analyst in the important task of relating the content of policies and procedures to the vision and strategic planning processes. The procedures analyst can be assured of support for his efforts to create and maintain a system of policies and procedures when the goals and objectives of policies and procedures are evident in an organization's vision statement and strategic plan. The future of procedures analysts often rests on continual support from senior management.

As you will see, when feasible and possible, the procedures analyst should play a role in the definition and documentation of an organization's vision, strategic plan, and core processes. While this chapter provides you with the basic