

# Team Clarity & Communication

## Awaken The Diagramming Force Within

### Overview

Diagrams are as powerful as they are versatile. They get people to see the big picture. They help teams vault over communication hurdles. They can be equally useful for looking at high level plans or drilling down to the smallest detail. And, if you think there's no inner diagramming Jedi waiting to awaken within you, give us a chance to prove you wrong.

### Visual Language is Universal

Chances are, you've experienced the instant disorientation that sets in when you visit a country and don't speak the language. You immediately regress to a time when you couldn't read and symbols become your new best friends.

Symbols can guide you to food, shelter and gas. They can help you avoid danger and tell you when to stop and when to go. Diagrams (comprised of multiple symbols) are even more powerful. A diagram can align a team, clarify a process, communicate a complicated idea and get departments with different areas of expertise to finally understand each other.

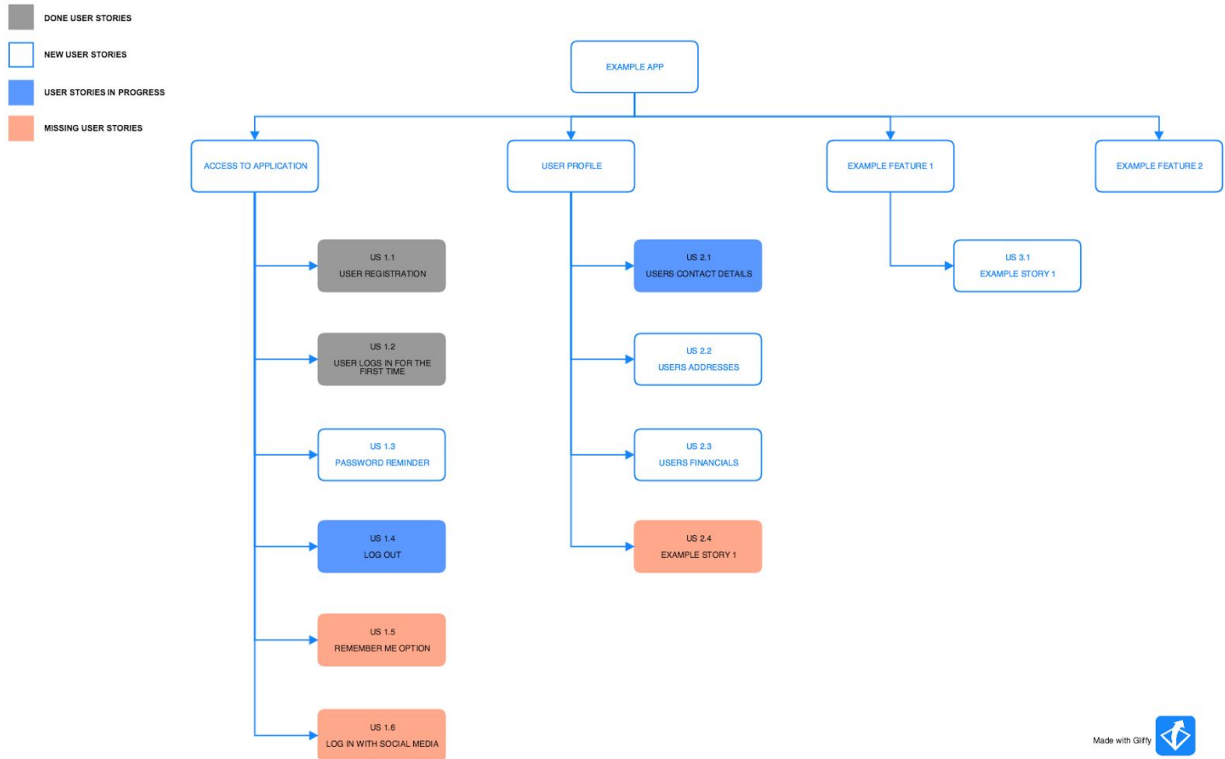
Whether you're a software engineer, a product manager, work in marketing or HR or just want to show your brilliant sense of humor, there's a diagram for you.

### Software Engineers

#### Diagrams for Requirement-Gathering & Maintenance

Diagrams are great for communicating complicated ideas in a simple (visual) way and for clarifying technical requirements for non-technical stakeholders. This is particularly helpful for software engineers at the beginning of the SDLC.

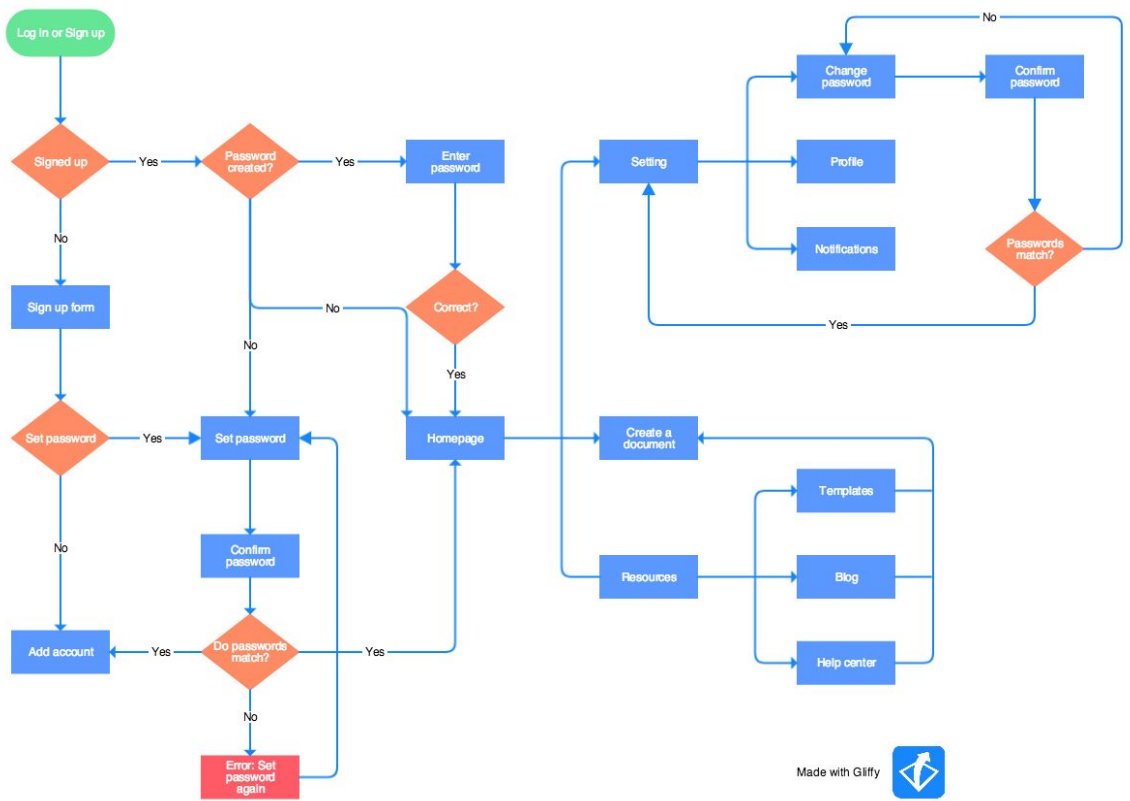
Every new product comes with as many unknowns as opinions. A simple set of diagrams can manage both. No one knows what they don't know, but creating a diagram forces you to get specific. For example, a simple diagram that maps out a user story can help identify gaps and missing features. Once gaps have been identified, you can draw another diagram to fill in what's missing. You can also use a flowchart to define new features or split a single feature into multiple user stories.



### Story Map

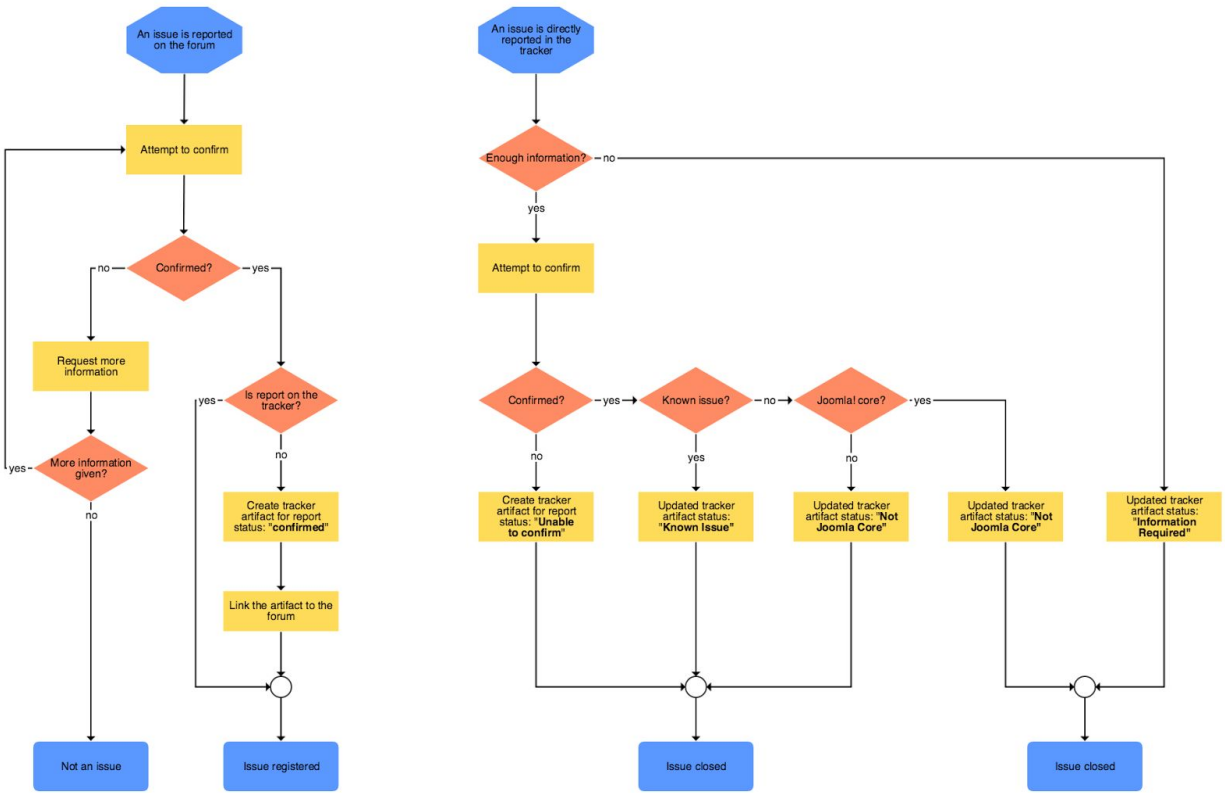
Once the basics have been worked out, you can get non-technical stakeholders to better understand the product and the scope of work involved by drawing out the user's journey. Getting everyone aligned early helps avoid scope creep and unpleasant surprises when work gets started.

Diagrams allow everyone to see the big picture, but they can also be used for drilling down to the minutest details. Flowcharts are equally useful for analyzing a moment of decision or summarizing the change in status.



### User Journey Map

While crucial in early stages, diagrams can be used at every stage of the SDLC to align teams and create repeatable processes. Creating and sharing a bug fixing flowchart, for example, is a great way to make sure everyone knows the protocol of when to fix and how to document bugs.



Bug Fixing Process

# Product Managers

## Diagrams for Risk-Mitigation

As a product manager, getting decision-makers on your side early can make the difference between the next game-changing product and glory for you, or a business proposal that’s taking up space on your laptop.

There are many diagram types that are useful for product managers: roadmaps, timelines and SWOT diagrams. But none help align people early like the lean canvas diagram.

Lean Canvas is Ash Maurya’s adaptation of Alex Osterwalder’s Business Model Canvas. Its 1-page format forces you to answer the most critical questions so that nothing is forgotten and risk is minimized.

# Lean Canvas

		Name of Initiative	Iteration #1	Change Date
<b>Problem</b> <i>List your customer's top 3 problems</i>	<b>Solution</b> <i>Outline a possible Solution for each problem</i>	<b>Unique Value Proposition</b> <i>Single, clear compelling message, that turns an unaware visitor into an interested prospect</i>	<b>Unfair Advantage</b> <i>Something, that can't be easily copied or bought</i>	<b>Customer Segments</b> <i>List your customer segments and users</i>
<b>Existing Alternatives</b> <i>List how these problems are solved today</i>	<b>Key Metrics</b> <i>List the key numbers, that tell you how your business is doing</i>		<b>Channels</b> <i>List your path to customers</i>	
		<b>High Level Concept</b> <i>List your x for y analogy (e.g. youtube = flicker for videos)</i>	<b>Early Adopters</b> <i>List the characteristic of your ideal customer</i>	
<b>Cost Structure</b> <i>List your fixed and your variable costs</i>		<b>Revenue Streams</b> <i>List your sources of revenue</i>		
<b>PRODUCT</b>		<b>MARKET</b>		

Lean Canvas is adapted from the Business Model Canvas (<http://www.businessmodelgeneration.com>) and is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Un-ported Licence  
Adapted version from Ash Maurya [leanstack.com](http://leanstack.com)



## Lean Canvas

### How To Create A Lean Canvas

(It is recommended that you work in the order below. )

1. Problem: Describe your users' top 3 problems. Then list how the problems are currently being solved. (Existing Alternatives)
2. Customer segments: Describe your target users. Who are the early adopters and the ideal customers?
3. Unique value proposition: Determine a simple message that will describe the product and entice prospects. Then determine the High Level Concept, or "this is the X of the Y."
4. Solution: Outline a solution to each problem and determine what the customer is paying you to do.

5. Channels: Determine your path to customers, i.e. media channels, in-person, word of mouth etc.
6. Revenue streams: Determine your source of revenue and estimates.
7. Cost structure: Lay out your fixed or variable costs.
8. Key metrics: Choose a measurement that will determine success for how the feature/product is performing.
9. Unfair advantage: This is one of the most important pieces of the puzzle. Jason Cohen defines an unfair advantage as: “one that cannot easily be copied or bought”. It’s the one thing that can lead to success because it’s your true differentiator.

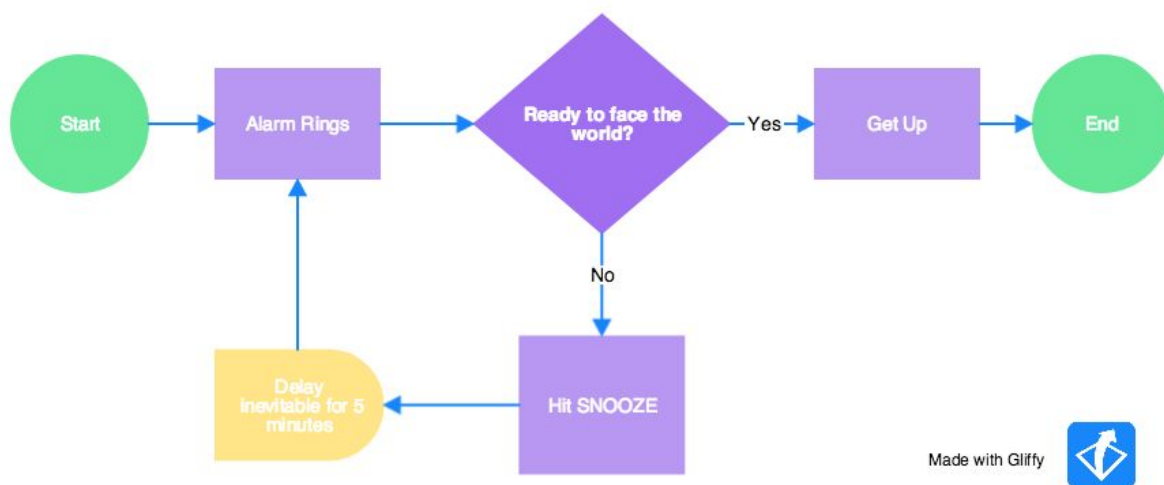
In addition to helping you answer critical questions early on, the concise, visually-engaging format of a Lean Canvas makes it a great presentation tool.

## Marketers

### Diagrams for Planning & Resource Management

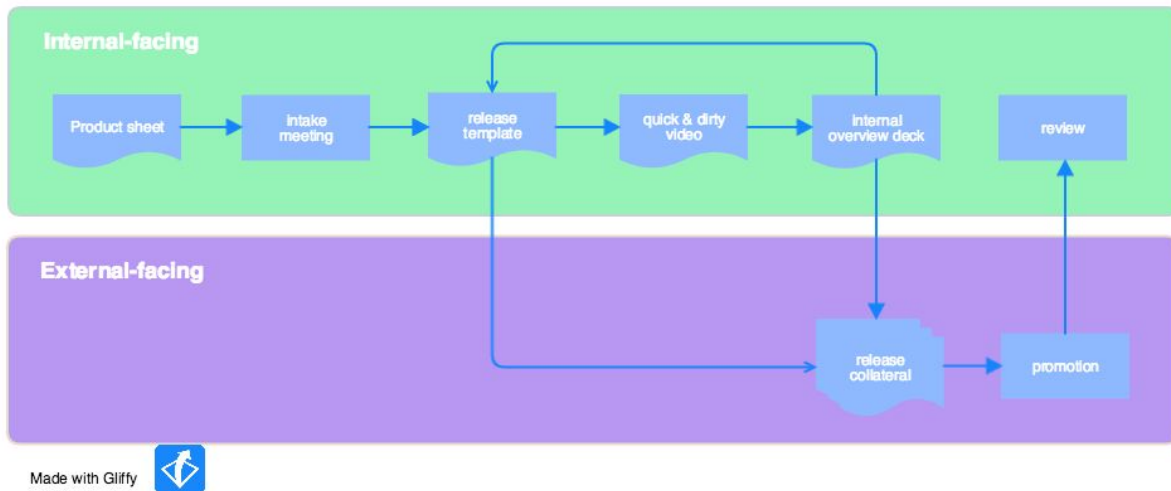
There are dozens of diagrams that can help marketers on their journey to win consumers’ hearts and minds: diagrams that track top, middle and bottom of the funnel activity and strategies, diagrams to visualize email flows, content calendars and roadmap calendars. The list goes on and on. We’ll focus on the most versatile few below.

If you need to plan a marketing campaign, move around resources or get the team onboard with a new way of doing things, the versatile process flowchart is for you. It illustrates the way a manufacturing, administrative or service process works from first step to last, along with the decisions involved along the way.



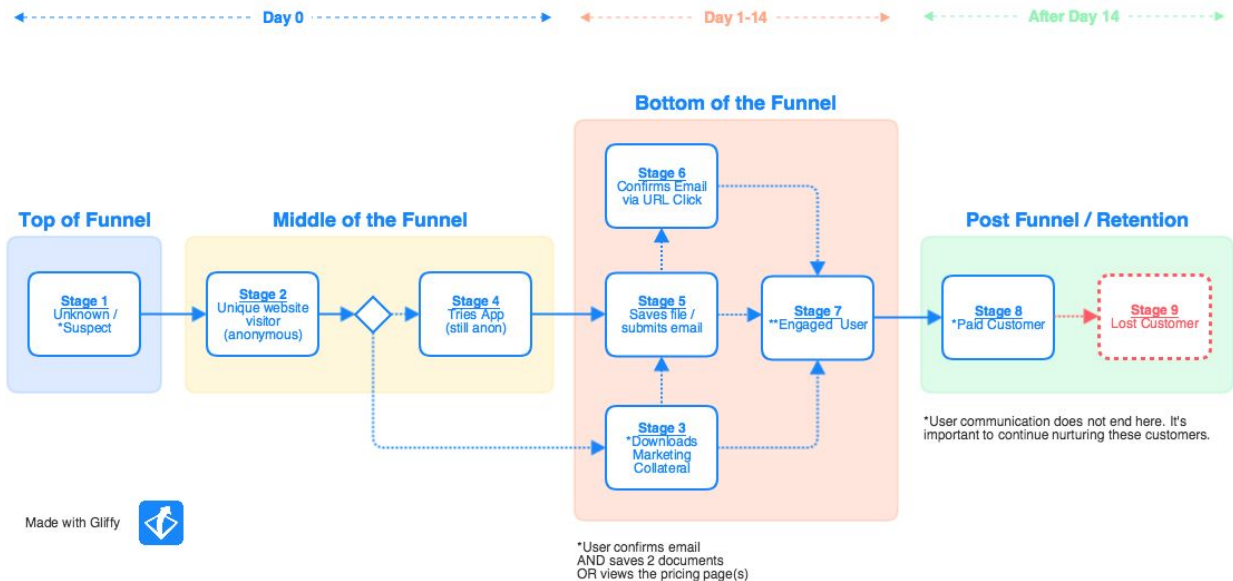
## Process Flowchart

Looking to see the relationship between two parallel initiatives, people or departments? Use swimlanes. They come in handy when you need to show multiple things running side by side. The below example illustrates the way an internal-facing department runs parallel with an external-facing one and at what point they intersect.



## Swimlane Flowchart

In our data-rich environment, it is imperative to see where data comes in and is processed. A data flowchart shows exactly where data flows in and out of an information system or business. The below example represents a typical sales funnel. In this case the “data” is consumer behavior.



Data Flowchart

## Human Resources

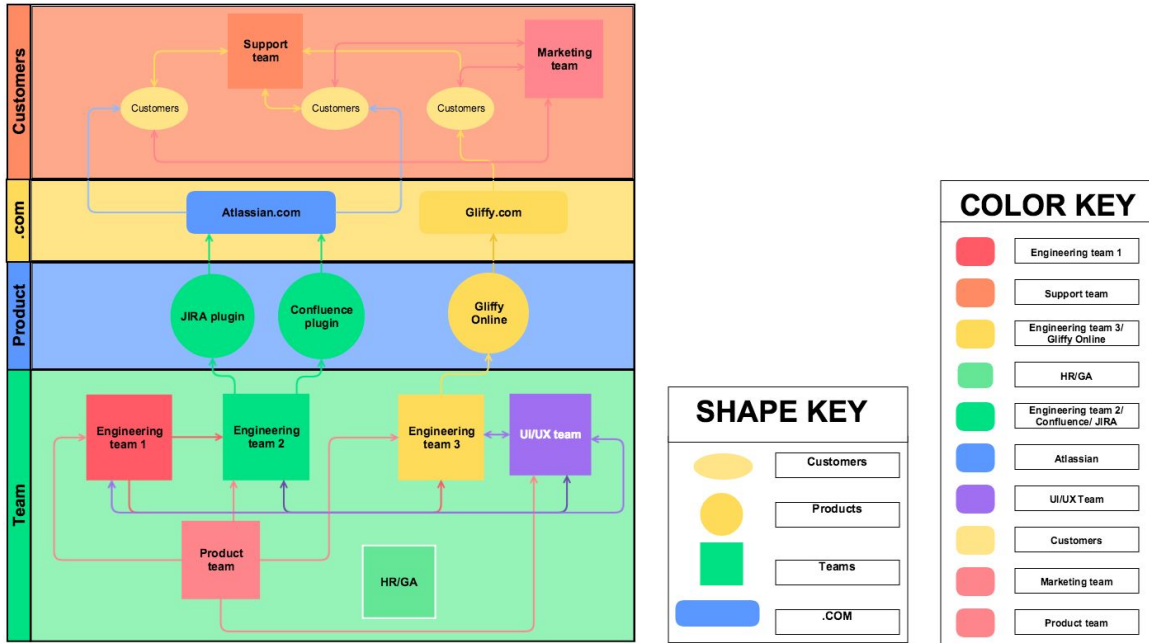
### Diagrams for Employee Onboarding

Did you know that hiring and training can range between 30-50% of the employee's starting salary? And after such a massive investment a vast number of employees don't make it past the first year. A well-structured onboarding process can make the difference between a successful new employee and one who's packing their desk toys faster than they unpacked them.

There are four simple diagrams types commonly used to illustrate how companies run and the people involved in running them. Creating and routinely using them to help new hires get their bearings will make your onboarding process better and will save your company time and money in the long run.

A great way to see overall company structure and how the departments interact with each other and the customer is by drawing a team overview diagram. This can be as detailed or as high-level as you like.



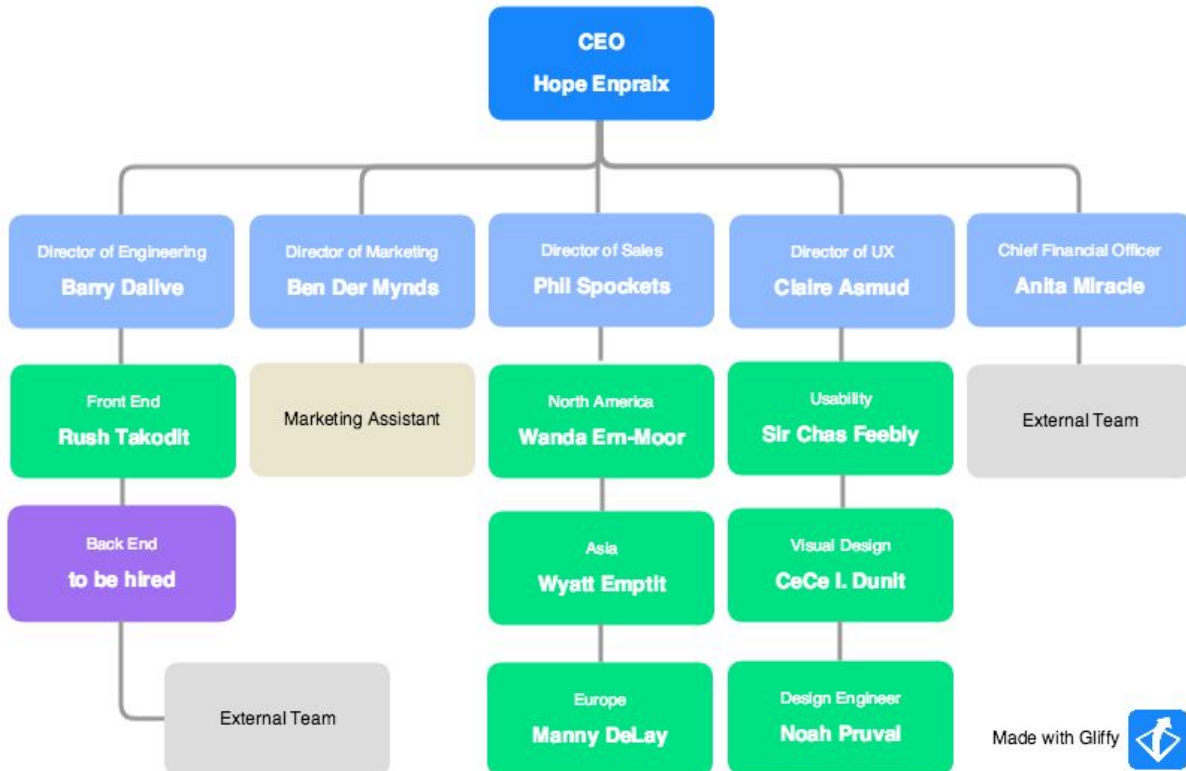


Made with Giffy 

*Team Overview Diagram*

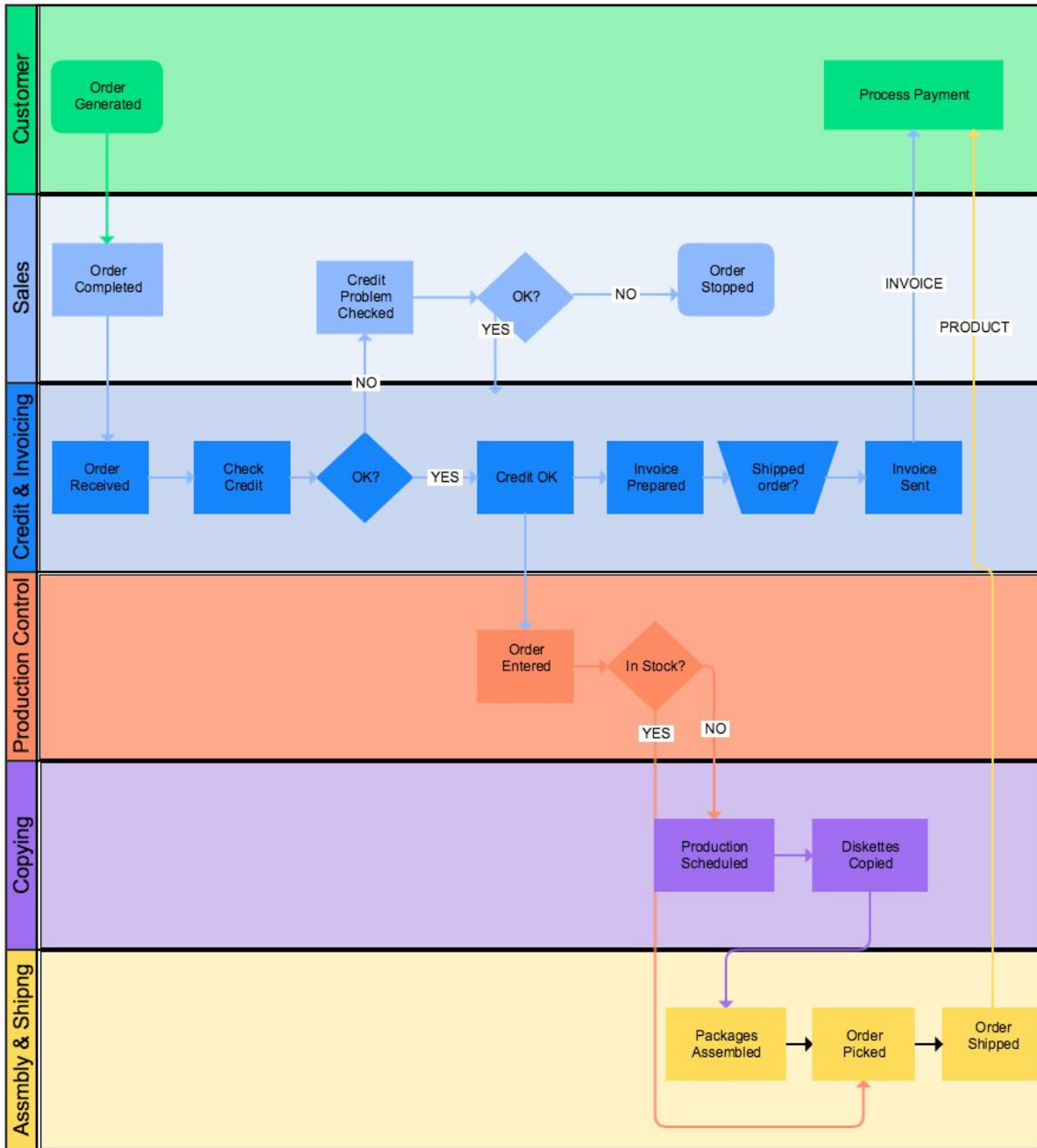
An org chart will help the new hire understand where they fit in within the organization. They'll get a better sense of how to plan their career path, which teams they'll be working with most frequently and who to talk to if you need to resolve conflict.

# Fun Company



Org Chart

For some employees, a business process map is key. Where a team overview diagram shows team interaction, a business process map focuses on showing what happens to a product/service within each department. It can show what happens if a product is out of stock or a customer credit card declines. It can be very detailed and complex or just give a general overview.



Made with Giffy 

*Business Process Map*

## Diagrams for All

Regardless of your job title, there are a few key things to keep in mind when creating a diagram:

1. Start by deciding what you want your diagram to accomplish and the amount of detail you'll need.
2. Brainstorm, then write down all the actions/steps involved in your diagram without worrying about the sequence.
3. After adding all your steps, arrange them sequentially.
4. Perhaps the most important step: GET A SECOND OPINION to make sure your diagram makes sense to someone who's never seen it.
5. Be humble when accepting praise, accolades & promotions.

Hopefully you've started to feel the stirrings of your inner diagramming Jedi and are ready to harness the force (never for the dark side, of course).