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BPMN Made Easy With PROCESS-BILITY

Kevin Tan

From Complexity to Clarity -
Effective ***Visual*** Communication in
Digital Transformation

2024Nov11

To Mauren,

Thank you for being my rock behind the scenes, looking after everything—so I could focus on writing. You've given me the time and space to burn the midnight oil and bring this project to life. I couldn't have done it without your love, patience, and unwavering support.

With all my heart,

Kevin

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking the time to explore Chapters 1-5 of "BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility." It means a great deal to me that you've invested your time and effort to learn more about the art of simplifying business process modelling.

Process-bility is not just a method—it's my way of bringing clarity to a complex world. I believe that clarity empowers people, and through this journey, I hope to inspire you to make your processes smoother, your communications clearer, and your work more impactful. Whether you're new to BPMN modelling or a seasoned expert, Process-bility is here to help you see things from a fresh perspective.

I've poured my passion into this book with the hope that it will not only teach but also ignite a spark of transformation in how you approach process modelling. If you found these chapters valuable, I'd love for you to consider purchasing the full version—it dives even deeper into the principles that can help you and your organisation thrive.

And if this isn't quite the right time for you, that's okay too! Feel free to share this free copy with any colleagues or friends who might benefit from it. The more we spread Process-bility, the more we can collectively simplify and improve the way businesses run.

Your journey to mastering BPMN modelling starts here, and I'm grateful to be a part of it. Let's make process modelling easy, effective, and fun—together.
Thank you once again for your time and trust.

Warmest regards,

Kevin Tan
Author, **BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility**

Foreword

With over 20 years of global experience, working for major companies like Siemens and SAP in 7 countries, I've had the privilege of solving some of the most complex business challenges by aligning People, Process, Applications, and Data. Throughout my career as a former CIO, CFO, Head of Operational Excellence, and Head of Service Business, I've seen first-hand how important process modeling is in every business stage, from start-ups to acquisitions.

In the world of process modeling, complexity often overshadows clarity, leaving many professionals—both beginners and experts—struggling to communicate their ideas effectively. That's where Kevin Tan steps in, with an unwavering passion to demystify the art of Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN). Through his years of experience and dedication, Kevin has developed a fresh approach that blends simplicity, storytelling, and visual balance, making process modeling accessible to everyone.

As I turned the pages of BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility, I found myself not just reading but discovering. Kevin's insights opened my eyes to the nuances of process modeling in a way I had never imagined. What initially seemed like a straightforward guide quickly became an ocean of value waiting to be unlocked. Every chapter revealed new dimensions of BPMN, and I came to realise just how much potential was hidden beneath the surface of what I once thought was a rigid, complex framework.

The more I delved into the principles of Storytelling and Visual Balance, the more I appreciated the depth and power of Kevin's approach. His ability to break down complicated concepts into digestible, actionable steps made it clear that BPMN is not just a tool for experts, but a language anyone can master. And as I continued to explore the pages, I felt confident that I was gaining skills that could drive real transformation in how processes are modeled, understood, and communicated.

This book, BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility, is more than a guide; it's an invitation to explore a new way of thinking about processes. Whether you're just starting out or are a seasoned analyst, Kevin's insights will resonate with you. His desire to share his expertise and help others overcome the challenges of process modeling is evident on every page. Kevin's belief that process models should not only function but also inspire collaboration and innovation is at the heart of this work.

Dive in, and you'll find that this book is not just for experts but for anyone who wants to unlock the true potential of BPMN. With Kevin as your guide, complexity gives way to clarity, and the art of process modeling becomes an empowering tool for everyone.

Gia Thi Nguyen

VP, SAP Signavio, Market Impact APJ & GC
Singapore, Oct 2024

Preface

In the world of business process modeling, it’s easy to get lost in complex notations, gateways, and jargon. For years, I saw professionals—new and experienced—struggle to create models that worked and could be easily understood across an organisation. That struggle inspired the creation of **Process-bility**.

Born from two decades of hands-on experience, Process-bility makes BPMN easier, clearer, and more intuitive—without losing its power. It focuses on three core principles: Storytelling, Visual Balance, and Simplicity, ensuring models not only function but also tell engaging stories that everyone—from CEOs to frontline employees—can follow.

Along the way, I learned that process modeling isn’t just about technical accuracy—it’s about clarity, growth, and collaboration. When models are easy to understand, they spark conversations, align teams, and encourage continuous improvement.

This book isn’t just about building better models—it’s about communicating better, working together, and enjoying the process. Whether you're a seasoned business analyst or just starting your journey, I hope Process-bility provides the tools, insights, and confidence to unlock your potential. Let’s turn complexity into clarity and make BPMN easy with Process-bility.

Kevin Tan

www.Process-bility.com

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Chapter 1

Introduction

- From Complexity to Clarity
- Why This Book?
- The Problem with BPMN
- What You'll Learn
- Why Process-bility Matters?
- Closing Thoughts

From Complexity to Clarity

Have you ever tried to navigate the world of Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN), only to find yourself tangled in its complexities? The notations, Gateways, Flow Lines—it can all feel overwhelming, even for seasoned professionals. But BPMN is critical. In today's fast-paced, digital-first world, the ability to model and truly understand your business processes is key to successful digital transformation and continuous improvement.

Process-bility strips away the complexity from BPMN, replacing it with clarity, simplicity, and storytelling. At its core, process modeling is more than just diagrams and symbols—it's about telling a story. A visual story about your organisation, your people, and how they collaborate to achieve meaningful business outcomes.

Why This Book?

With over three decades of experience in business process modeling, I've encountered it all—the good, the bad, and the unnecessarily complex. Through these experiences, I developed a set of principles called Process-bility. This methodology breaks down BPMN into its most essential components, focusing on three core principles:

1 **Visual Balance**:

A well-designed BPMN model should be visually balanced. That means no messy cross-over lines, no cluttered activities, and an easy-to-follow flow from start to finish. A visually balanced model is not just more aesthetically pleasing—it's easier to understand, which leads to better decisions.

2 **Simplicity**:

BPMN can quickly get bogged down in details and notations that add more complexity than value. The best BPMN models are simple but not simpler. They contain just enough information to convey the process clearly, without overwhelming the reader.

3 **Storytelling:**

At its core, every BPMN model should tell a story that anyone—from a CEO to an entry-level analyst—can understand. The focus is not on showing off how many notations you know, but on creating a clear, engaging narrative that communicates the process effectively.

The Problem with BPMN

BPMN is undoubtedly a powerful notation standard, capable of supporting both events and activities, as well as business rules and decision flows. However, its very strength can also be its downfall. With hundred of notations to choose from, and no established best practices, many process modelers fall into the trap of focusing too heavily on technical complexity. Often, models are driven by the need to represent every detail, rather than focusing on business clarity.

This technical bias leads to over-complicated models where many business rules and decision flows are treated as processes themselves. The result is a model that, while technically accurate, is confusing and overwhelming for all stakeholders. Instead of providing clarity, these models muddy the waters by including unnecessary detail, making it harder for teams to understand the processes.

When process modelers attempt to represent every nuance, decision, and rule in a BPMN diagram, they often lose sight of the bigger picture. Without a clear framework, it becomes easy to overcomplicate the model. The true purpose of BPMN—capturing and communicating a clear, digestible narrative of how a business operates—gets lost in the details.

Process-bility offers a superior approach. By focusing on Visual Balance, Simplicity and Storytelling, it ensures that BPMN models serve their real purpose: communicating not just how a process works, but why it matters to the business.

What You'll Learn

In this book, you'll learn how to approach BPMN with the same mindset I developed through years of trial and error. You'll discover how to:

- Use Visual Balance to create BPMN models that are easy to read and understand.
- Tell a story with clarity using BPMN models - with minimum notations.
- Apply the principles of Storytelling to cut through the noise and deliver BPMN models that drive real, actionable insights.

We'll also look at common BPMN mistakes and how to avoid them, share real-world examples of BPMN models done right (and wrong), and give you practical tips on applying Process-bility in your day-to-day BPMN modeling.

Whether you're new to BPMN or a seasoned professional, this book will show you how to take your BPMN process modeling to the next level.

> "Absorb what is useful,
> discard what is not,
> add what is
> specifically your own."
>
> — BRUCE LEE

Why Process-bility Matters?

The business landscape is changing at an unprecedented pace. Digital transformation and continuous improvement are no longer a buzzword—it's a necessity for survival. And as businesses pivot toward automation, artificial intelligence, and data-driven decision-making, having a clear understanding of your processes becomes even more critical.

Process-bility helps you see the bigger picture. It's not just about creating a diagram that looks good—it's about fostering collaboration, breaking down silos, and driving meaningful change within your organization.

As we dive into the world of BPMN through the lens of Process-bility, you'll see how a well-modeled process can unlock new efficiencies, improve communication, and ultimately, help your business thrive.

Fg1.1 The future is now

Closing Thoughts

Process is the manifestation of activities when knowledge is applied to achieve a desired business outcome. Think of BPMN as the X-ray of your business processes. Just like an X-ray helps doctors diagnose a problem, a well-modeled process helps you diagnose inefficiencies, identify opportunities, and ensure that your business is operating at its full potential.

So let's get started on this journey together—from complexity to clarity, from confusion to understanding. BPMN made easy with Process-bility.

> “Process is the manifestation of activities when knowledge is applied to achieve a desired business outcome.

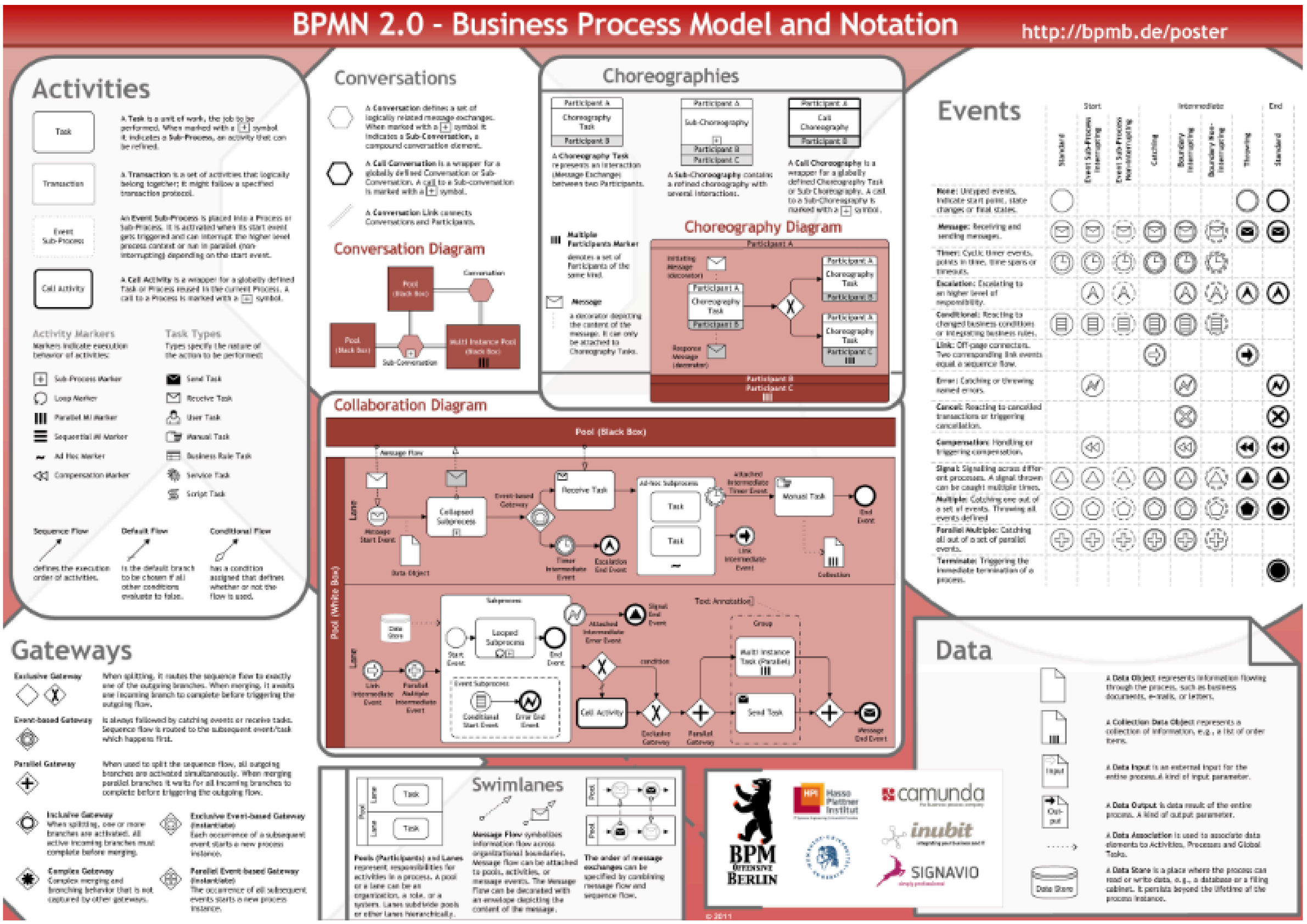
Chapter 2

The foundation of BPMN

- What is BPMN?
- The Key Elements of BPMN
- Why Most People Get It Wrong?
- Get Ready With Process-bility
- Closing Thoughts

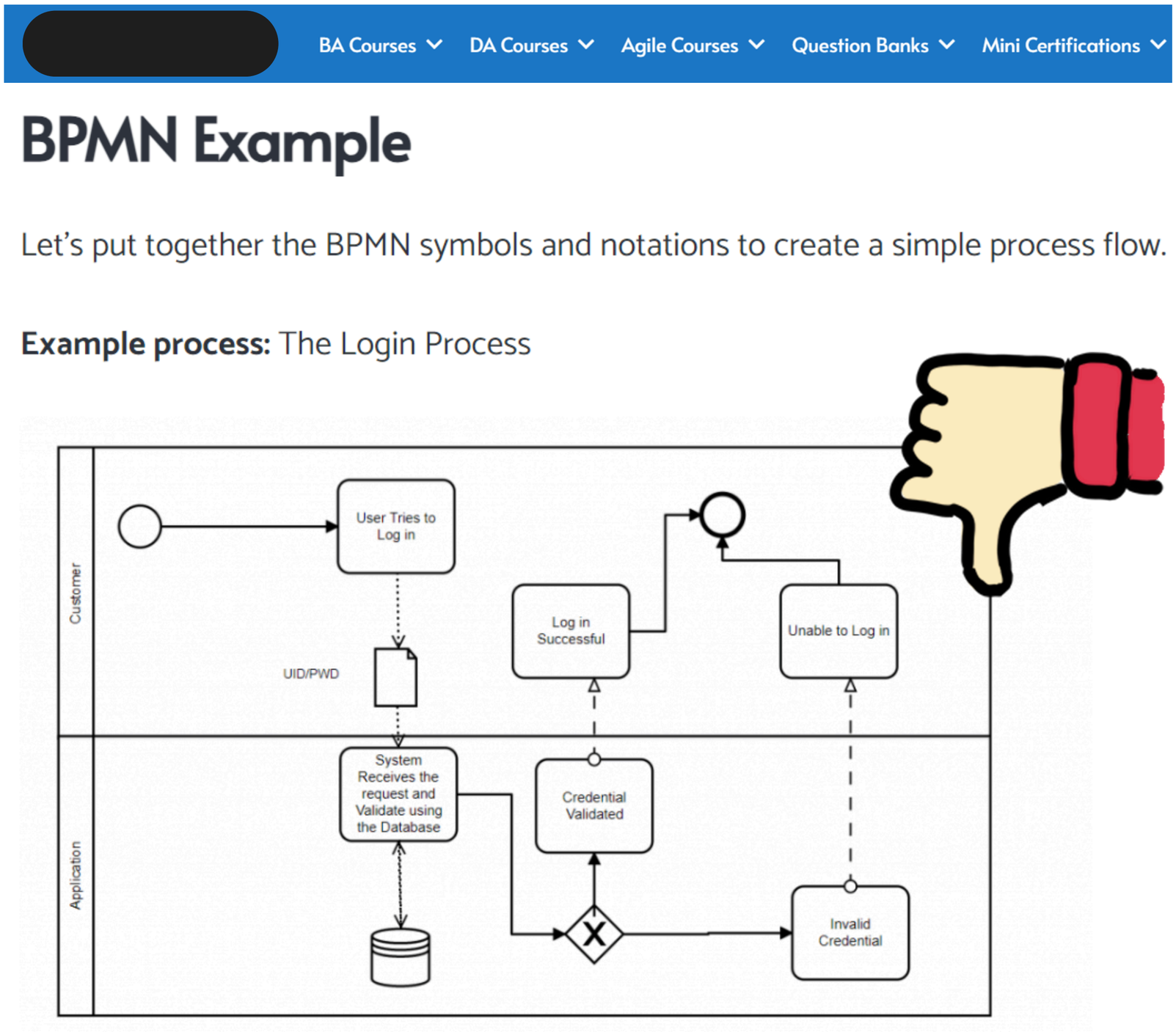
What is BPMN?

Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN) is an international standard developed to visually represent business processes in a way that can be easily understood across various roles—from stakeholders to developers. Initially introduced by the Business Process Management Initiative (BPMI) in 2004, it was later adopted by the Object Management Group (OMG) in 2005. The goal was to bridge the gap between business and IT by providing a universal language for process modeling, and BPMN quickly became the go-to standard. The release of BPMN 2.0 brought enhancements, including expanded event and data flow capabilities, making it even more robust for modern business process management needs.



Fg2.1 BPMN 2.0 Notations

However, while BPMN 2.0 provides a rich, comprehensive framework, its official OMG documentation is extremely technical, more like a programming manual than a user-friendly guide. The dense, detail-oriented nature of the standard has made it challenging for newcomers to approach. Consequently, many turn to online resources to learn BPMN, often relying on tutorials or summaries that lack depth and accuracy. This has led to widespread misinterpretations and inconsistent practices, resulting in overcomplicated or ineffective models. Instead of fostering clarity, **BPMN*** often ends up misunderstood and misused—its intended simplicity lost in translation.



Fg2.2 Poor quality BPMN online resources to learn BPMN

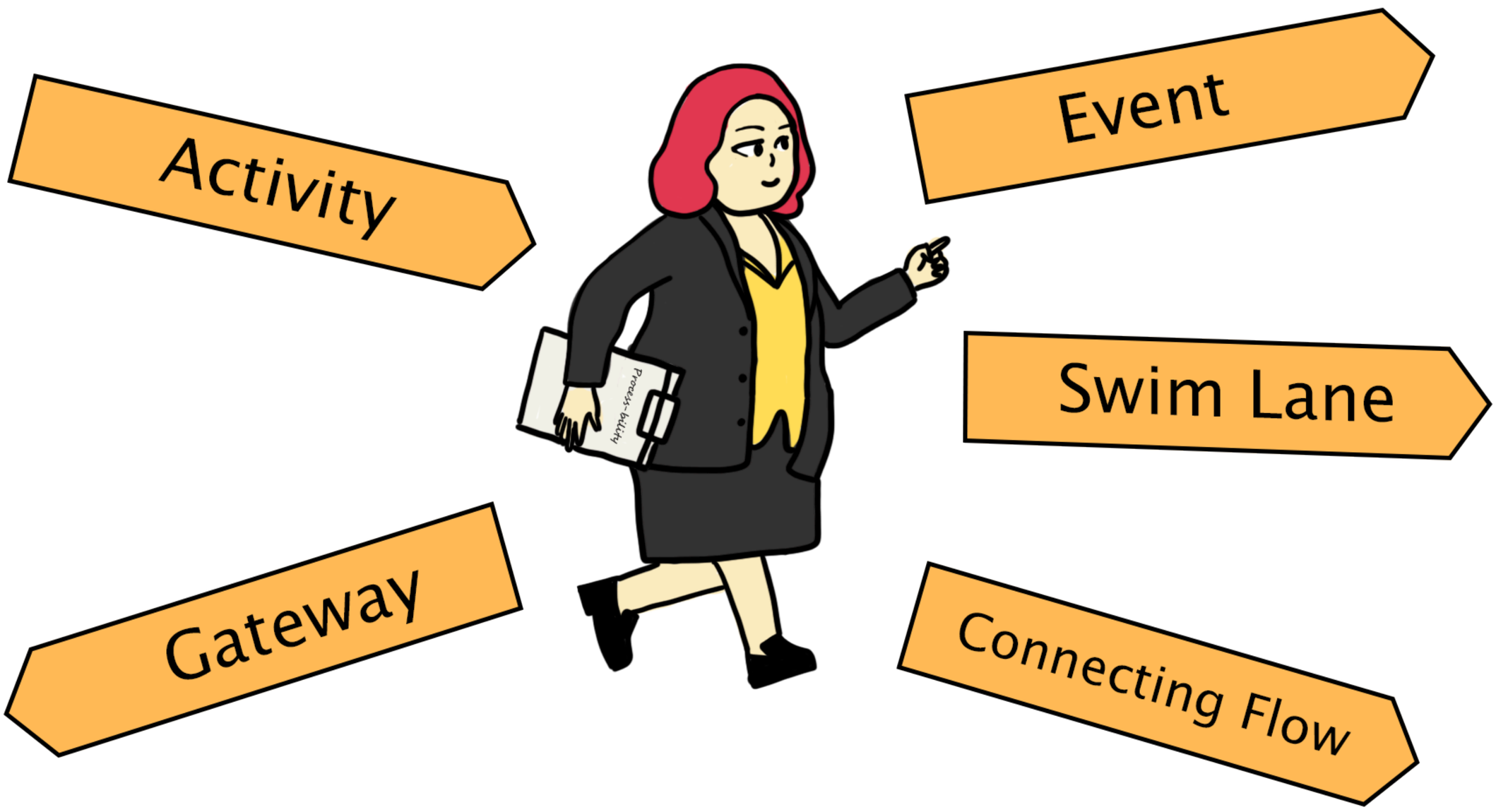
BPMN* specifically refers to Collaboration Diagrams within the BPMN 2.0 standard. While BPMN 2.0 includes three types of diagrams—Collaboration Diagrams, Choreography Diagrams, and Conversation Diagrams—our focus in this ebook is exclusively on Collaboration Diagrams.

The Key Elements of BPMN

At its core, BPMN revolves around five key elements:

Event, **Activity**, **Gateway**, **Swim Lane**, and **Connecting Flow**.

These are the fundamental "building blocks" of process models, with each playing a critical role in representing different aspects of a business process. The remaining notations are essentially variations of these core elements, providing additional detail or specificity, but they all function based on the same foundational behaviors. By mastering these five key elements, you can navigate BPMN without being overwhelmed by its many notations.

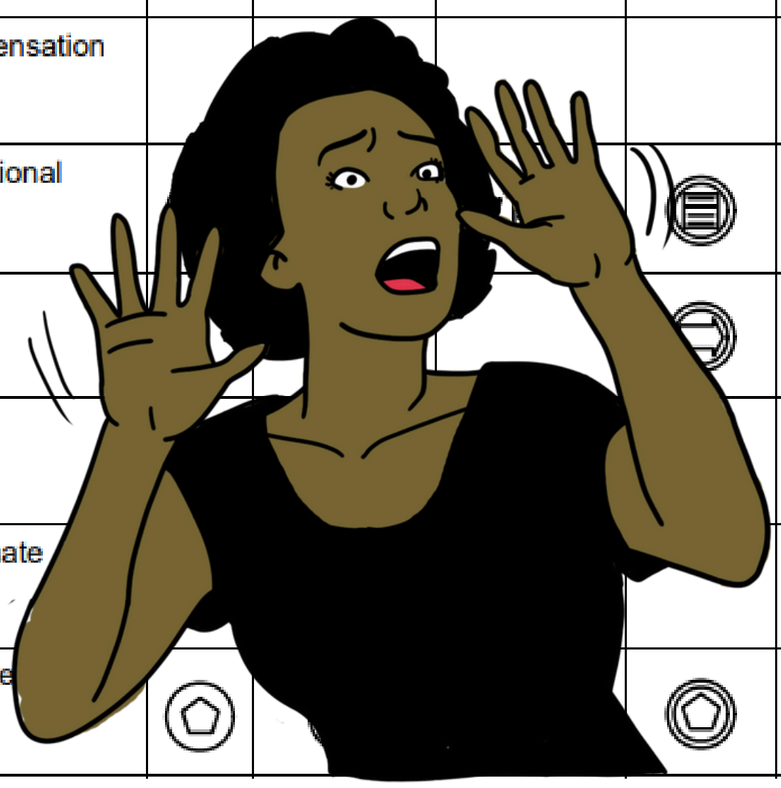


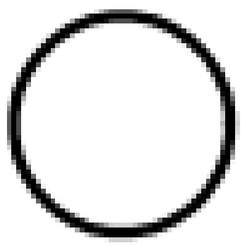
Fg2.3 BPMN Key Elements

Event

An Event represents something that occurs during a process. It can trigger the start of an activity, mark its end, or serve as a checkpoint during the process. Events are essential for understanding how the process flows and how it responds to various triggers or changes.
Examples of Events include *Start Event*, *Message Start Event*, *End Event*, and *Intermediate Timer Event*, among others.

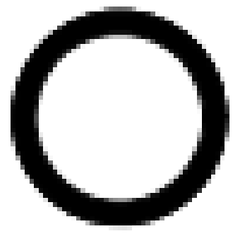
Types	**Start**			**Intermediate**				**End**
	Top-Level	Event Sub-Process *Interrupting*	Event Sub-Process *Non-Interrupting*	Catching	Boundary *Interrupting*	Boundary *Non-Interrupting*	Throwing	
None								
Message								
Timer								
Error								
Escalation								
Cancel								
Compensation								
Conditional								
Link								
Signal								
Terminate								
Multiple								





Start

Message Start



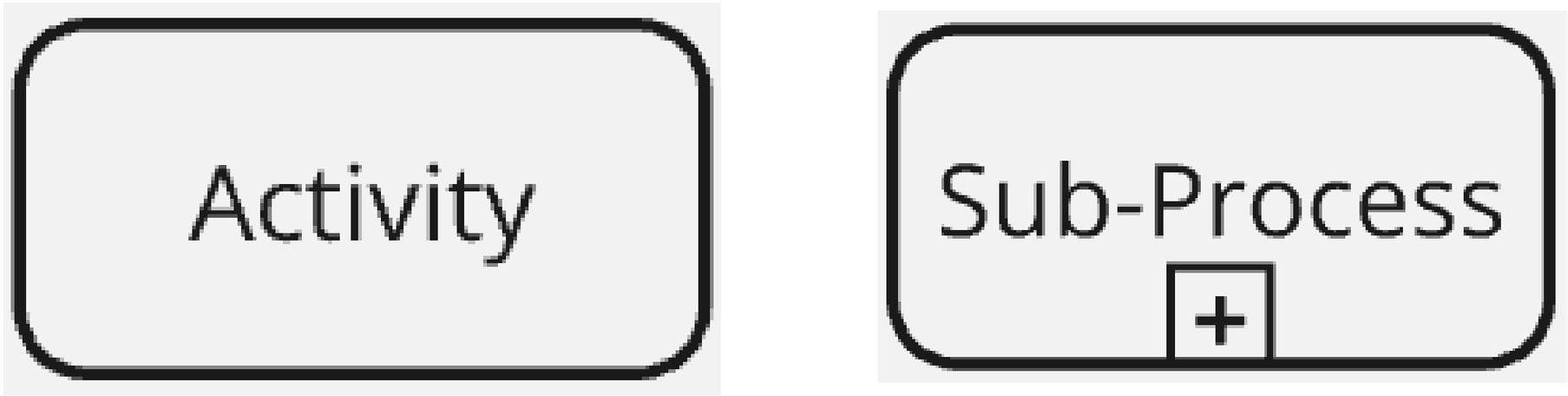
End

Intermediate Timer

Fg2.4 BPMN Notation - Events - Don’t worry, you only need to understand less than 10 BPMN notations to be able to master BPMN modelling

Activity

An Activity represents tasks or work that is being performed. These can range from manual tasks (like destroying duplicate hardcopies) to automated tasks (like validating credit status). In BPMN, activities can be further categorised into *Tasks*, *Sub-processes*, and *Call Activities*, but their core purpose remains the same—they are the actions that move the process forward.

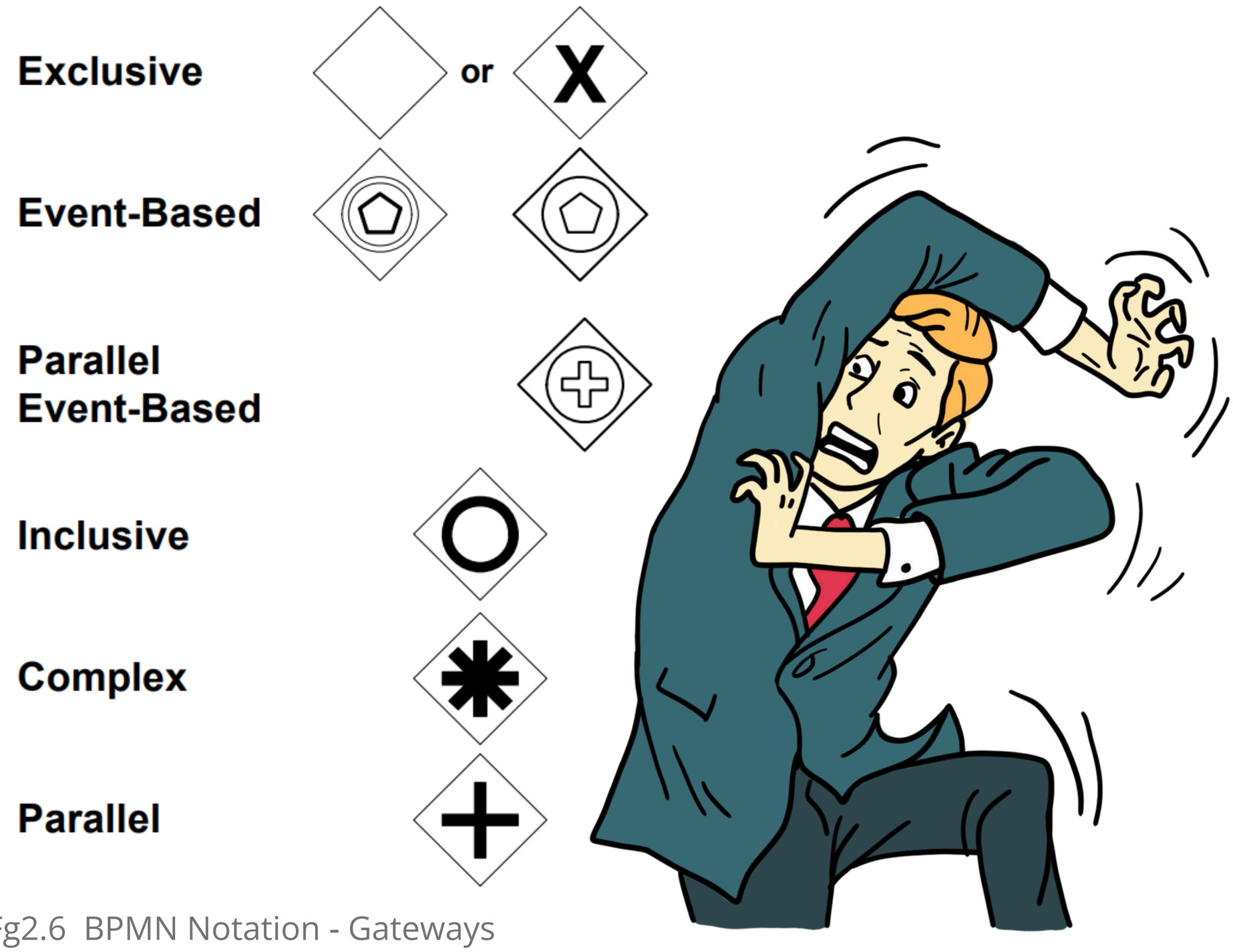


Fg2.5 BPMN Notation - Activity and Sub-Process

Gateway

Gateways control the flow of a process, acting as decision points where the flow can either split into different paths or converge back into one. They ensure that processes adapt to various scenarios, but they are often misunderstood and overused.

The most commonly used Gateways are the *Exclusive Gateway* and *Parallel Gateway,* while the *Inclusive Gateway* and *Event-based Gateway* are less frequently used.



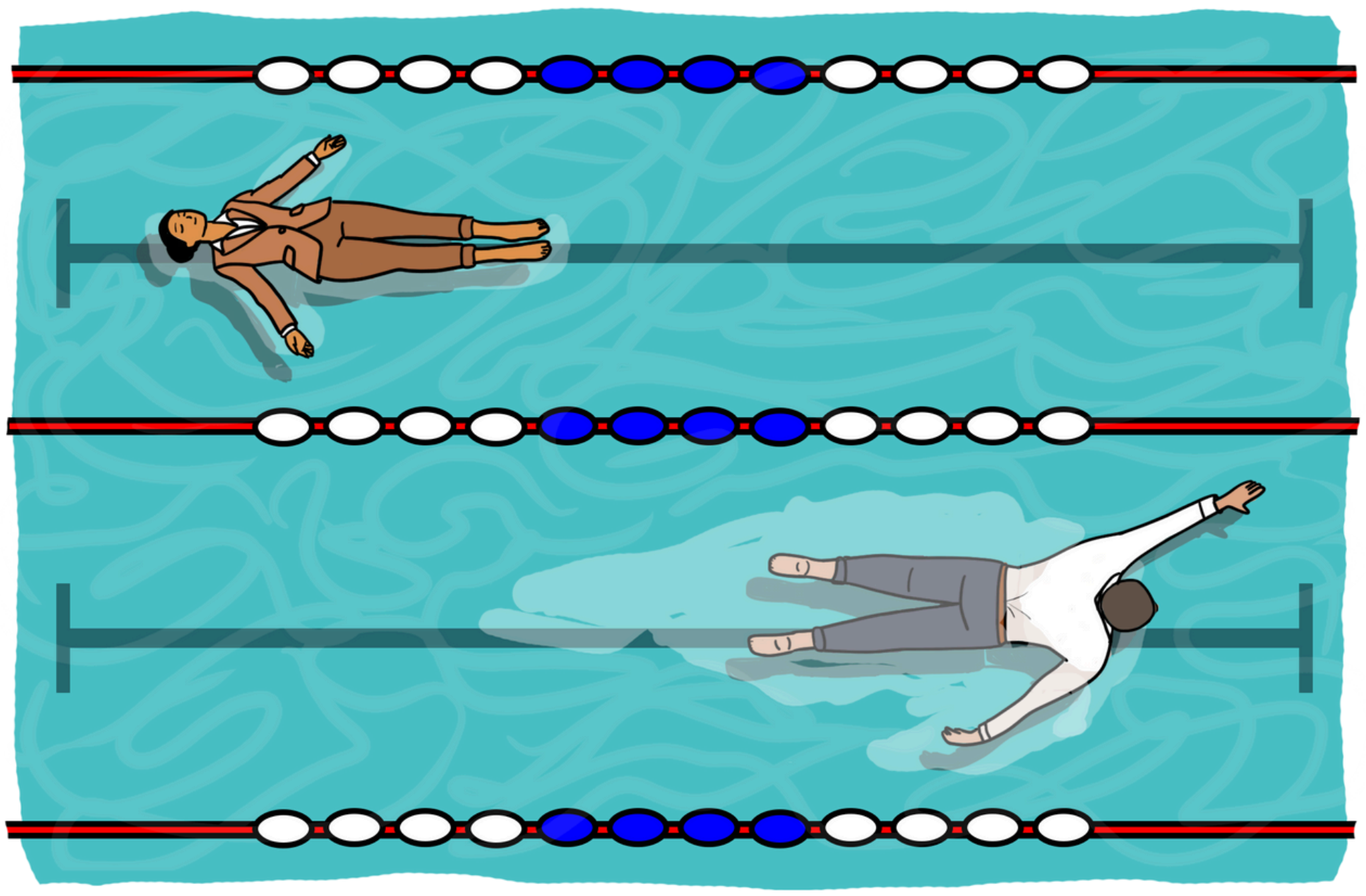
Fg2.6 BPMN Notation - Gateways

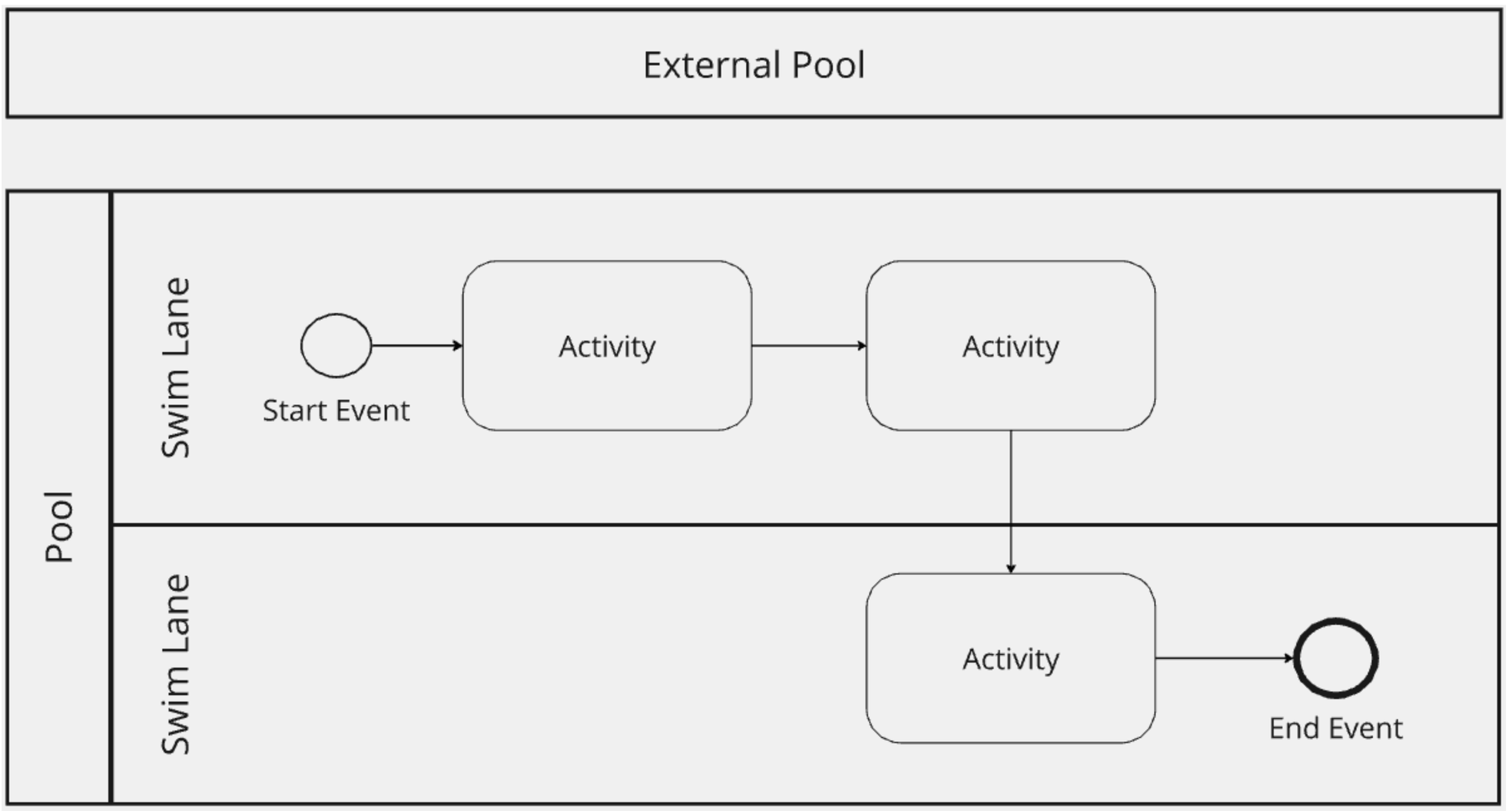
Swim Lane

Swim lanes represent the roles, teams, or systems involved in the process. They visually organise the process by assigning tasks to specific roles, making it easier for stakeholders to understand their responsibilities and contributions within the process.

Here are the variations of Swim Lane:

- Pool
- External Pool





Fg2.7 BPMN Notation - Swim Lane, Pool and External Pool

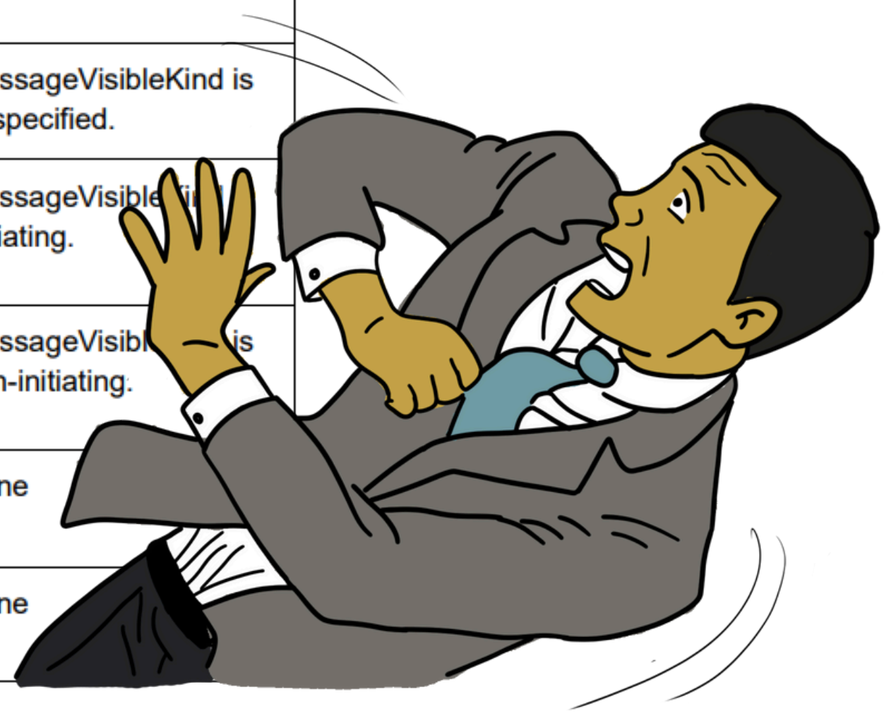
Connecting Flow

Connecting Flows are the lines that link Activities, Gateways, Events and Artifacts. They depict how the process transitions from one task to the next, ensuring that the flow of the process remains clear and easy to follow.

Here are the variations of Connecting Flows:

- Sequence Flow: Connects Activities, indicating the order of Activities in the process.
- Message Flow: Represents communication between different two Pools.
- Association Flow: Links an object, such as an attachment or note, to an Activity.

Kind:	Depiction:	Specific Depiction Resolution:	
		bpmnElement:	BPMNShape Attributes:
Sequence Flow	Label	SequenceFlow where default is false and conditionExpression is unspecified.	None
Conditional Sequence Flow	Label	SequenceFlow where default is false and conditionExpression is specified (exception when source is a Gateway).	None
Default Sequence Flow	Label	SequenceFlow where default is true and conditionExpression is unspecified.	None
Message Flow	Label	MessageFlow	messageVisibleKind is unspecified.
Initiating Message Flow with Decorator	Label	MessageFlow	messageVisibleKind is initiating.
Non-Initiating Mes-sage Flow with Decorator	Label	MessageFlow	messageVisibleKind is non-initiating.
Association	Label	Association where associationDirection is none.	None
Directional Association	Label	Association where associationDirection is one.	None



Fg2.8 BPMN Notation - Connecting Flow - Don’t worry, you only need to understand 3 to be able to master BPMN modelling

Why Most People Get It Wrong?

Despite having a standardised notation, BPMN is often misused or overcomplicated. Many people approach BPMN as a technical skill rather than a storytelling tool, and that’s where the confusion starts.

Here are the most common mistakes:

Overcomplicating the Model

It’s tempting to include every possible detail in your BPMN model. You might want to show every decision, exception, and path. But just because you can, doesn’t mean you should. Overcomplicated models confuse the very people who need to understand them—your stakeholders.

Misuse of Gateways

A significant issue in BPMN modeling is the lack of understanding of Gateways. Many modelers misapply Gateways, resulting in confusion and misinterpretation of the business scenarios and process flow.

Improper merging or branching of Gateways is another common mistake, often disrupting the clarity of the model. Additionally, BPMN's flexibility sometimes leads modelers to either overuse or underuse Gateways, further complicating the diagram.

The key isn't just knowing how to place a gateway but understanding when and why it's necessary to accurately depict process flows.

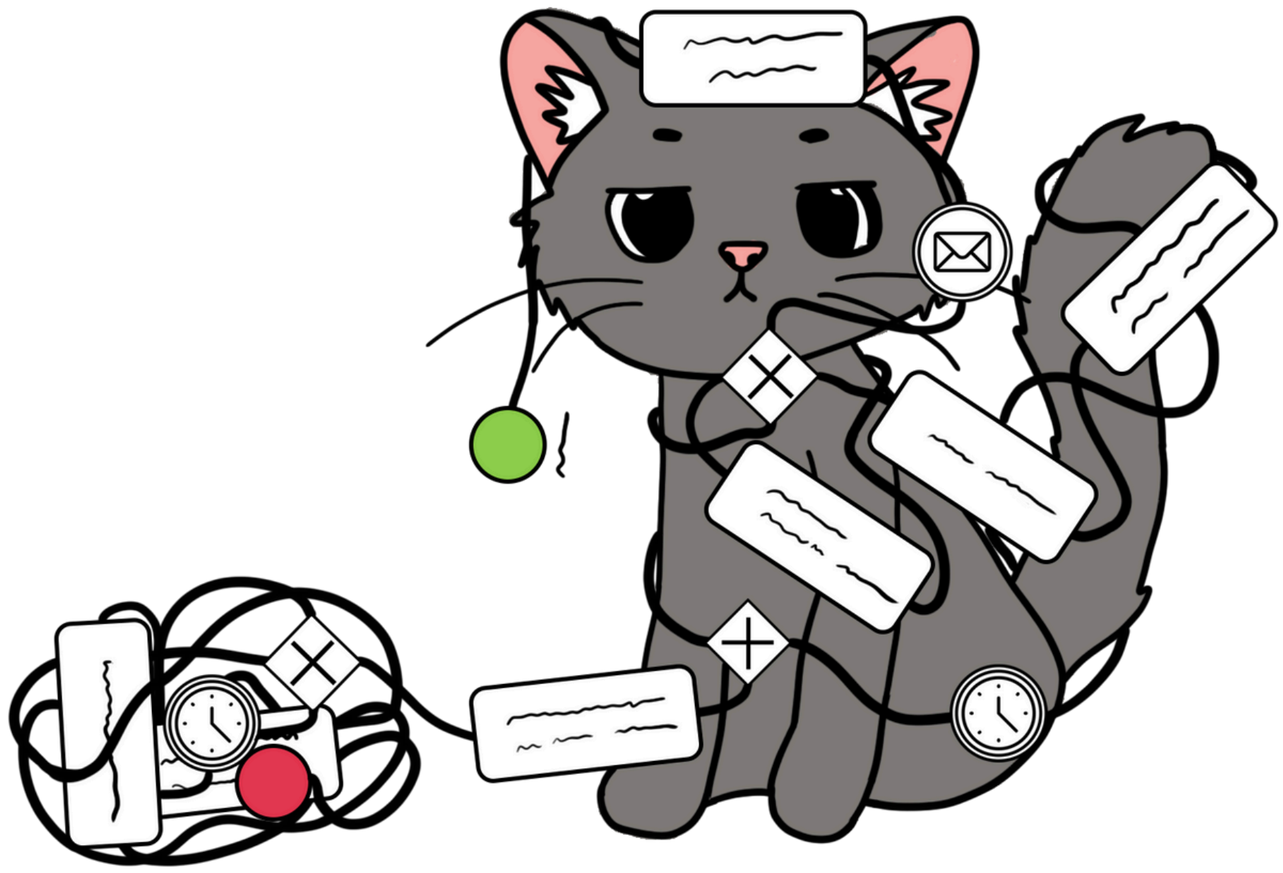
Focusing on Notation, Not Communication

Too often, BPMN modelers focus on getting the notation right without considering whether the model actually communicates the process clearly. BPMN is a visual language meant for communication, not a technical diagram reserved for the elite few.

Misuse or Lack of Sub-Processes

Another common mistake is failing to use sub-processes effectively to simplify and structure your model. Sensible grouping of related activities into sub-processes not only declutters your diagram but also helps cater to different audiences—those who prefer high-level overviews, those interested in detailed steps, and even those focusing on technical specifics.

Without proper use of sub-processes, models become overwhelming and difficult to navigate, limiting their effectiveness.



Fg2.9 The tangling kitten

Get Ready With Process-bility

It’s clear that mastering the notation alone isn’t enough. A model might follow BPMN rules but still fail to communicate effectively. Rather than just focusing on the technical aspects of BPMN, Process-bility transforms BPMN into a communication tool that bridges the gap between complex processes and clear understanding.

At its core, Process-bility is built on three guiding principles:

Visual Balance

Visual Balance ensures the model is easy on the eyes and easy on the mind. Proper alignment of elements, consistent spacing, and clear organisation help the reader grasp the process at a glance. It’s not just about aesthetics—it’s about making the process model engaging and digestible.

Simplicity

Simplicity doesn’t mean leaving out important details. It means showing just enough information to tell the story without overwhelming the reader. In Process-bility, we focus on “Less is more.” We avoid unnecessary notations and only include elements that help tell the story. These principles are designed to ensure that your BPMN models are not just technically accurate, but easy to understand and impactful for all stakeholders.

Storytelling

Every process model tells a story - with a beginning, middle, and end. The goal of BPMN is to ensure that this story is told clearly so everyone can understand it. In Process-bility, we focus on ensuring the process flow is easy to follow and that each task, event, and decision fits within a coherent narrative.

> “Simplicity
> is the
> ultimate Sophistication
>
> LEONARDO DA VINCI

Closing Thoughts

Understanding the foundations of BPMN is crucial, but it’s just the beginning. Once you grasp the basic elements of BPMN—Activities, Events, Gateways, Swim Lanes, and Connecting Flows—you’re ready to take the next step: transforming your models into clear, engaging, and visually balanced stories.

Process-bility is here to guide you through that transformation. In the next chapters, we’ll dive deeper into each of these elements, explore common pitfalls, and show you how to apply Process-bility principles to make BPMN models that are both easy to create and easy to understand.

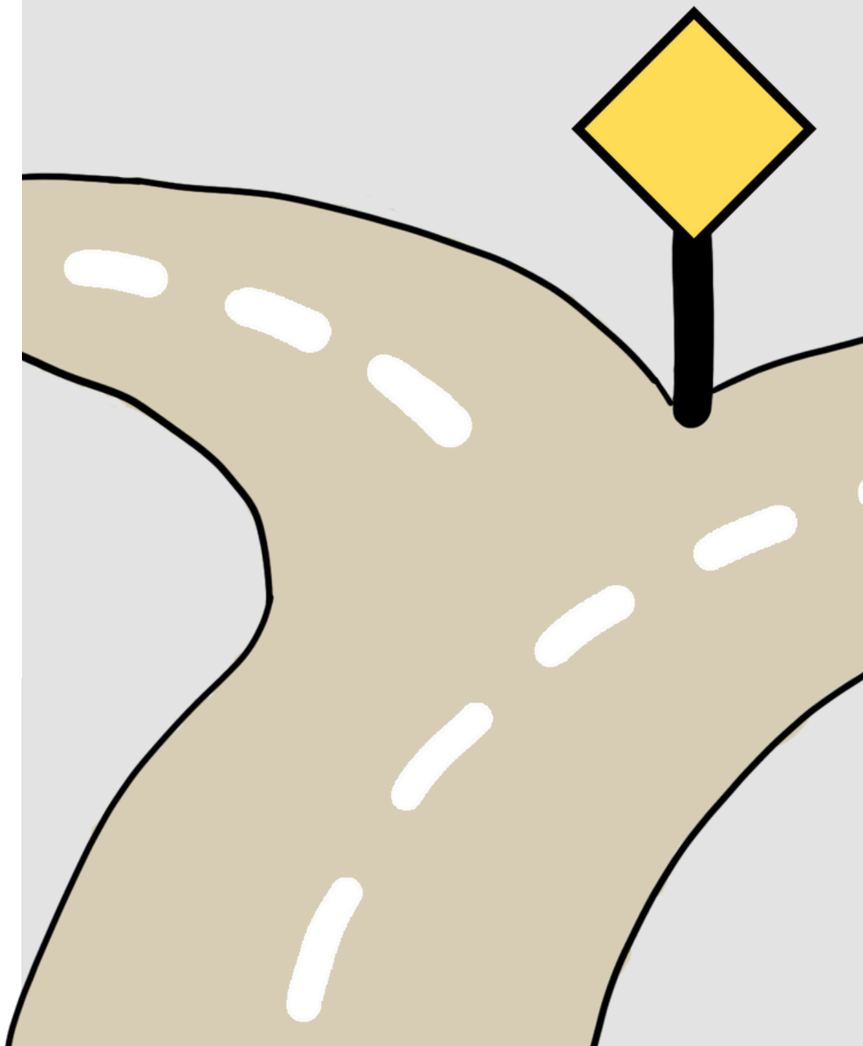
With Process-bility, you’ll not only create better models but also help your team and stakeholders understand the process more effectively.

> “There is a science in the art of business process modeling.

Chapter 3

Gateways With Process-bility

- Are you ready for Gateway?
- Exclusive Branching Gateway
- Exclusive Merging Gateway
- Parallel Branching Gateway
- Parallel Merging Gateway
- Inclusive Branching Gateway
- Inclusive Merging Gateway
- Event-Based Gateway
- Why Gateways Matter?



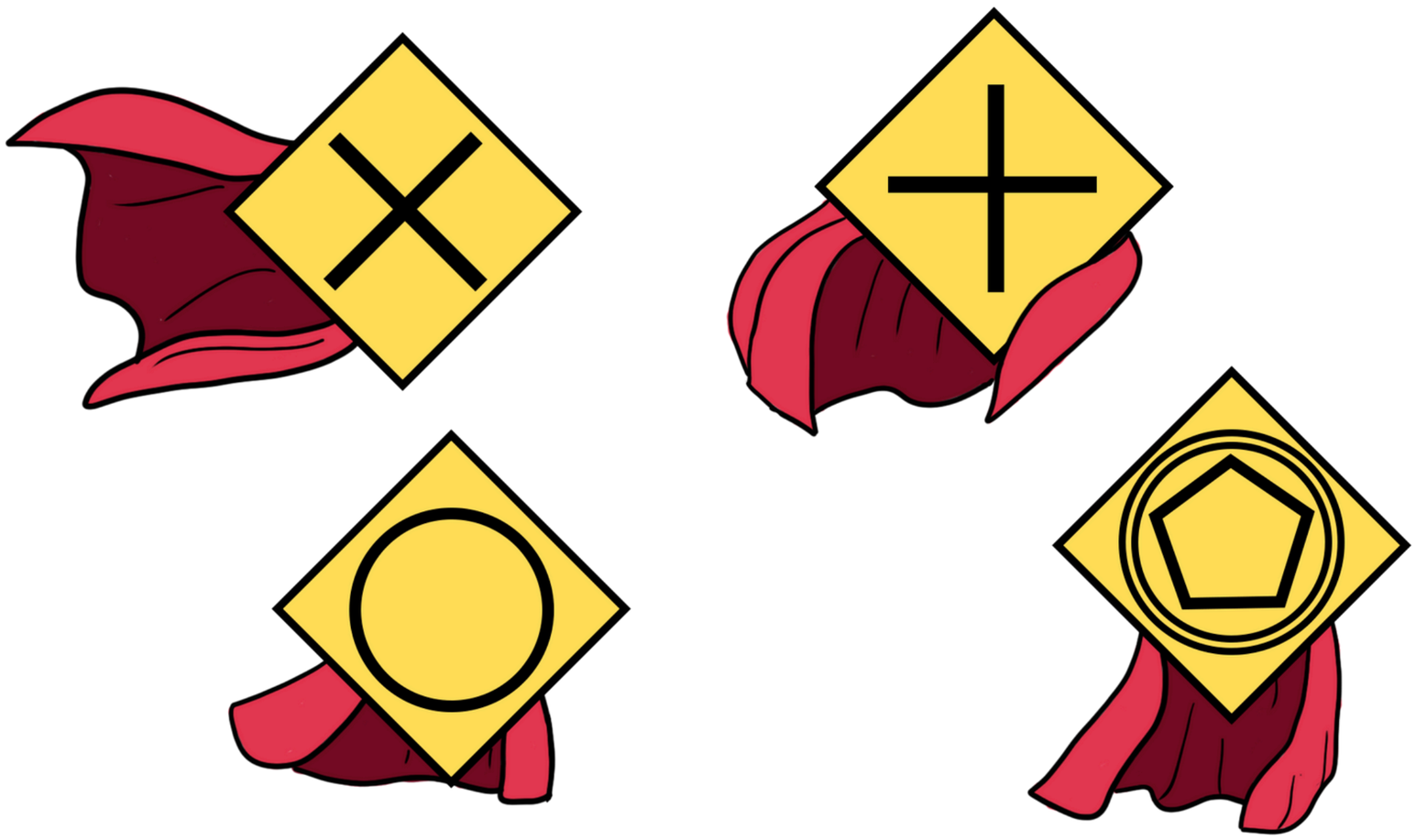
Are you ready for Gateway?

Gateways are one of the most misunderstood elements in BPMN. While they are essential for both controlling the flow and merging multiple paths in a process, their purpose is often confused, leading to overly complex or inaccurate models. In Process-bility, we aim to simplify the use of gateways, ensuring they serve their dual purpose effectively—whether it's routing the flow based on decisions made elsewhere or merging incoming flows depending on the gateway type.

In this chapter, we'll explore four key types of gateways:

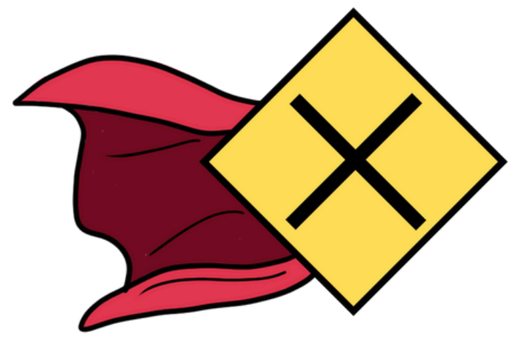
Exclusive Gateway,
Parallel Gateway,
Inclusive Gateway and
Event-based Gateway.

Through clear explanations and analogies, we'll help you understand how to use each one effectively.



Fg3.1 The Gateway Heros

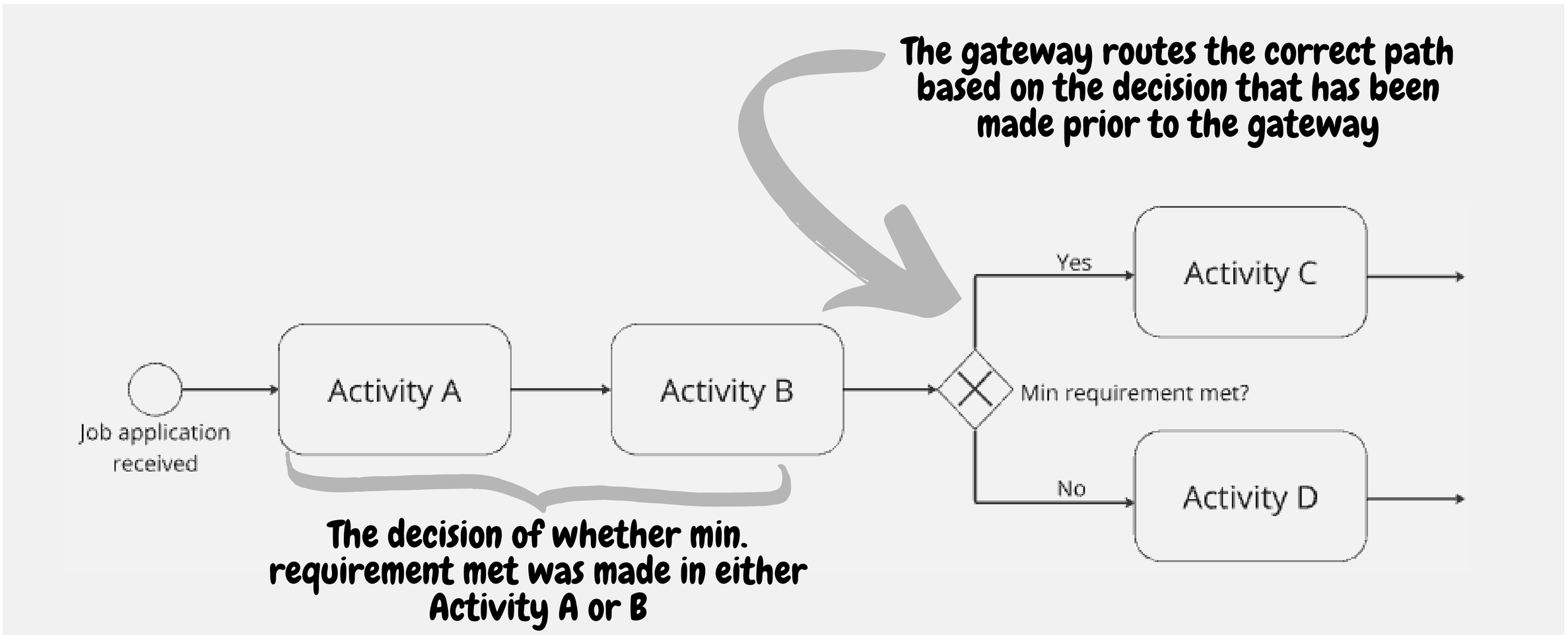
Exclusive Branching Gateway



The Exclusive Branching Gateway (also known as the XOR Gateway) is the most commonly used Gateways in BPMN model. Its role is to route the flow of the process to one of several possible paths based on a decision that has already been made. Despite its simplicity, the Exclusive Gateway is often misused or misunderstood.

What It Does:

Routes the flow based on decisions made in prior task(s) or activitiy(s). Chooses only one path to continue the process. In the example, the Exclusive Branching Gateway - *Min. requirement met* will route the flow to *Activity C* if the *Min. requirement* was met, it will route the flow to *Activity D* if the *Min. requirement* was not met, based on the decision made in either *Activity A* or *Activity B.*



Fg3.2 BPMN Exclusive Branching sample

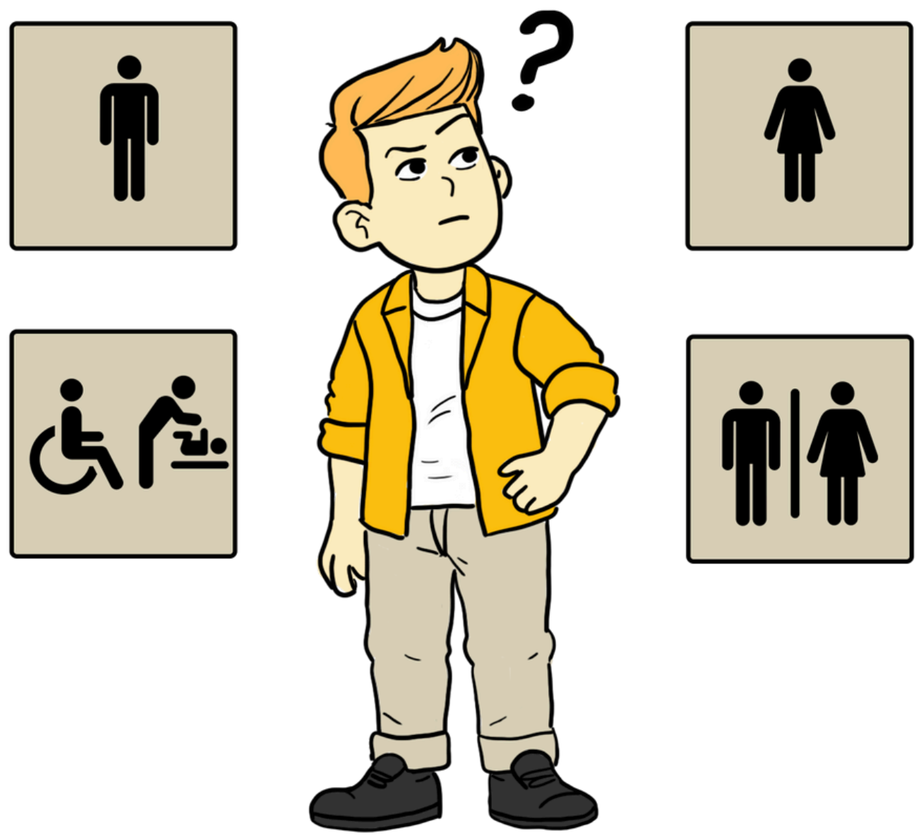
What It Doesn’t Do:

The Exclusive Gateway does not make decisions—this is a common misconception. The decision is always made in the task or activity prior to the gateway. The gateway simply routes the flow based on that decision.

The Toilet Signage Analogy

Think of the Exclusive Branching Gateway like the signage outside public restrooms—one for men, one for women, and others. The decision of whether to enter the male or female restroom isn’t made by the signage itself; that decision was already determined by the person before they approached the restroom. The signage simply directs you to the appropriate restroom based on a decision made long before you arrived at that point.

This is exactly how the Exclusive Gateway operates. The decision has already been made in the task or activity before the gateway, and the gateway is simply there to route the process flow to the correct path—just like restroom signage directing you to the right door based on what you already decided.



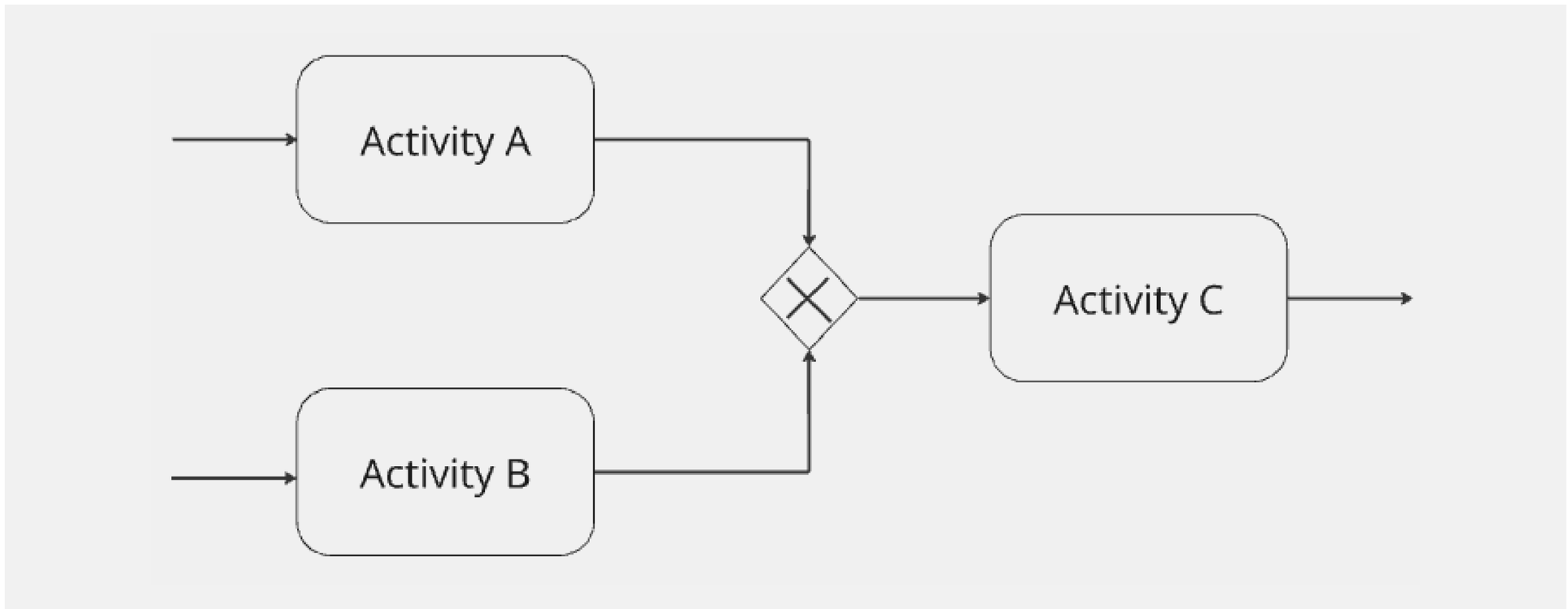
Fg3.3 Exclusive Gateway Analogy

Exclusive Merging Gateway

The Exclusive Merging Gateway is used to bring together two or more incoming flows into a single outgoing flow, but only one of the incoming flows is allowed to proceed at any given time. This is typically the result of an earlier decision made by an Exclusive Branching Gateway (XOR gateway) where one of several potential paths was chosen based on specific conditions.

When to Use an Exclusive Merging Gateway:

- Converging Paths: When there are multiple possible branches in a process (e.g., paths that result from an exclusive branching decision), and you want to bring them back together into a single flow.
- Simplifying Flow Control: If you have different tasks or processes that lead to the same final step, the exclusive merging gateway can be used to ensure that the process continues through a single path, regardless of which of the multiple paths was taken previously.



Fg3.4 BPMN Exclusive Merging sample

Exclusive Merging Gateway is not recommended in Process-bility

The exclusive merging gateway is **not recommended** because it tends to add unnecessary complexity to process models without offering significant clarity.

Here are the key reasons why it is discouraged:

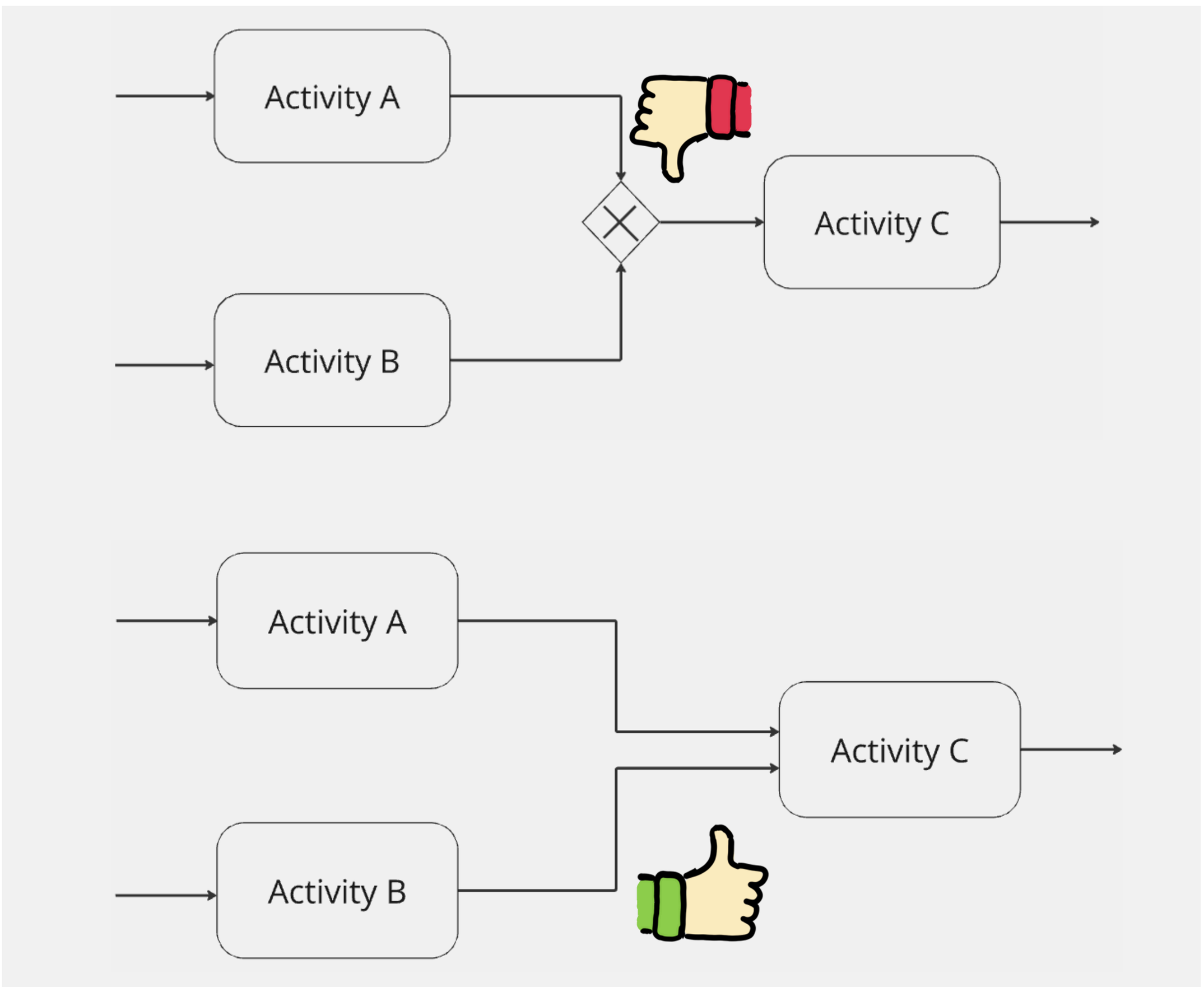
- **Redundant Notation**: The Exclusive Merging Gateway is often used when there are multiple incoming flows, with the intent of merging them back into a single path. However, this is something that can naturally occur without the need for an explicit gateway. BPMN models allow for multiple incoming flows to merge without the need for a merging gateway, making the gateway redundant in most cases.

- **Visual Clutter**: Adding gateways where they aren't needed contributes to visual clutter. Since Process-bility emphasises simplicity and Visual Balance, including unnecessary gateways detracts from the model's clarity and makes it harder for stakeholders to understand the process at a glance.

- **Misleading Representation**: Using an Exclusive Merging Gateway might imply that a decision is being made at that point, which is not the case. The decision should have already been made earlier in the process (before the exclusive branching gateway), and the merging gateway is simply consolidating the paths. Without proper understanding, this can confuse readers into thinking there is an additional decision happening at the merge.

- **Encouraging Simplicity**: Process-bility advocates for the **“less is more”** approach. Instead of overloading the model with gateways for every merging point, simply connecting the flows without an explicit merging gateway simplifies the model and maintains the narrative clarity.

By avoiding Exclusive Merging Gateways, Process-bility encourages streamlined, easy-to-understand models that enhance communication rather than complicate it.

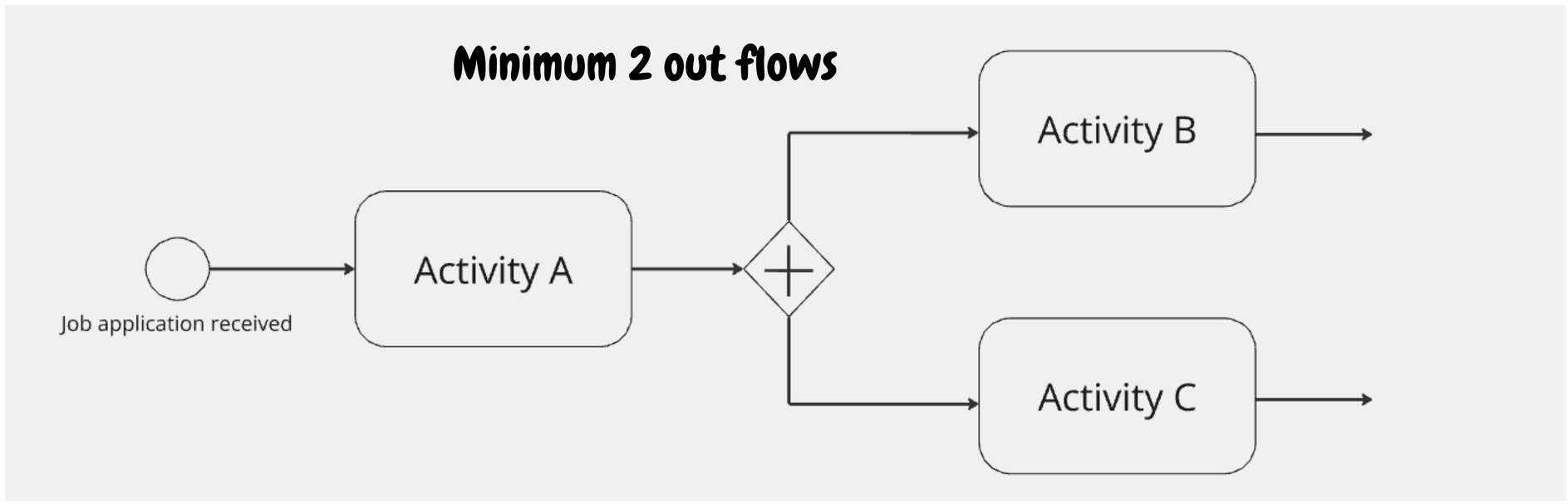


Fg3.5 BPMN Exclusive Merging - not recommended by Process-bility.

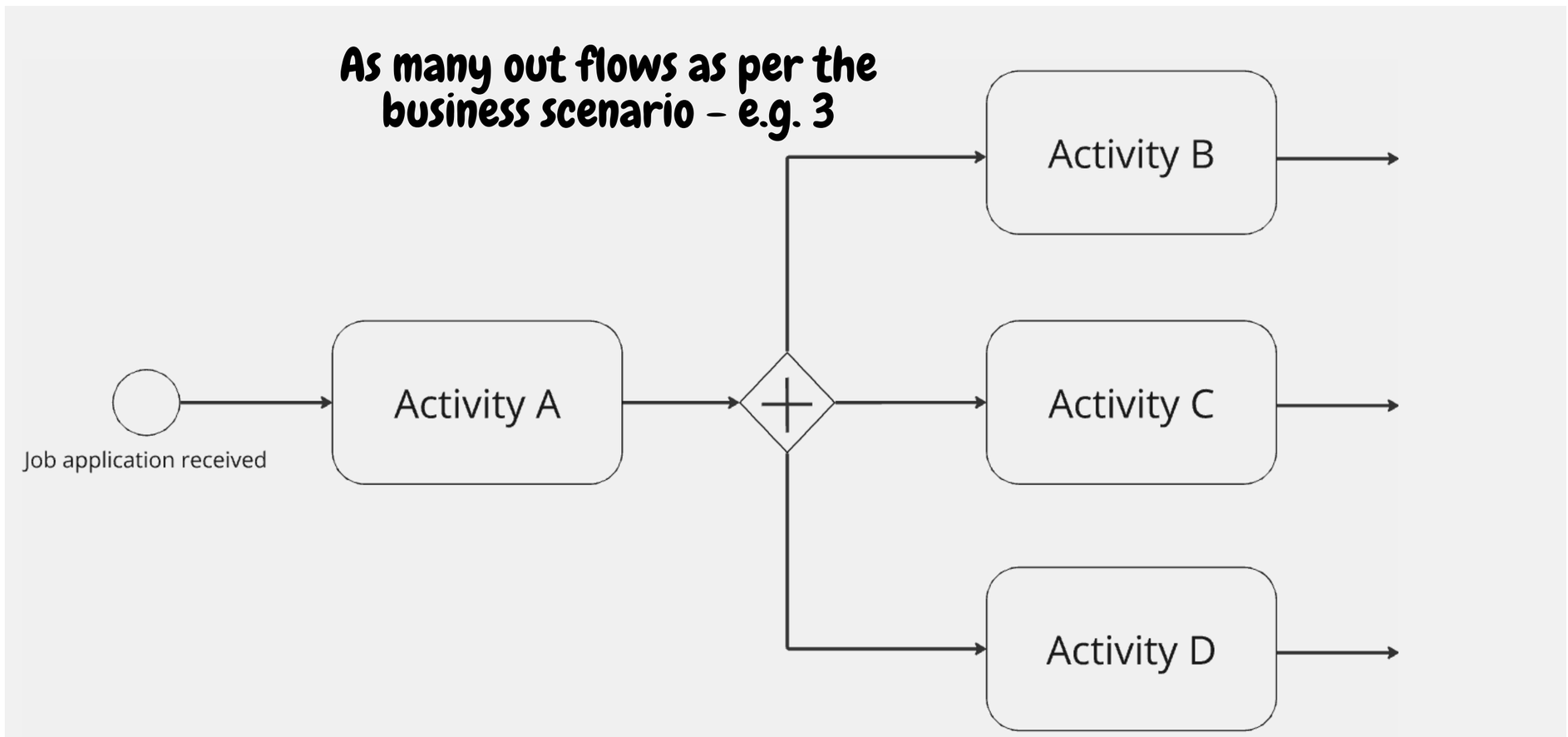
Parallel Branching Gateway

The Parallel Branching Gateway is used to manage activities that can occur simultaneously. It doesn't evaluate conditions or make decisions but simply activates multiple branches of a flow.

When the process flow reaches a parallel Branching gateway, all outgoing flows are triggered at once. This means several tasks can begin simultaneously, allowing different parts of the process to progress in parallel.



Fg3.6 BPMN Parallel Branching Gateway - Sample with two outflows

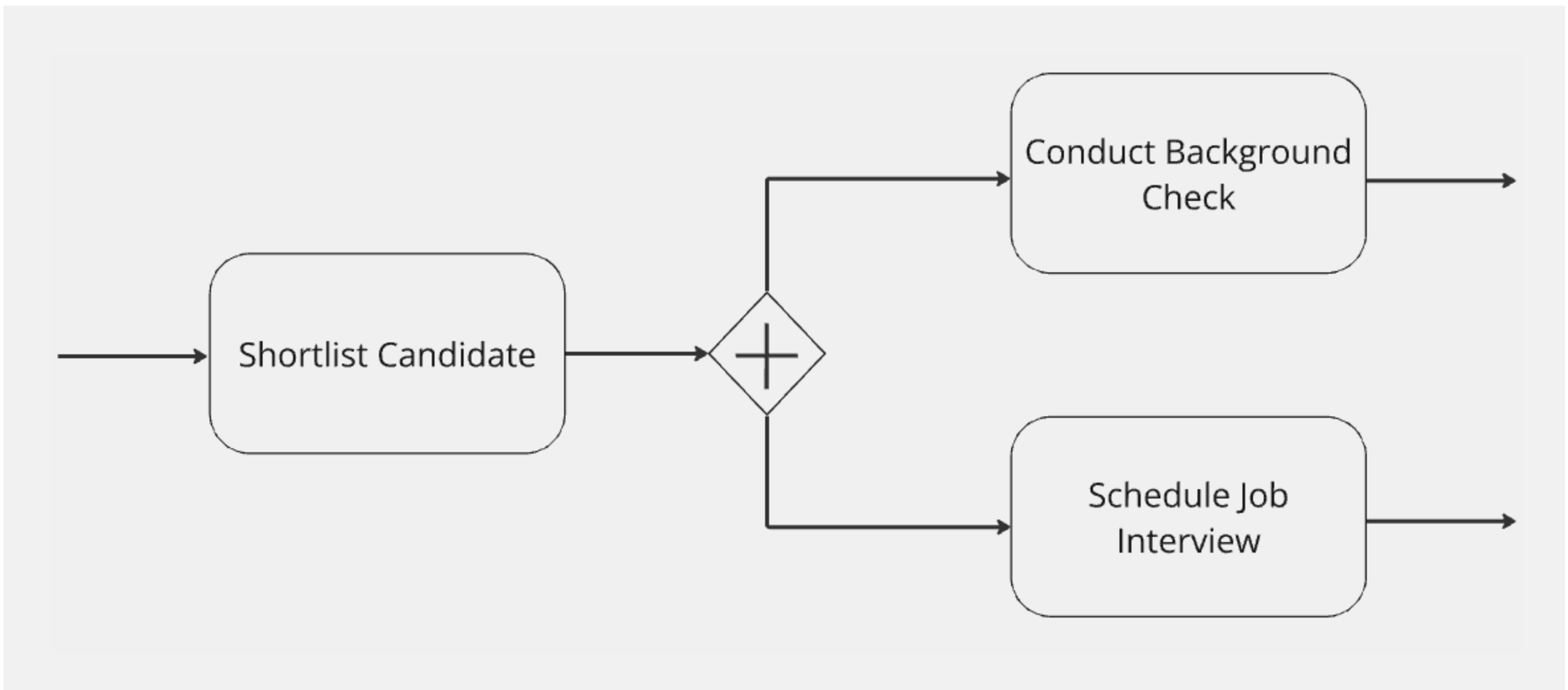


Fg3.7 BPMN Parallel Branching Gateway - Sample with three outflows

Dispelling the Myths of Simultaneous Execution of Parallel Gateway

The Parallel Gateway is often misunderstood as forcing all activities to be **executed simultaneously**. This **is a misconception**. In reality, the Parallel Branching Gateway splits the flow into multiple branches that can run in parallel, but they don’t have to happen at the same time. The gateway simply allows for multiple tasks to be active at the same time, without imposing any strict concurrency rules.

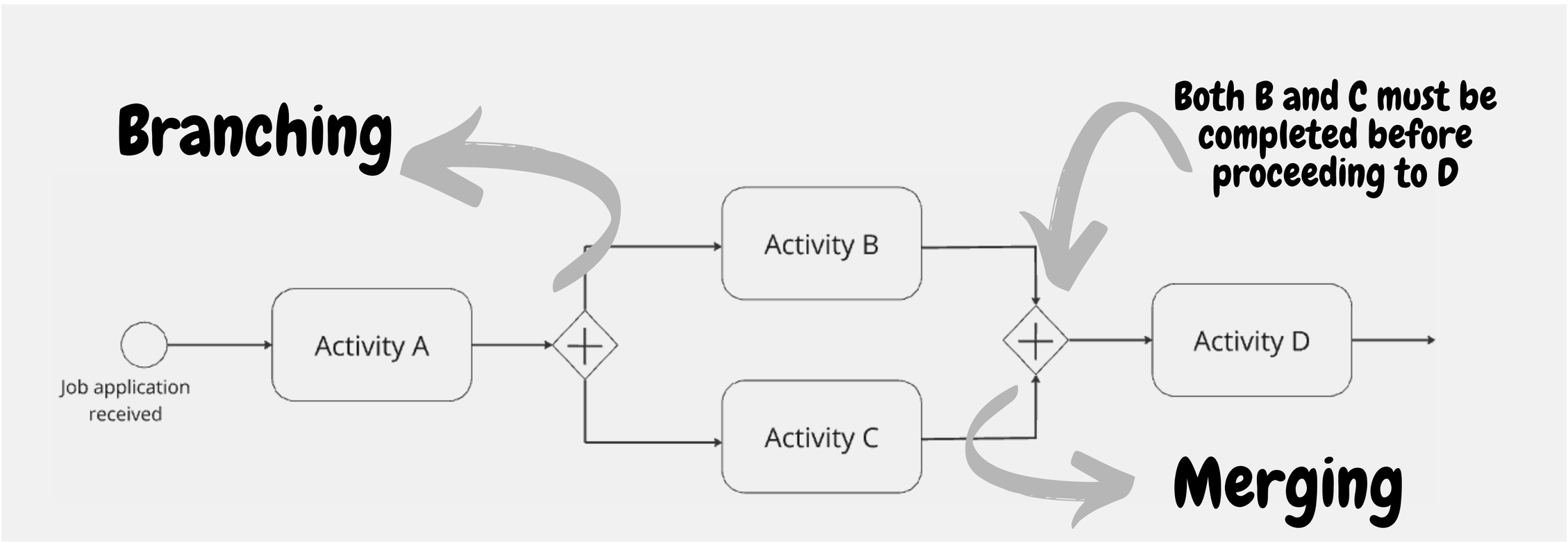
For example, imagine a hiring process where, after a candidate is shortlisted, two activities are initiated in parallel: conducting background checks and scheduling an interview. While both activities are triggered simultaneously, they don’t necessarily happen at the exact same time. The background check might take days, while the interview could be scheduled for the following week. The Parallel Gateway enables these activities to proceed independently but doesn’t require them to occur simultaneously. It merely ensures that both tasks must be completed before the process can continue to the next stage, such as making a job offer.



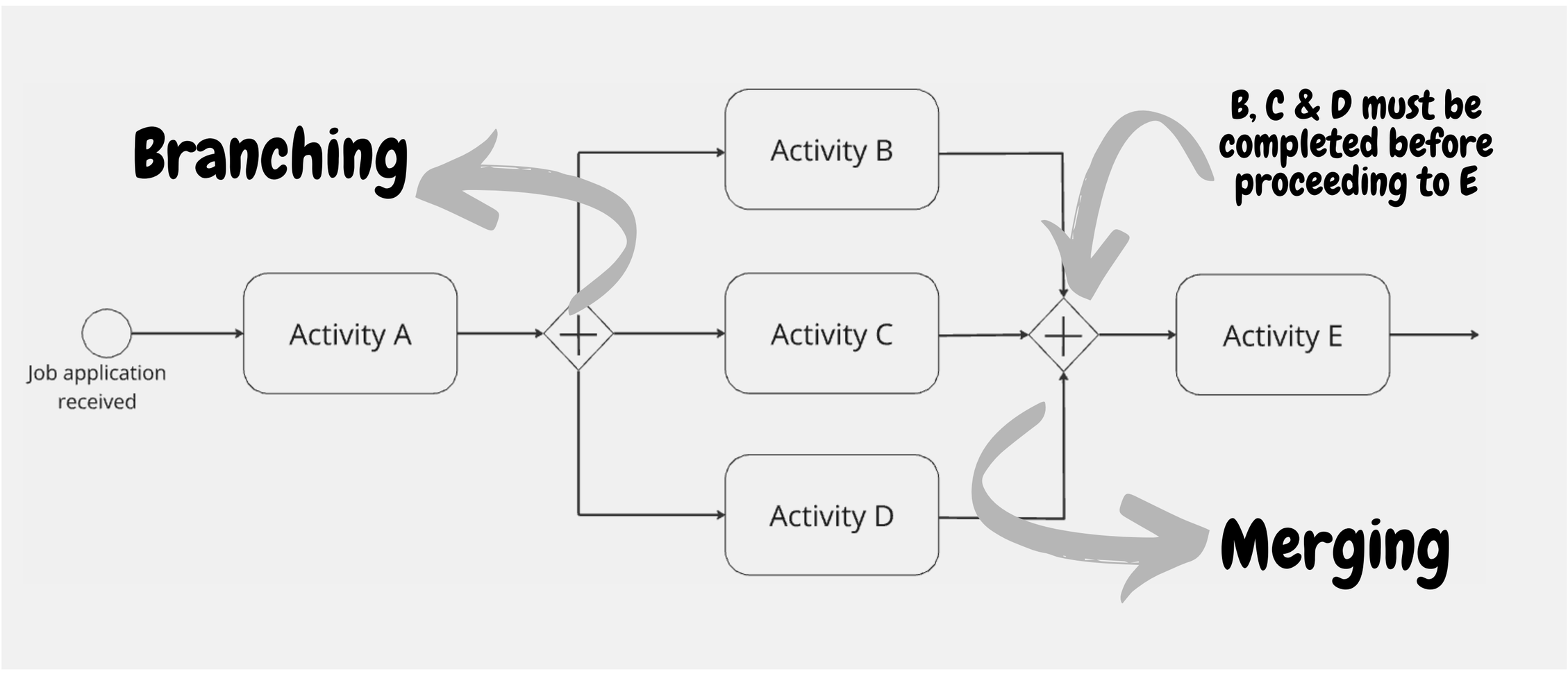
Fg3.8 BPMN Parallel Branching Gateway - Sample with two parallel activities

Parallel Merging Gateway

When used to merge flows, the Parallel Merging Gateway ensures that all incoming paths are completed before proceeding to the next activity. This guarantees that all parallel activities are finished before the process continues, keeping everything aligned and coordinated.



Fg3.9 BPMN Parallel Branching and Merging Gateway - Sample with two parallel activities



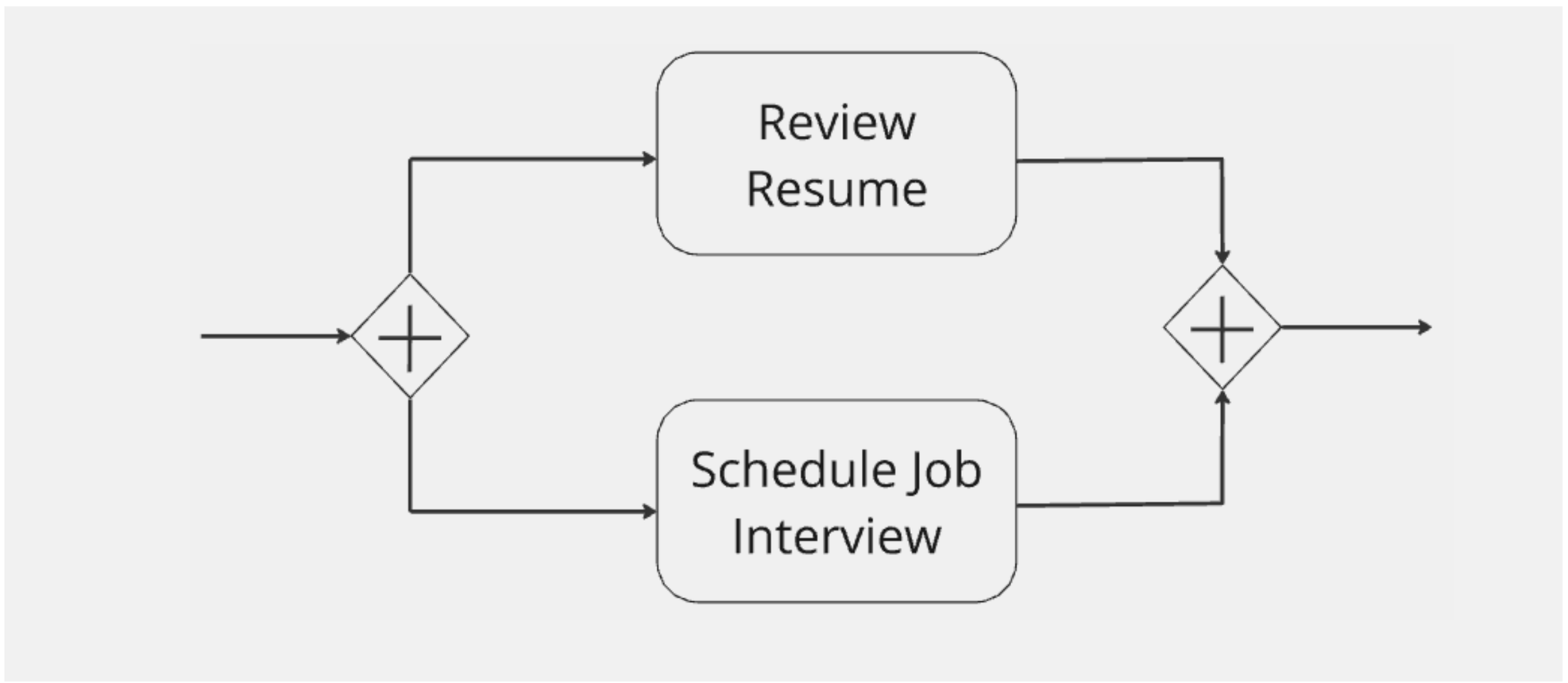
Fg3.10 BPMN Parallel Branching and Merging Gateway - Sample with three parallel activities

In a job application process, the concept of a Parallel Gateway can be used to represent activities that happen concurrently. However, in real life, there isn’t an actual "parallel gateway" ensuring everything happens simultaneously or in sync.

For example, consider a job application process where, after an applicant submits their resume, two parallel activities happen:

1. **HR reviews the resume.**
2. **The hiring manager schedules an interview.**

Both activities can occur in parallel, meaning that the HR team and the hiring manager don’t need to wait for one activity to finish before starting the other. However, they don’t need to happen at the exact same time—HR might take longer to review the resume, while the hiring manager might schedule the interview immediately.



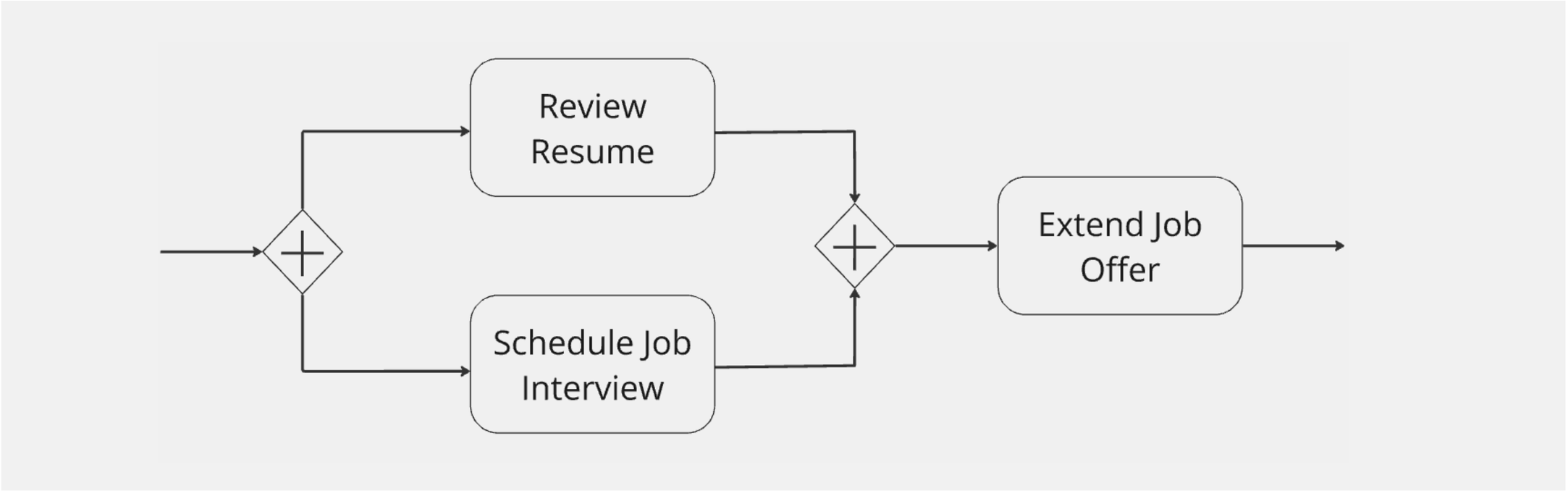
Fg3.11 BPMN Parallel Branching and Merging Gateway - Sample with two parallel activities to illustrate the activities don’t need to happen at the exact same time

Merging the Parallel Flows:

Once both activities (resume review and interview scheduling) are completed, the process moves to the next step, which could be **deciding whether to extend an offer**. This is represented by a Parallel Gateway, ensuring that both activities are finished before moving forward.

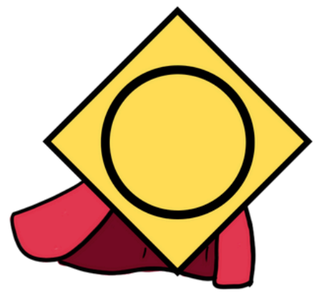
The Parallel Gateway visually represents this waiting or alignment of activities, but in practice, it's the people or systems that ensure all activities are finished before advancing.

- **Human Control**: A recruiter or HR coordinator might manually check that both the resume review and interview scheduling are done before advancing to the next step. They act as the "gatekeeper," ensuring all activities are completed.
- **System Control**: In an automated process, an HR system could track the completion of both activities. The system would wait for confirmation that both the resume review and interview scheduling are complete before allowing the process to move to the next step, such as sending an offer letter or arranging the interview.



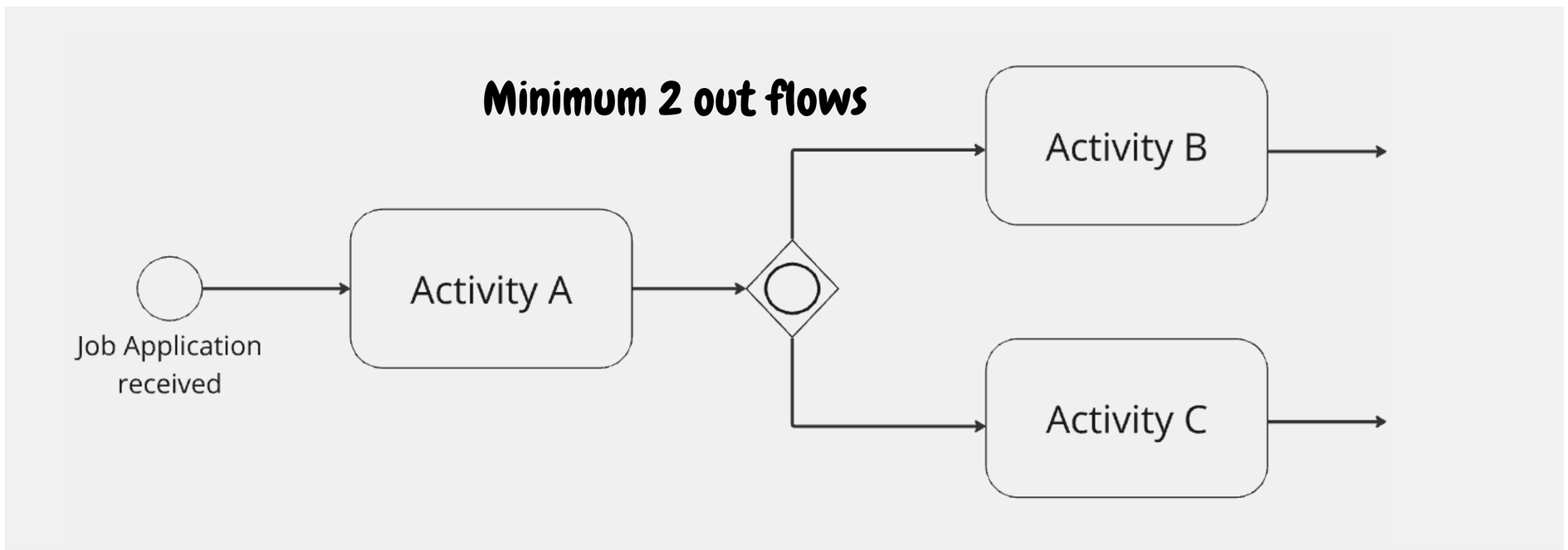
Fg3.12 BPMN Parallel Branching and Merging Gateway - Sample with two parallel activities to illustrate all activities must be first completed before moving to the activity after the Parallel merging gateway

Inclusive Branching Gateway

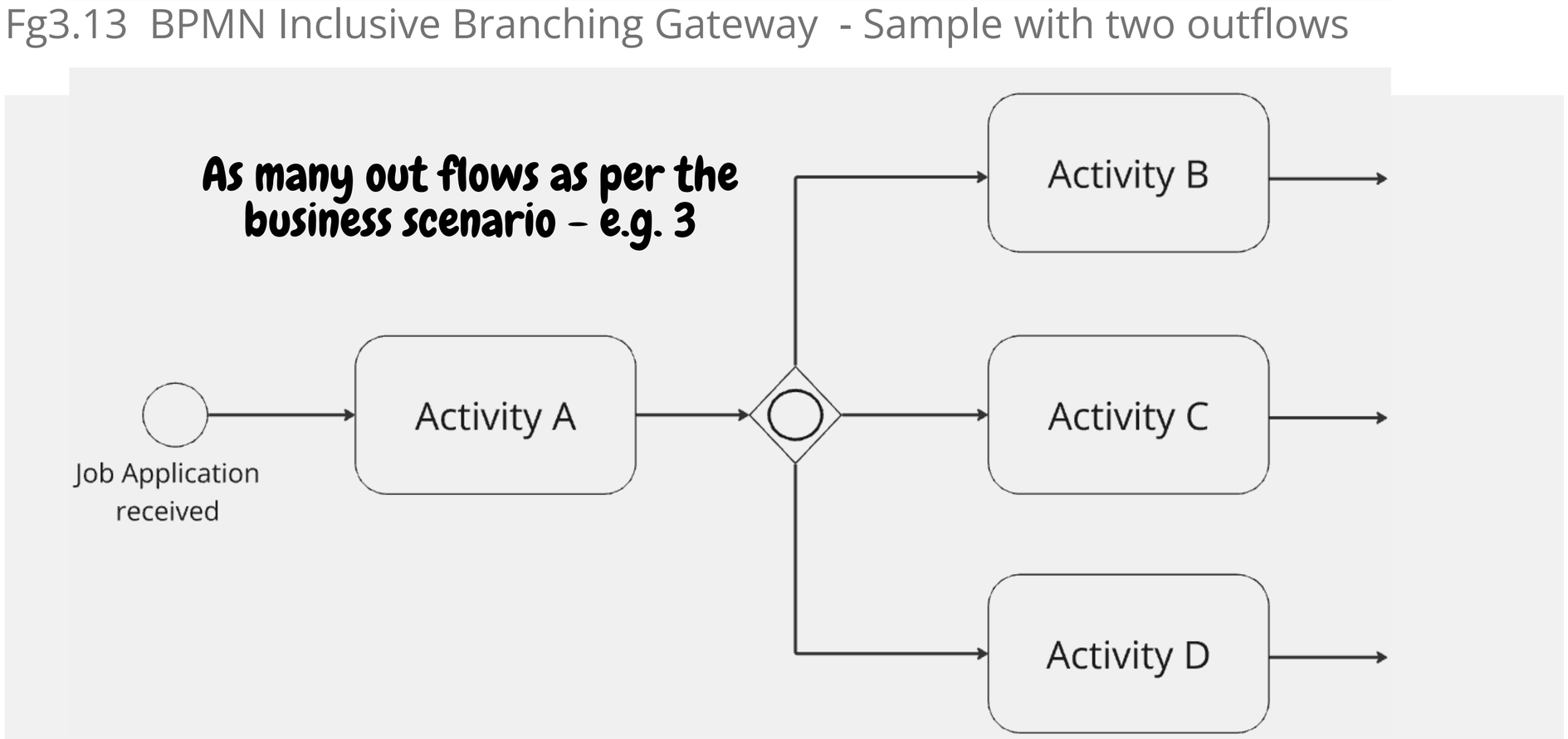


An Inclusive Branching Gateway is used to model situations where one or more branches may be activated based on the conditions defined in a process. Unlike the Exclusive Branching Gateway, which allows only one path to be taken, or the Parallel Branching Gateway, which activates all paths, the Inclusive Branching Gateway offers flexibility by allowing any combination of branches to be executed.

An Inclusive Branching Gateway evaluates conditions and then activates one or more paths based on the results of those conditions.



Fg3.13 BPMN Inclusive Branching Gateway - Sample with two outflows



Fg3.14 BPMN Inclusive Branching Gateway - Sample with three outflows

Inclusive Branching Gateway Example in a Job Application Process:

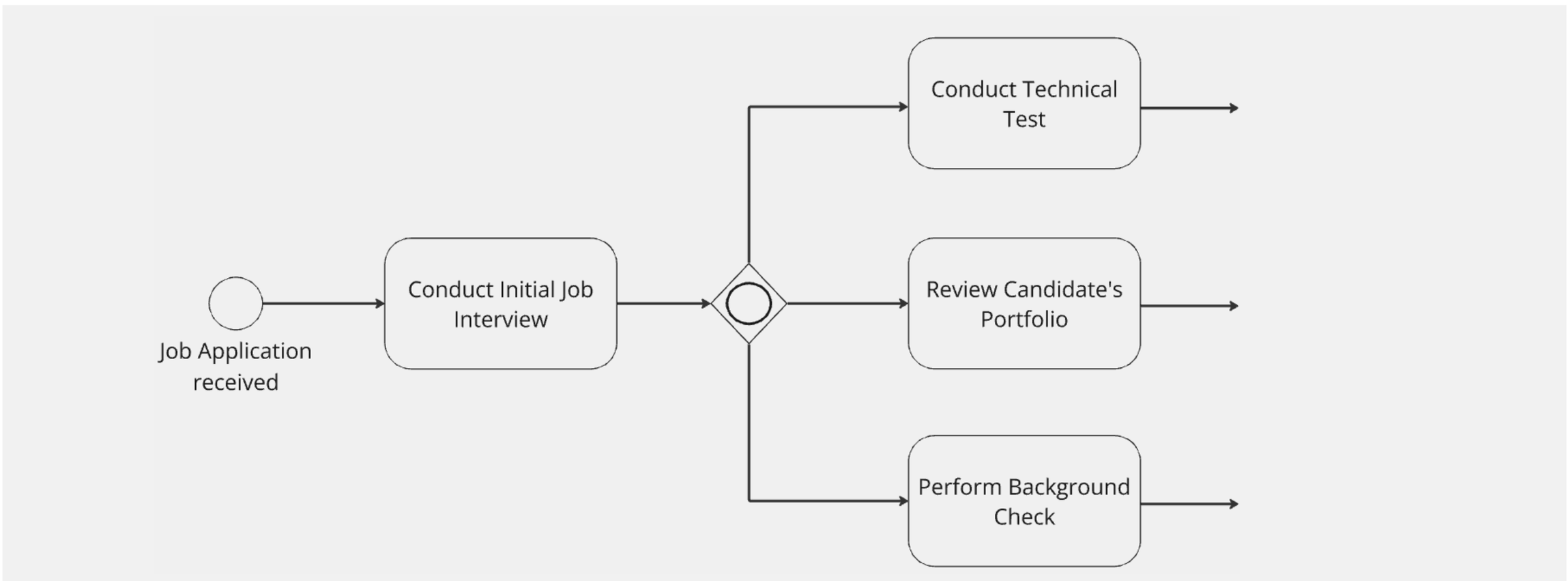
Imagine a job application process where, after an initial interview, several parallel evaluations must occur, but not all are required for every candidate.

1. **Technical Test**: If the candidate is applying for a technical role, they must take a technical test.
2. **Portfolio Review**: If the candidate is applying for a creative role, their portfolio must be reviewed.
3. **Background Check**: All candidates, regardless of the role, must undergo a background check.

Using an Inclusive Branching Gateway allows the process to flow based on specific conditions. For example:

- If the candidate is applying for a technical position, both the **technical test** and **background check** will be triggered.
- If the candidate is applying for a creative role, the **portfolio review** and **background check** will be activated.

For non-technical, non-creative roles, only the **background check** is performed.



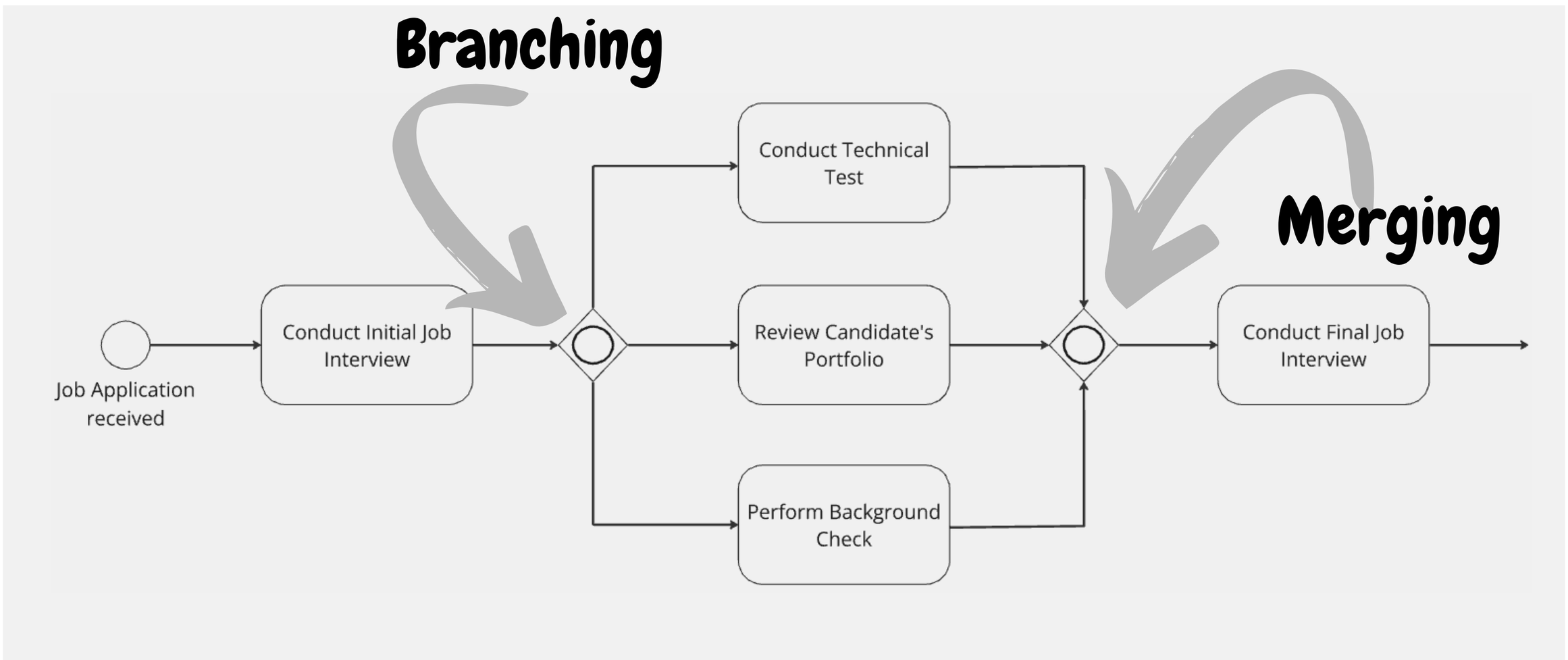
Fg3.15 BPMN Inclusive Branching Gateway - Sample with possible three activities of combinations

Inclusive Merging Gateway:

Once the required activities (e.g., technical test, background check, portfolio review) are completed, the **Inclusive Merging Gateway** is used to bring the process back into a single flow. This could lead to the final interview step or the decision to extend an offer.

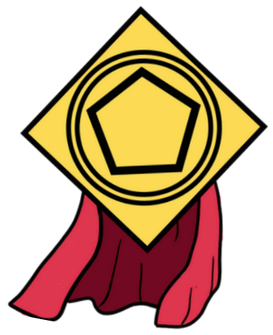
Inclusive Merging Gateway Explained:

The Inclusive Merging Gateway waits for all activated incoming flows to be completed before proceeding to the next task. This is key to its function—it doesn't require all potential incoming flows to be completed, only those that were activated based on the conditions defined earlier in the process. For example, if only the **background check** and **technical test** were triggered for a candidate, the process will wait for just those two activities to be completed before moving forward. This ensures flexibility while still maintaining control over the flow of the process.



Fg3.16 BPMN Inclusive Branching and Merging Gateway - Sample showing how they work together

Event-Based Gateway



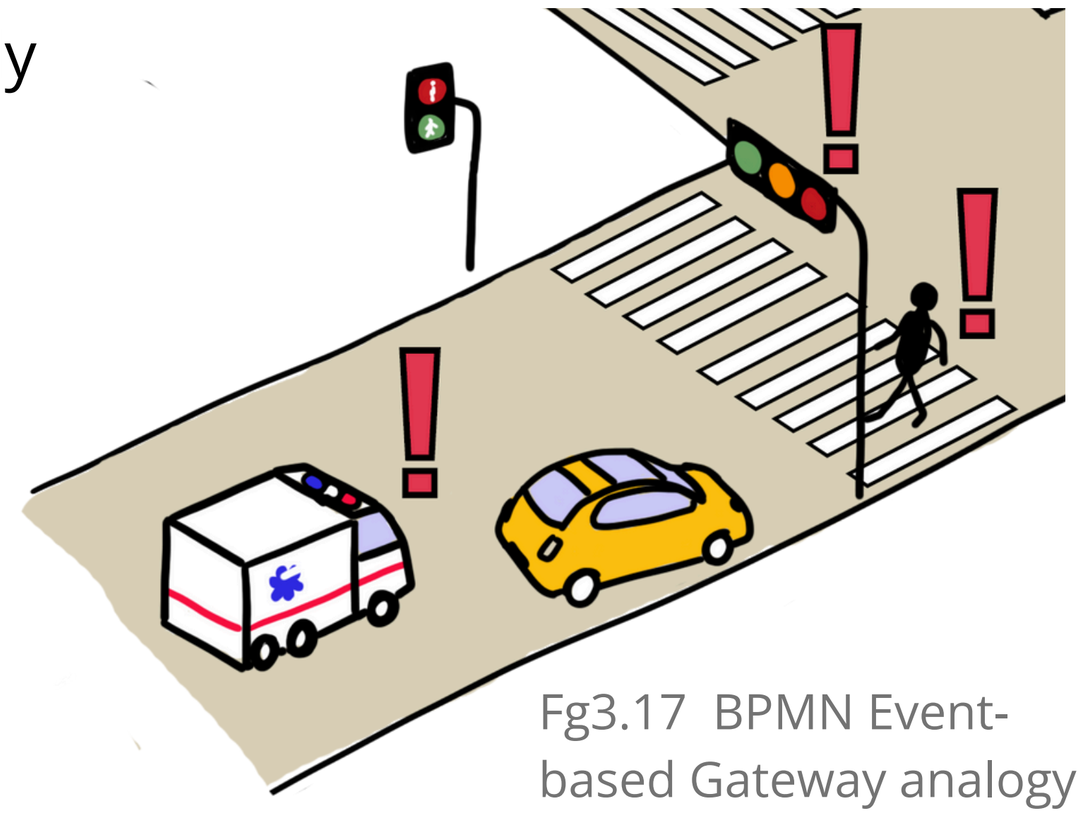
An Event-Based Gateway is used to model scenarios where the process flow is determined by waiting for one of several possible events. These events can be external or triggered by activities within the process model. Unlike the Exclusive or Inclusive Gateway, where decisions are based on predefined conditions, the Event-Based Gateway waits for the occurrence of one of several events before proceeding along the appropriate path.

***The Traffic Light Analogy* for Event-Based Gateway:**

Imagine you're driving toward a busy intersection with multiple traffic lights. The path you take depends entirely on which light changes first. You don't control the lights, but you react based on what happens:

- If the light turns green, you move forward (triggering one path).
- If a pedestrian crossing signal activates, you wait (triggering another path).
- If the emergency vehicle light flashes, you pull over (triggering a different path).

Just like in Event-Based Gateway, you're simply waiting for one of several events to occur before determining your next action.
The gateway directs the flow of the process based on the event that happens first.

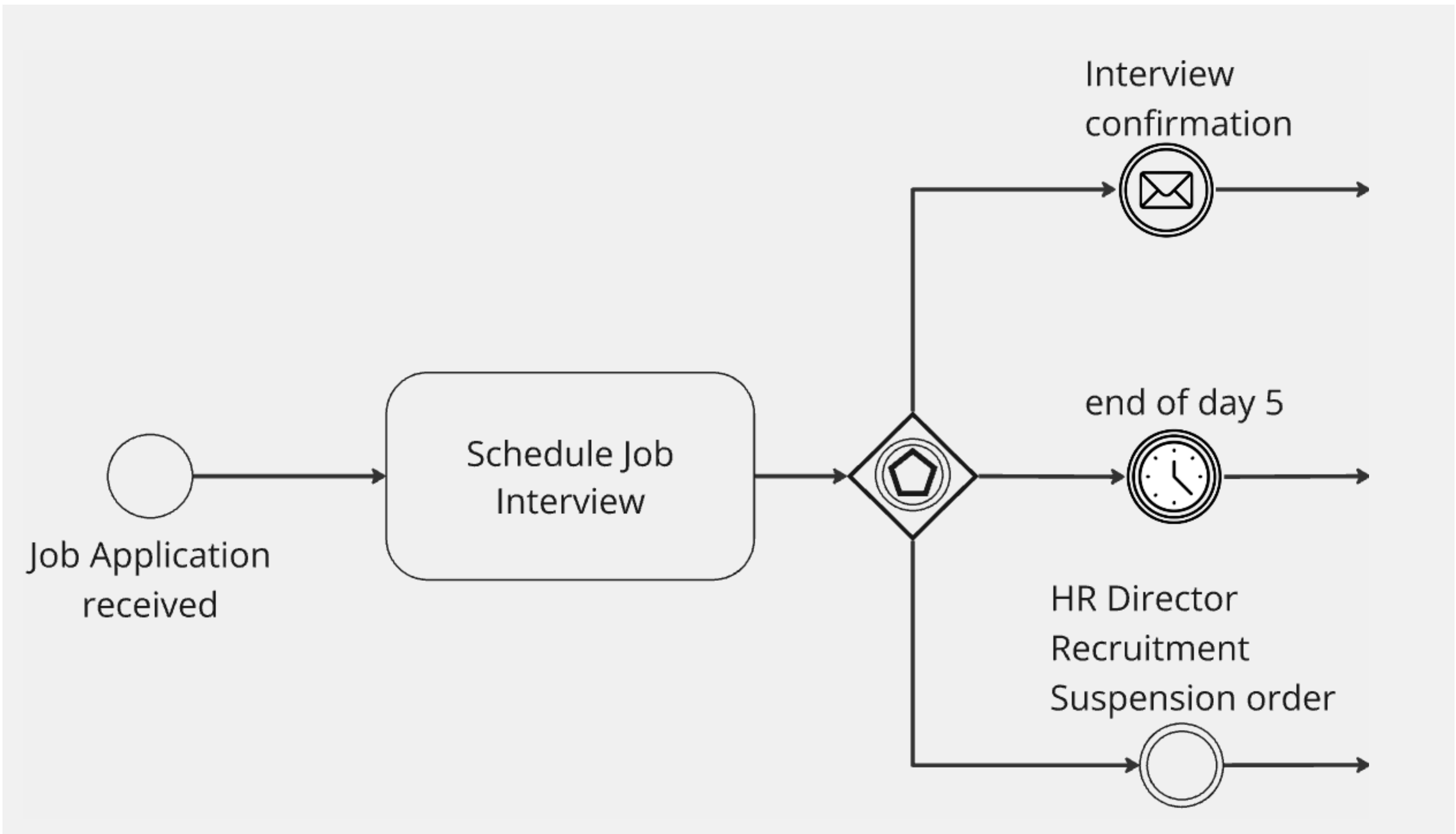


Fg3.17 BPMN Event-based Gateway analogy

Scenario: Job Application Process using Event-Based Gateway for Multiple Response Paths

In this scenario, after the **Recruitment Team schedules a job interview**, the process waits for different potential outcomes that dictate the next step. Here's how it could unfold using an Event-Based Gateway:

- **Candidate confirms the interview** (external event).
- **No response from the candidate within 5 days** (external event).
- **HR Director suspends the recruitment process** (internal event).

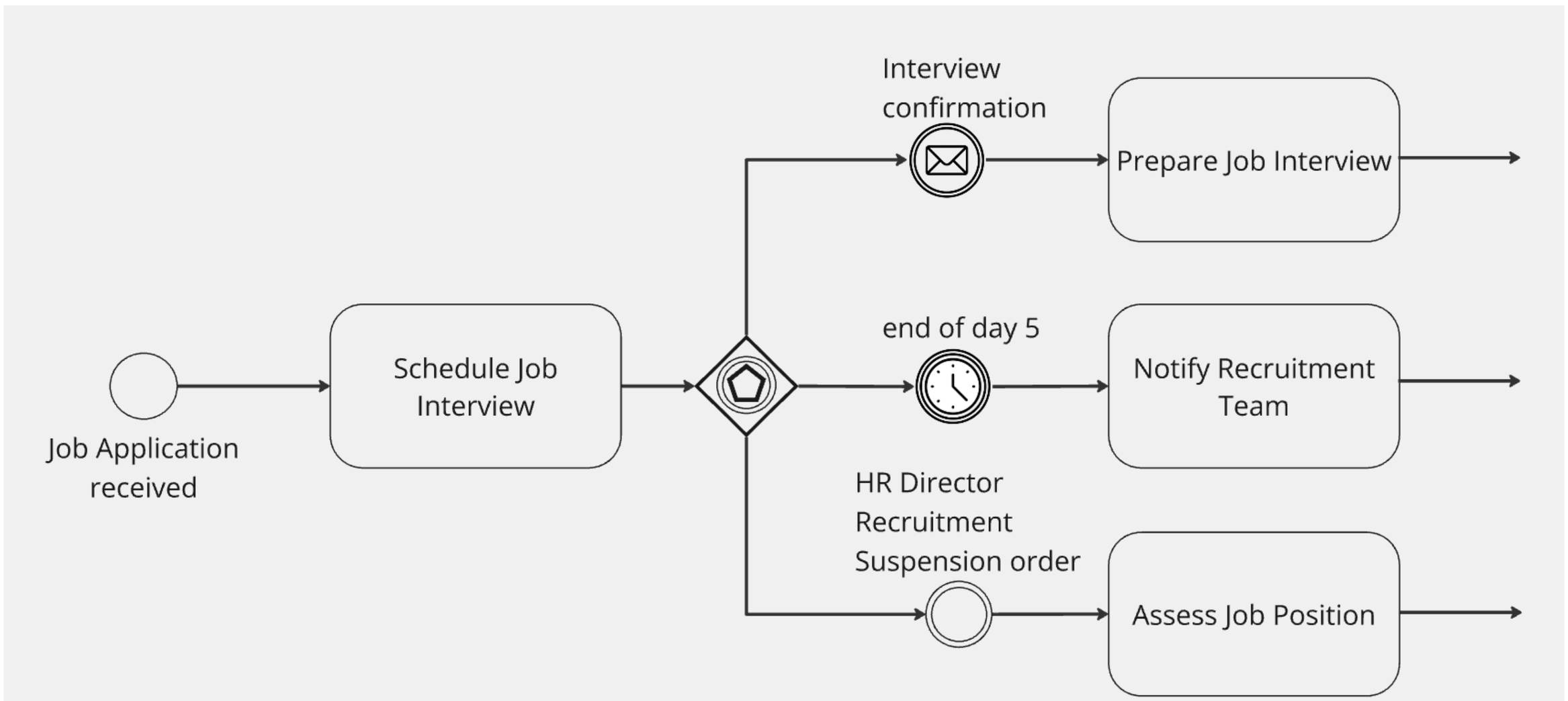


Fg3.18 BPMN Event-based Gateway common usage sample

Each of these events triggers a different path in the process:

- If the candidate confirms, the process **proceeds to preparing for the interview**.
- If there is no response within 5 days, the process might **notify the recruitment team to follow up or take further action.**
- If the HR Director suspends the process, all recruitment activities halt, and the team moves to another task or **reassesses the job position.**

This showcases how the Event-Based Gateway adapts the flow based on various business events, allowing flexibility in handling different real-world outcomes that arise during a recruitment process.



Fg3.18 BPMN Event-based Gateway common usage sample for Job application process

After an Event-Based Gateway, only certain types of **Intermediate Catching Events** can be used. These events typically represent waiting for a specific signal or occurrence before proceeding in the process.

Here are the possible event types:

1. **Message Intermediate Catch Event**
   - Incoming message (e.g., receiving a document, a request, or a notification).
   - Example: Candidate confirm the job interview.

2. **Timer Intermediate Event**
   - Waits for a specific time to elapse or a deadline to be reached.
   - Example: If the candidate doesn't respond within 5 days, this timer event is triggered.

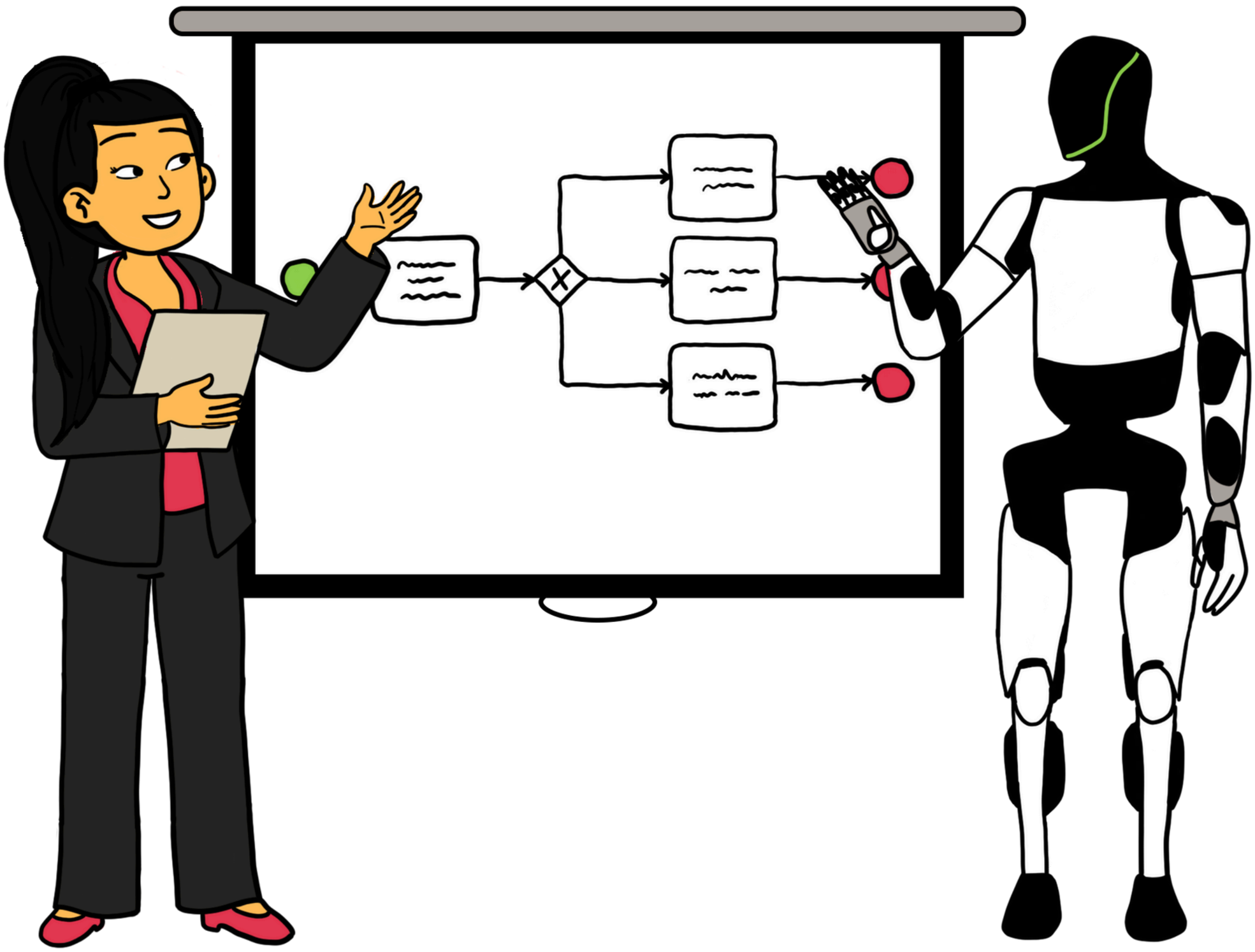
3. **Signal Intermediate Catch Event**
   - Waits for a broadcast signal that can be triggered by another process or activity within the organisation.
   - Example: A signal broadcast when a candidate passes a background check, which triggers the next step in the process.

4. **Conditional Intermediate Event**
   - Waits for a condition to be true before proceeding.
   - Example: The process waits for the condition that all necessary approvals are completed.

These events represent different "triggers" that can occur and determine which path the process takes after an Event-Based Gateway.

Why Gateways Matter?

Software vendors love gateways because gateways communicate workflow requirements unambiguously. They define decision points and dependencies in a clear, structured manner, making it easier for both human users and automated systems to follow the process flow without confusion.

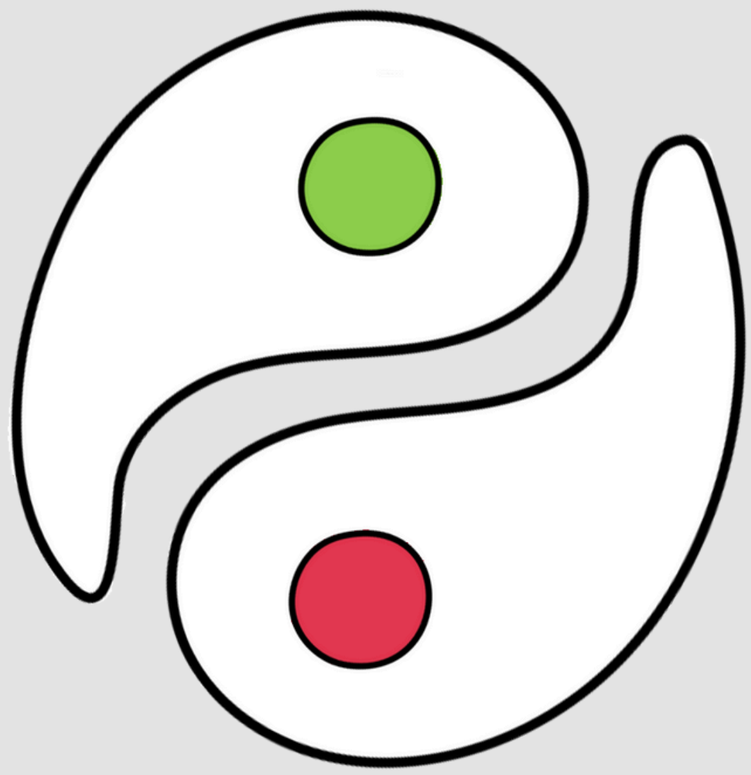


Fg3.19 Happy software vendor

Chapter 4

Visual Balance with Process-bility

- **Visual Balance Transformed My Modeling**
- **Visual Balance Guidelines**
- **Signature Process-bility Visual Balance Element**
  - Person Icon for Swim Lanes
  - Process-bility System Representation
- **Why Signature Process-bility Visual Balance Element?**
- **Closing Thoughts**



Visual Balance Transformed My Modeling

In 2008, I considered myself a solid business process modeler. My focus was entirely on the content of the model—getting the processes right—but I paid no attention to how they looked visually. Then came a turning point. My project manager, who was also the SME, kept giving me feedback that had nothing to do with the accuracy of the process. Instead, she would point out how the notations were not aligned, or how the connecting flows weren't straight. At first, I found her comments frustrating, as they seemed superficial.

But something changed as I went back to "fix" those visual elements. In aligning the notations and straightening the flows, I realised I had missed a few critical aspects of the process itself. That was my aha moment—the power of **Visual Balance**.

Visual Balance isn't just about making a model look good; it's about clarity. When a BPMN model is visually balanced, it becomes far easier to spot gaps, inconsistencies, or errors in the process. From that day on, I prioritised Visual Balance in my models, even during process discovery workshops. The impact was immense. Stakeholders could easily follow the flow, provide meaningful feedback, and we could complete the modeling process much faster.

Visual Balance Guidelines

This are the core principles of Visual Balance that ensure your BPMN easy to understand:

Left to Right, Top to Bottom Flow:

A left-to-right, top-to-bottom flow is essential. The Start Event should be on the left, with Activities and Gateways aligned naturally from there. This clear direction helps readers follow the process without confusion.
When crossing Swim Lanes, vertical alignment is key, especially during handovers, but the main rule is to keep the left-to-right flow. Misaligned or randomly placed notations can lead to confusion and make the process harder to follow.

This flow mirrors how we naturally read and process information, making the process narrative easier to grasp. Even complex models become clearer and simpler to understand, allowing the reader to focus on the process itself.

Exception to the Left-to-Right Flow

While left-to-right flow is a general best practice, there is one exception—rework or loop-back scenarios. In cases where an Activity must be revisited due to an error or a business rule (e.g., a review or rework process), it is acceptable for the process flow to move from right to left. This exception makes sense when visually representing a loop back to an earlier point in the process for correction or further action.

- **Balanced Alignment**: Maintain horizontal alignment (within Swim Lane) and vertical alignment (among Swim Lanes), ensuring a clean, well-structured diagram that’s easy to follow.

- **Consistent Spacing**: Proper horizontal and vertical spacing between notations keeps the model clean and easy to digest.

- **Consistent Notation Sizing**: All notations of the same type have identical sizes in your BPMN models.

- **Consistent Color Coding for Events:** Use green for Start Events, red for End Events, and yellow for Intermediate Events. This uniformity ensures that readers can easily follow the process flow and understand the progression from start to finish.

- **Avoiding Cross-Overs:** Minimise or eliminate cross-over lines (connecting flows that cross each other). This can often be achieved by rearranging Swim Lanes.

- **Avoiding Excessive Blank Space:** Minimising wasted space in models. Overly large Pool and/or Swim lanes create unnecessary blank areas, which disrupts visual flow and makes the diagram harder to navigate. By keeping pool sizes proportionate, the model remains clean, efficient, and easier to follow.

- **Avoiding Merging-lines:** Prevents visual clutter, keeping each pathway distinct. This ensures clarity, reduces confusion, and makes the process easier to follow.

- **Avoiding Unnecessary Zig-Zags in Connecting Lines:** Connecting lines should be smooth and straight to maintain clarity. However, a small exception is allowed when crossing swim lanes to accommodate vertical alignment. In such cases, minimal zig-zagging may be necessary, but the goal remains to keep the lines as direct as possible to ensure a clean and easy-to-follow model.

- **Person Icons for Role/Team in Swim Lanes**: Instead of relying solely on text to represent roles or teams in Swim Lanes, use person icons to visually differentiate between roles.

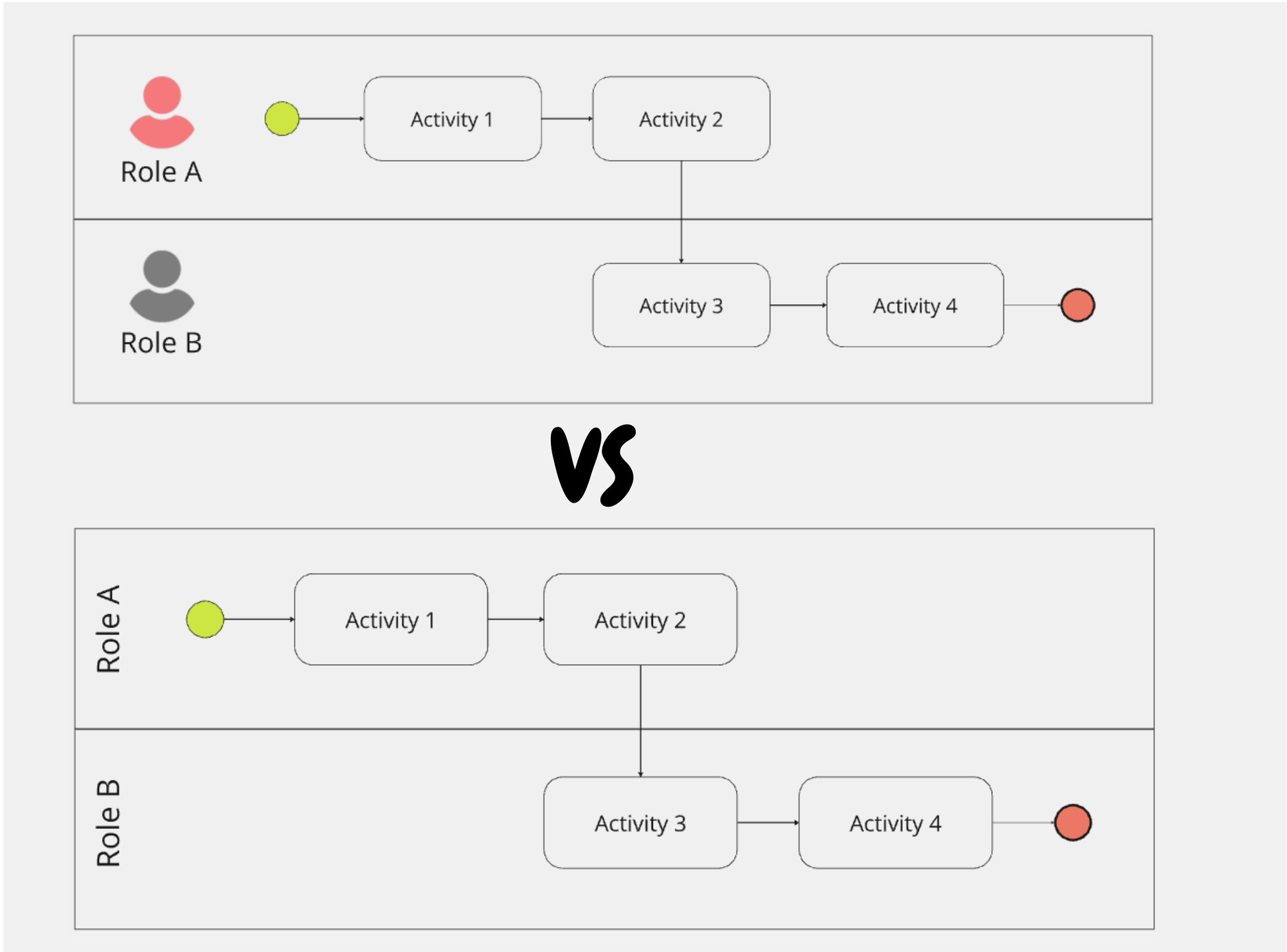
- **System Representation by Placing the System Label Within the Activity Notation:** Embed the system/app label directly within the activity box to maintain focus on the business process. This ensures clarity and avoids clutter from extra swimlanes or external symbols.

Signature Process-bility Visual Balance Element

These two guidelines go beyond standard BPMN practices and reflect the innovative spirit of Process-bility. They emphasise how process models can be enhanced to improve communication and clarity:

Person Icons for Swim Lanes:

Instead of relying solely on text to represent roles or teams in Swim Lanes, use person icons to visually differentiate between roles.



Fg4.1 Showing differences between Process-bility Person Icon and BPMN Role in Swim Lane

Why Person Icons Are Superior to Vertical Text?

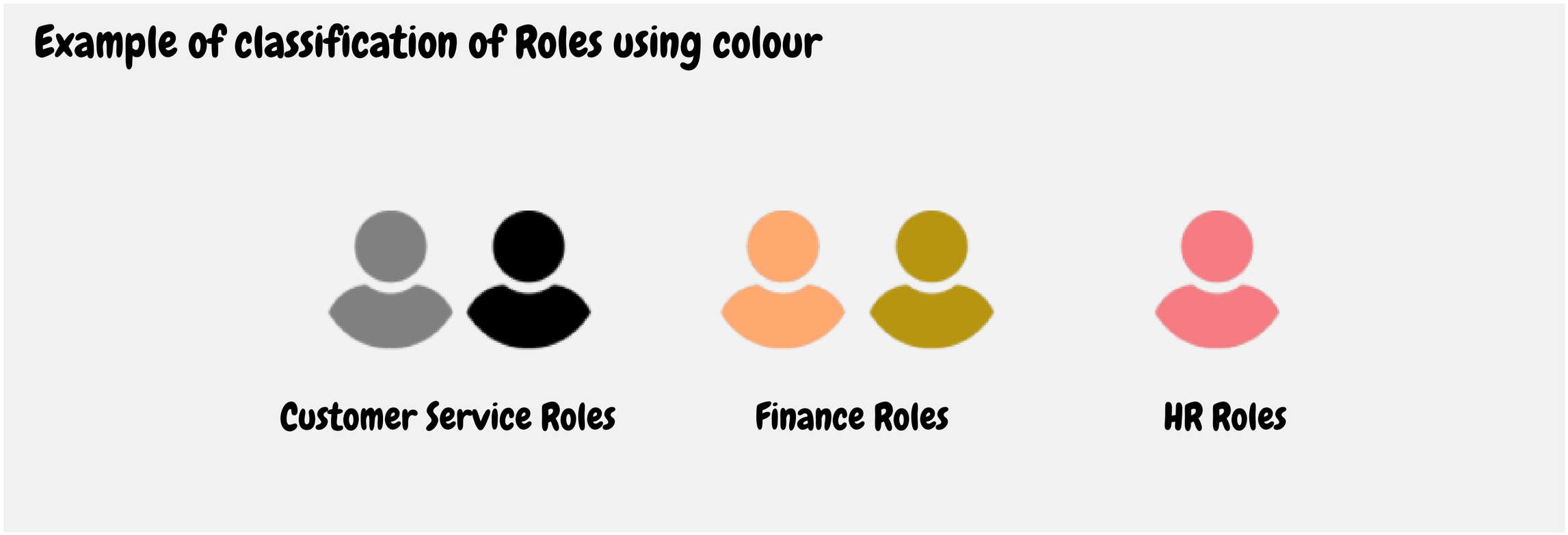
- **Immediate Recognition:** Person icons allow stakeholders to instantly recognise the role or team associated with each swim lane. In contrast, the traditional approach of writing role/team names vertically often forces the reader to tilt their head or strain to read sideways, slowing down comprehension.

- **Better Visual Flow:** The vertical text disrupts the natural left-to-right reading flow, while icons integrate smoothly into the process layout without breaking the visual rhythm. Person icons align with human cognitive patterns, making the diagram more intuitive to follow.

- **Visual Consistency:** With icons, the roles remain consistent in appearance and placement throughout the model, making it easier for stakeholders to track roles across the diagram. Vertical text, by contrast, varies in length and orientation, often leading to inconsistent visual flow.

- **Engagement and Appeal:** Icons make the model more visually engaging. They provide a touch of personality and visual diversity, encouraging greater attention from stakeholders during presentations or workshops. Vertical text, especially in complex diagrams, tends to look monotonous and can cause stakeholders to lose interest.

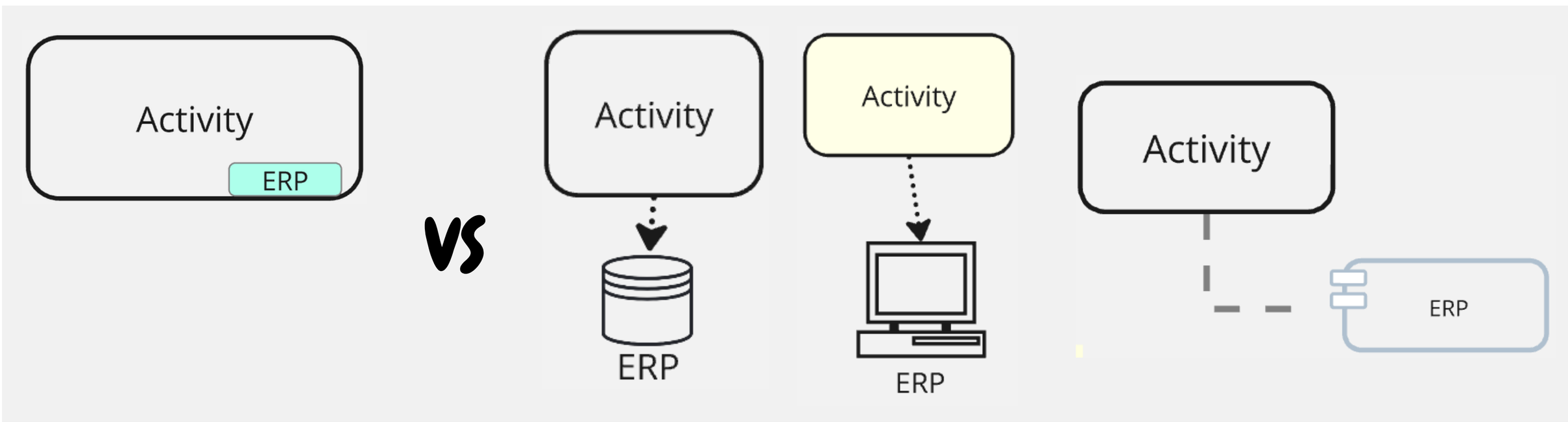
- **Use of Colors or Variations:** Different colors or variations of the person icon can represent different roles, teams, or departments, improving readability and visual balance. This technique helps stakeholders immediately differentiate between roles, ensuring that the process flow remains clear even in complex models.



Fg4.2 Sample Person Icon with different colour for logical grouping/association

Process-bility System Representation

Process-bility offers a unique approach to system representation by embedding the system label within the Activity notation. This contrasts with traditional BPMN methods and modern BPM tools, offering significant advantages in terms of clarity, simplicity, and overall Visual Balance.



Fg4.3 Process-bility system representation

Advantages of Process-bility Compared to Traditional BPMN Methods:

1. Traditional BPMN Method: Systems as Swim Lanes:

- **Challenge:** In traditional BPMN, systems are often represented by creating separate swimlanes for each system. This makes the process system-focused rather than business-focused, shifting attention away from the core business processes. It also results in more complex and cluttered diagrams, especially when multiple systems are involved.
- **Process-bility Advantage:** By embedding the system label directly within the task, Process-bility keeps the model business-focused. This removes the need for additional swimlanes dedicated to systems, resulting in cleaner, more efficient diagrams where stakeholders can focus on the process itself rather than being overwhelmed by extra lanes.

2. Traditional BPMN Method: Using Data Store Icon:

- **Challenge:** Another traditional method is using a Data Store Artifact (often depicted as a database icon) with association lines to link tasks to the systems they interact with. While this method shows system involvement, it's disconnected from the task, making it harder for stakeholders to immediately see which system is being used.

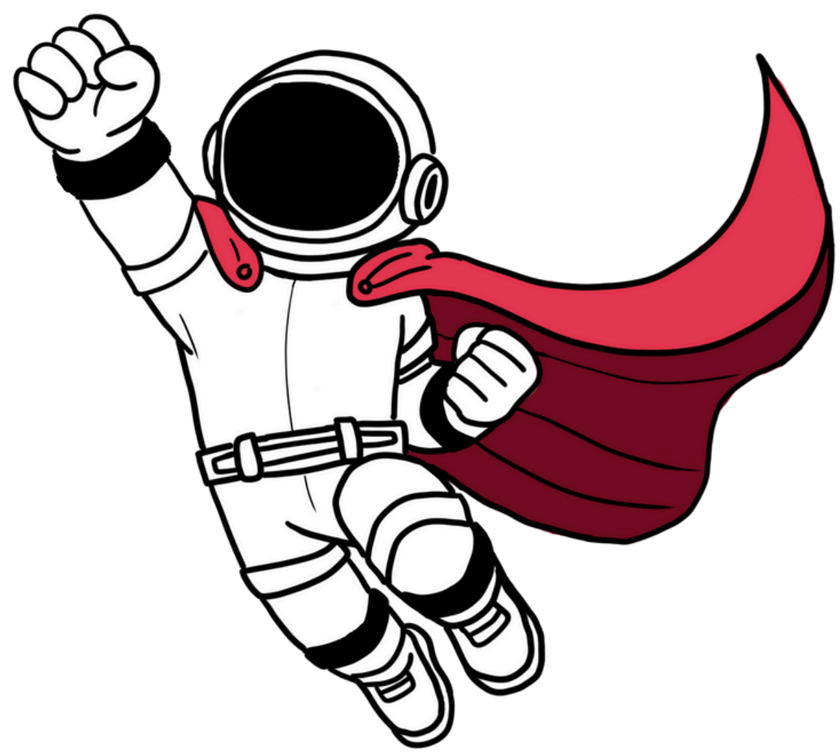
- **Process-bility Advantage:** In contrast, Process-bility places the system label within the Activity box, providing immediate clarity. Stakeholders don't need to follow association lines or look for external artifacts; the system is clearly visible within the context of the Activity.

3. Modern Method: Linking System with Computer Icon and Association Line:

- **Challenge:** Tools like Signavio often use a computer icon to represent systems, linked to tasks with a dashed association line. While this method visually shows system involvement, it adds complexity by introducing additional icons and lines outside the task. Readers must trace the association line to understand which system is connected to the task, which can be cumbersome, especially in larger diagrams.

- **Process-bility Advantage:** Process-bility eliminates the need for external association lines or icons. By placing the system/app label directly within the activity, it's immediately clear which system is used, reducing visual complexity and improving readability. This direct integration makes it easier for stakeholders to understand the process at a glance without needing to search for linked elements.

Why Signature Process-bility Visual Balance Element?



Clarity and Focus: The Process-bility approach removes unnecessary clutter from Swim Lanes, artifacts, or external associations, allowing the system to be immediately visible within the Activity.

Business-Focused Approach: By avoiding the use of extra Swim Lanes for systems, Process-bility keeps the focus on the business process rather than making it system-centric.

Simplified Structure: Instead of adding more elements (Swim Lanes, icons, or association lines), Process-bility keeps everything contained within the Activity, ensuring that the process flow remains the focal point of the model.

Better Stakeholder Engagement: With systems clearly identified in-task, stakeholders can quickly grasp which tools or systems are involved in each step, allowing for more effective discussions and decision-making.

By embedding system labels directly in the Activity, Process-bility delivers a more intuitive and streamlined approach to system representation, far surpassing both traditional BPMN and modern BPM tool methods in terms of simplicity, business focus, and visual balance.

Closing Thoughts

Bringing Visual Balance to Life

We've explored the theory and significance of Visual Balance, seeing how crucial it is for creating clear, effective BPMN models. Visual Balance isn’t just a matter of aesthetics; it’s a tool that transforms complex processes into easy-to-understand narratives. The real magic, though, happens when these principles are applied to actual models.

In the next chapter, we’ll dive deeper into **Visual Balance in Action**. Here, you’ll see real-world BPMN examples and how applying Visual Balance changes the way processes are modeled and understood. We’ll take a hands-on approach, demonstrating step-by-step how these techniques can be used to elevate your own models. Get ready for a visual journey that turns complex flows into models that are not only functional but beautiful in their simplicity.

> Visual Balance is not just about making the models pleasing to our eyes – it unclutters the human mind and helps us crystallise complex processes in seconds.

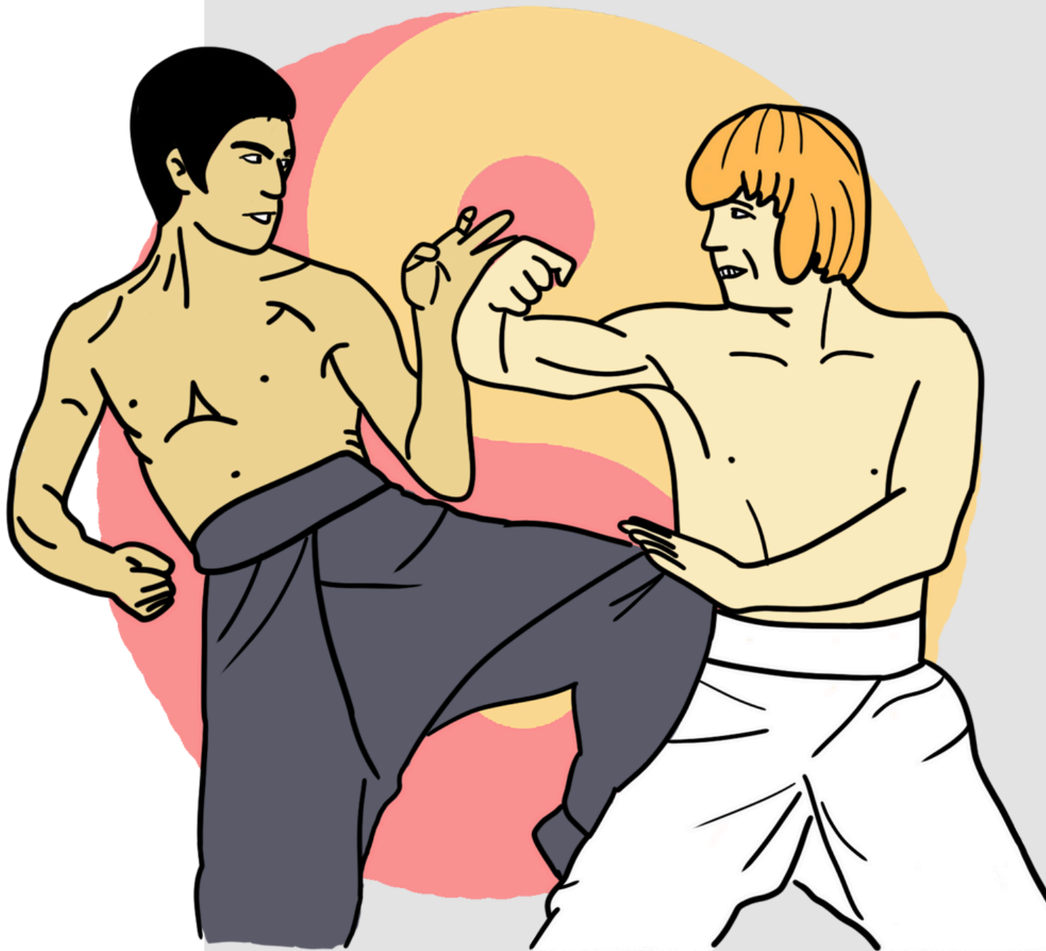
Chapter 5

Visual Balance In Action

- **The Easiest Way to Transform BPMN Models**

- **Transforming BPMN Model with Visual Balance**
  - Case 1 : Typical Poor Visual Balance BPMN
  - Case 2 : Cross-over BPMN Model
  - Case 3 : BPMN with Systems
  - Case 4 : Simple BPMN with Re-work

- **Question and Answers**



Visual Balance: The Easiest Way to Transform BPMN Models

Visual Balance is the unsung hero of process modeling. While many modelers focus solely on content, they often overlook how the layout and structure of a model can make or break its clarity. In Process-bility, we believe that every BPMN model should not only convey information but do so in a way that's visually organised and easy to follow.

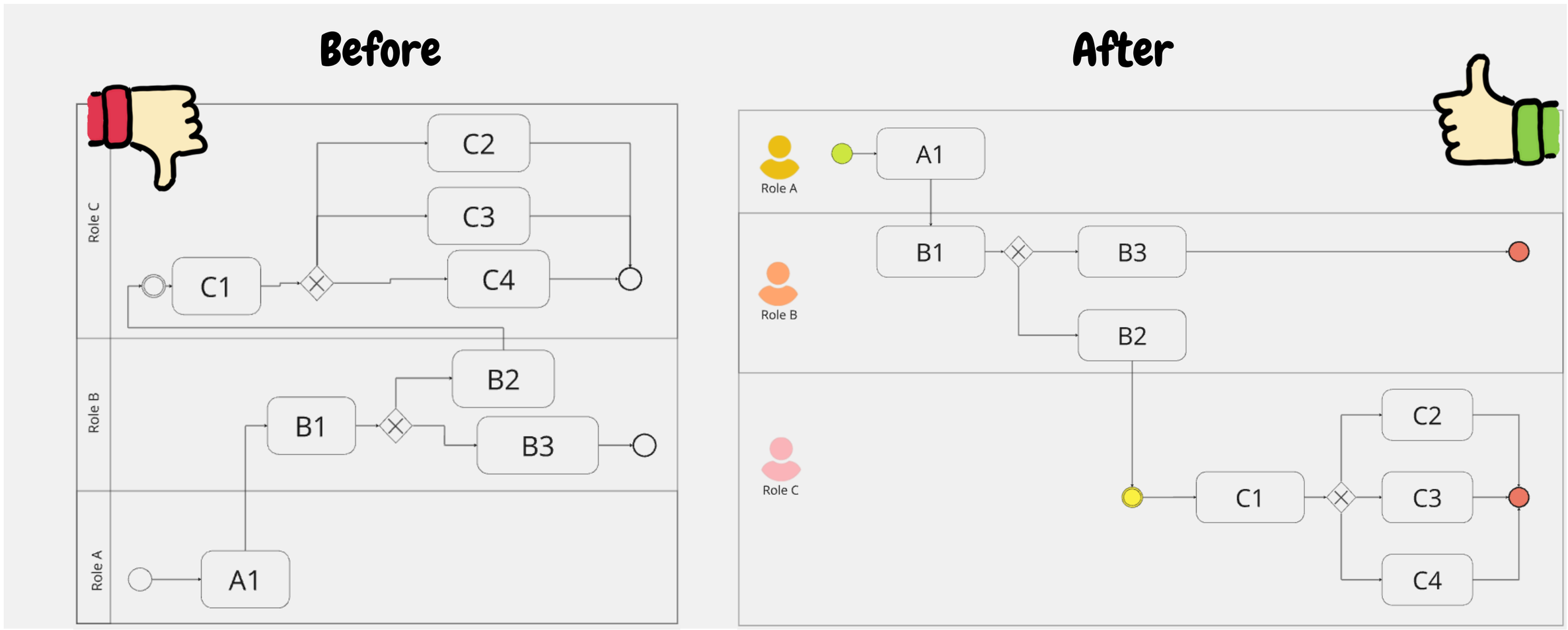
A well-balanced diagram is like a well-composed piece of art—it draws the viewer's eye naturally, guides understanding, and enhances communication between stakeholders. The best part? Visual Balance is the easiest techniques to apply and delivers immediate results. You don't need to be an expert to see its impact—just a few small changes in alignment, spacing, or flow can dramatically improve your models.

Auto alignment of BPMN modeling Tool

Many BPMN modeling tools, such as MS Visio, Signavio, GBTEC BIC, Aris, and others, offer auto-alignment or smart/AI alignment features. While these tools can provide some level of assistance in organising models, they often fall short of delivering the true visual balance needed for clarity and understanding.

Automated alignment typically focuses on arranging elements efficiently but may fail to capture the narrative flow, intuitive layout, and structured storytelling that Process-bility emphasises. It's not just about making the model neat; it's about making it make sense at a glance.

Transforming BPMN Model with Visual Balance: Case 1

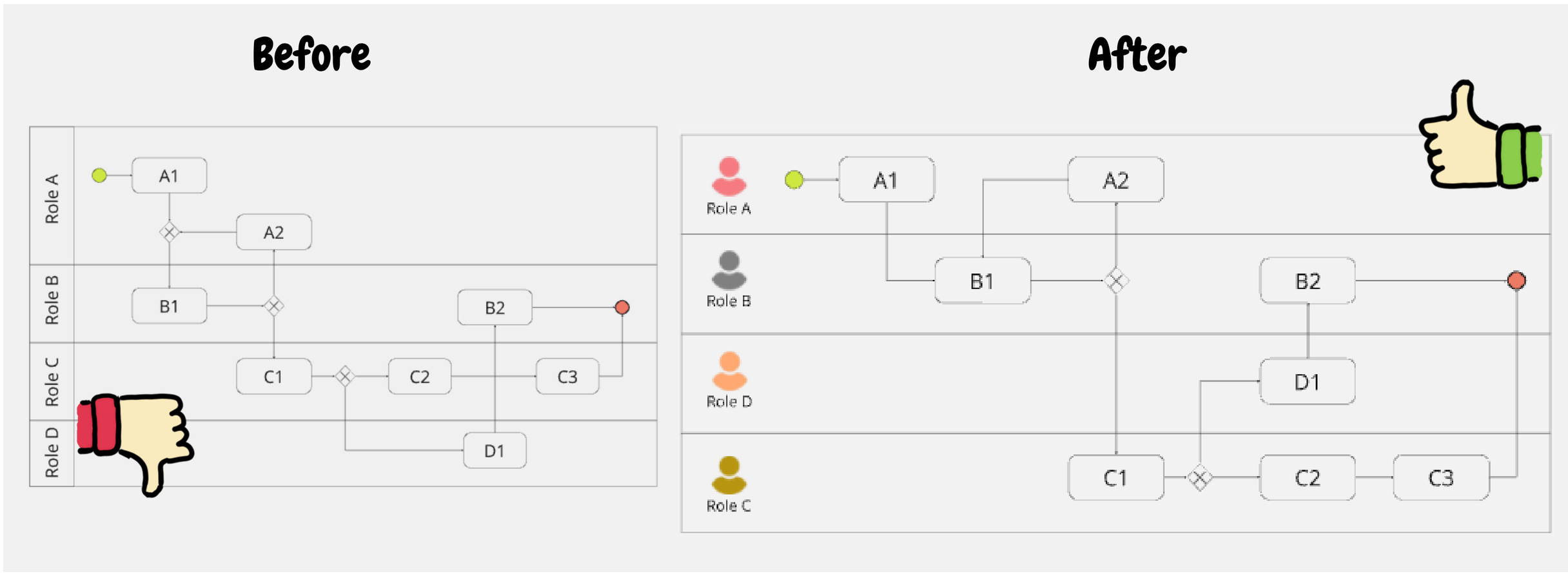


Fg5.1 Visual Balance Case 1

Visual Balance Applied in the After Model:

1. **Left-to-Right, Top-to-Bottom Flow:** The process now flows naturally from left to right, making it easier to follow and understand.
2. **Balanced Alignment:** Activities within swim lanes are horizontally and vertically aligned, providing a clean, structured look.
3. **Consistent Spacing:** Proper horizontal and vertical spacing between notations makes the model visually clean and easy to digest.
4. **Consistent Notation Sizing:** All notations of the same type have identical sizes for easy reading
5. **Avoiding Excessive Blank Space:** Pool and swim lane sizes have been adjusted to remove unnecessary empty space, ensuring a more efficient layout.
6. **Avoiding Merging-Lines:** Distinct paths reduce visual clutter and confusion, keeping each flow clear.
7. **Avoiding Unnecessary Zig-Zags:** Connecting lines are smooth and straight, with minimal zig-zagging, ensuring the flow is easy to follow.
8. **Person Icons for Swim Lanes:** Icons represent each role, enhancing clarity and making it easier to identify responsibilities.
9. **Consistent Color Coding for Events:** Green for Start Events, yellow for Intermediate Events, and red for End Events help the reader visually track the process progression.

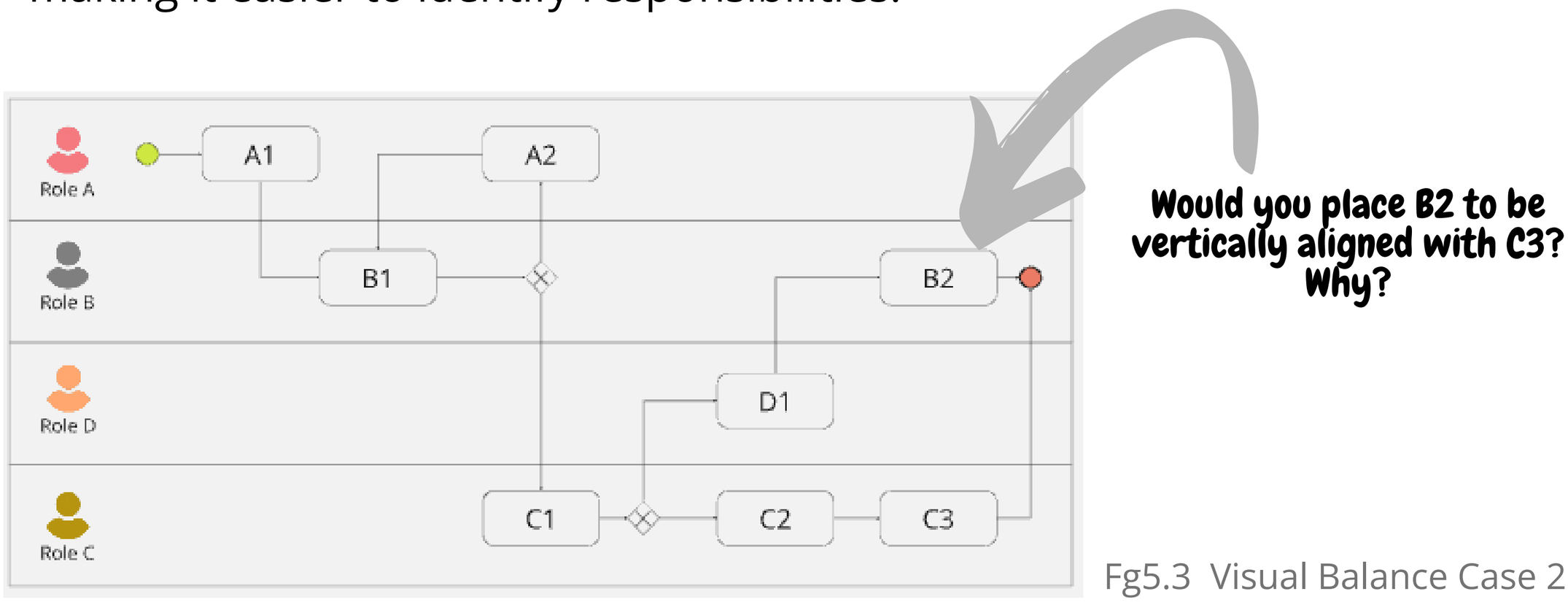
Transforming BPMN Model with Visual Balance: Case 2



Fg5.2 Visual Balance Case 2

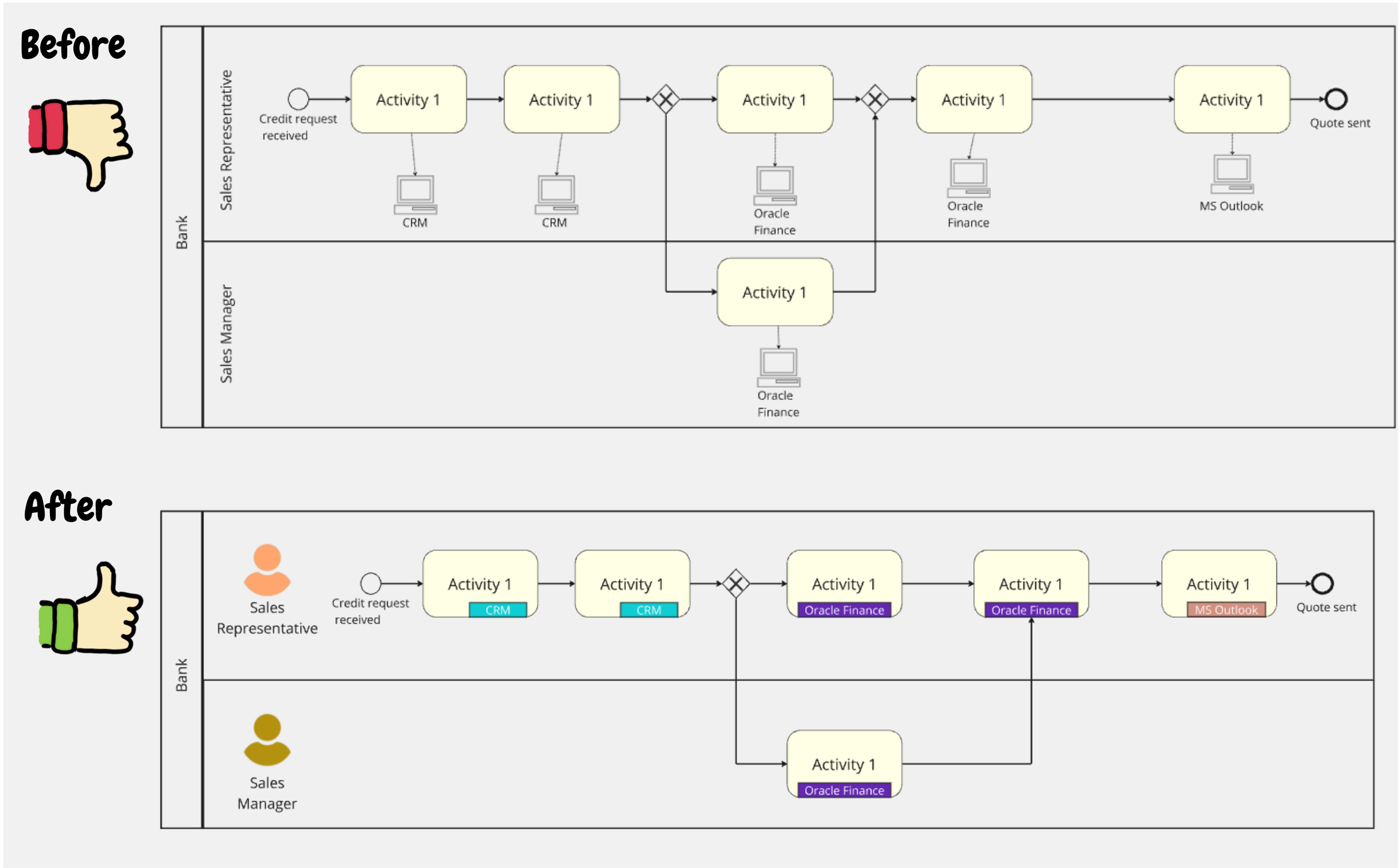
Visual Balance Applied in the After Model:

1. **Left-to-Right, Top-to-Bottom Flow:** The process now flows naturally from left to right, making it easier to follow and understand.
2. **Right-to-Left for re-work/loop back:** A2 to B1, removing the Exclusive Merge Gateway
3. **Consistent Notation Sizing:** C1,C2,C3 and D1
4. **Avoiding Cross-Overs:** Rearranging Swim Lanes (swap Role C with Role D)
5. **Person Icons for Swim Lanes:** Icons represent each role, enhancing clarity and making it easier to identify responsibilities.



Fg5.3 Visual Balance Case 2 question

Transforming BPMN Model with Visual Balance: Case 3

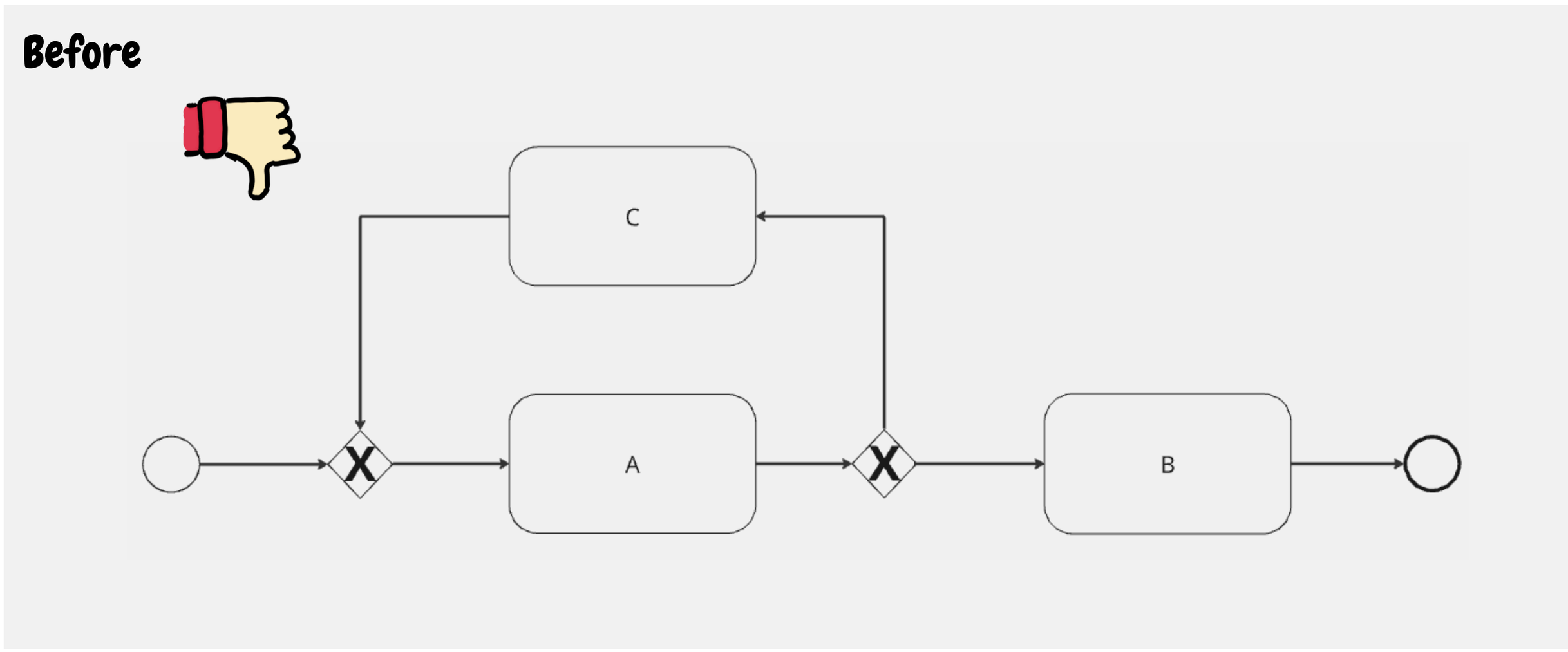


Fg5.4 Visual Balance Case 3

Process-bility Signature Visual Balance Element Applied in the After Model:

1. **Person Icons for Swim Lanes:** Icons represent each role, enhancing clarity and making it easier to identify responsibilities.
2. **Process-bility System Representation:** Embedding the system label within the Activity notation

Transforming Simple BPMN with Re-work: Case 4



Fg5.5 Visual Balance Case 4 - Before

Hints: Visual Balance Techniques to-be applied:

1. Left-to-Right, Top-to-Bottom Flow
2. Right-to-Left for re-work/loop back
3. Exclusive Merging is not recommended

When should I apply Visual Balance in BPMN modeling?

Visual Balance should be applied from the very start of your BPMN modeling process. It’s an essential part of designing your model, ensuring clarity and simplicity from the beginning. Here's why:

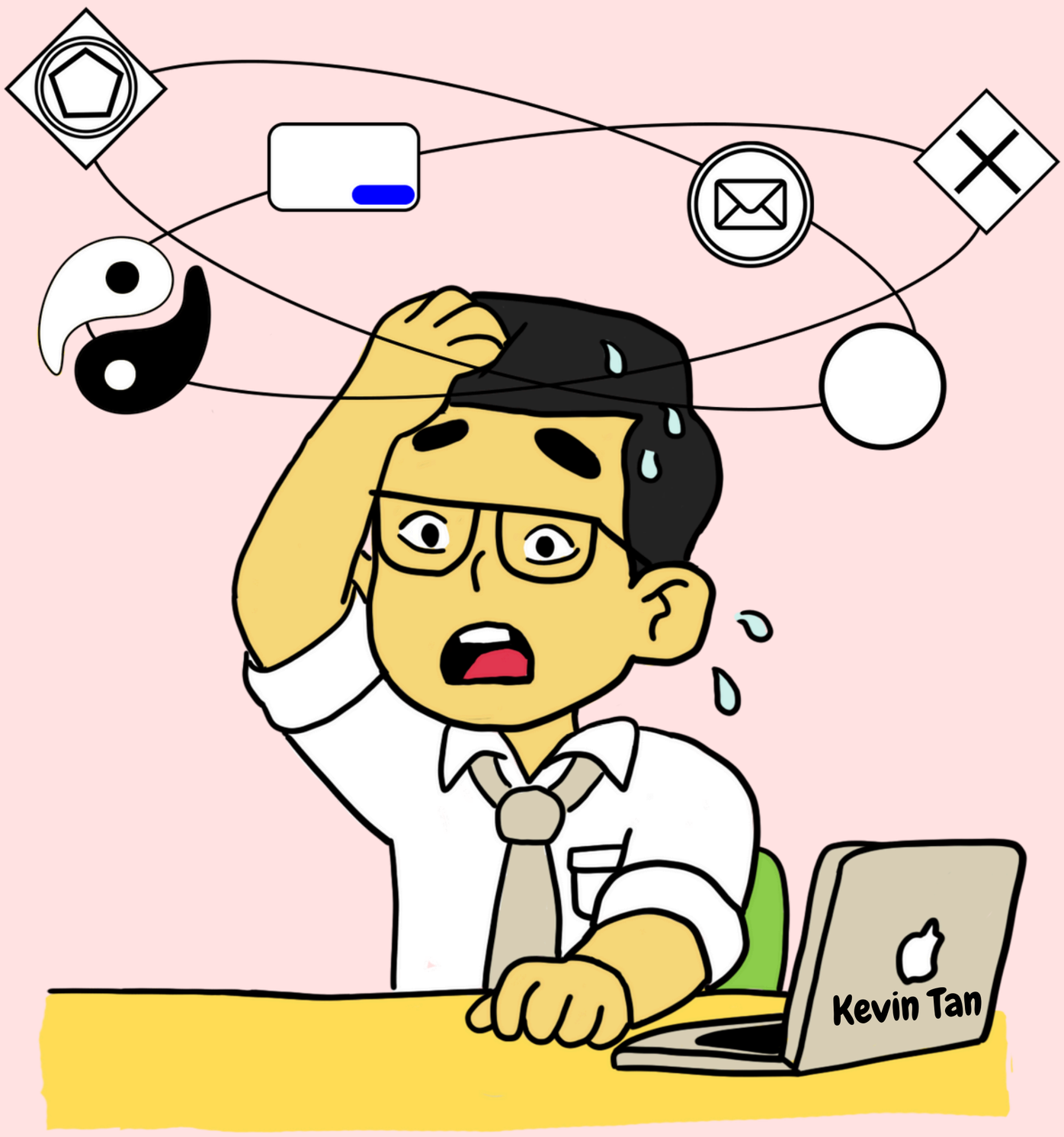
- **Clear and Intuitive Flow:** By applying Visual Balance early, the process flows naturally, making it easy for stakeholders to follow. This enables them to provide quality feedback sooner and become more engaged in the process workshop, as they can understand the model better.
- **Helps the Modeler Understand the Process:** Visual Balance isn't just for stakeholders—it also helps the modeler gain a clearer understanding of the business process. By organizing the elements with balance in mind, the modeler can more easily see how each part fits into the overall flow.
- **Avoiding Rework:** If you wait until the end to fix alignment, spacing, or other balance issues, you risk having to reorganise large portions of your model. Applying Visual Balance consistently saves time and effort.
- **Consistency and Simplicity:** Visual Balance simplifies even complex processes. By building with balance in mind, you create a structured, clear, and professional-looking model that tells a compelling story from the start.

Visual Balance is a guiding principle throughout your modeling, not just a finishing touch. It improves the quality of your model, enhances your own understanding of the process, and makes the process more engaging and easier to understand for all stakeholders.

Do you have any questions?

If you have any questions about Visual Balance or other topics covered in this chapter, feel free to write to me at kevin.Tan@process-bility.com

I'll personally answer all your questions, and some of the most insightful ones will be featured in the next update of this book—with your name included as a contributor! Let's keep the learning going and continue improving together.



What Others Say About Process-bility:

When people say they don’t understand your perfectly correct process modes, don’t blame the people. Look to the models. What business problem do they help to define and resolve? None, if the target audience doesn’t understand the models. Read this book. Take Kevin’s advice. Create process models that communicate.

Roger Tregear
Principal Advisor
TregearBPM
Australia

Mirko Kloppenburg
Founder of
NewProcessLab.com
Hamburg, Germany

Kevin is a true master of this art. — The van Gogh of business process modelling. And with Process-bility, he has distilled the fundamentals of his art into a framework that will help you create your own masterpieces that will truly inspire people and push your process forward.

Clyde Livingston
Senior Manager | Business Process Management (BPM)
Sydney, Australia

My journey through training and coaching process modelers has revealed the complexities inherent in BPMN. These experiences prompted Kevin to refine his approach, ultimately culminating in the creation of BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility. Influential voices in this field, like Bruce Silver, have divided the BPMN palette into manageable layers, providing clarity through his influential work, BPMN Method and Style. Kevin Tan has further simplified this approach by emphasizing three guiding principles: Storytelling, Visual Balance, and Simplicity.
As the statistician George E. P. Box aptly noted, “All models are wrong, but some are useful.” By embracing Process-bility, you will be equipped to create models that are not only useful but also comprehensible, enabling your organization to implement and continually improve its processes. This book serves as a beacon for anyone seeking to harness the true power of BPMN and elevate their business practices to new heights. Welcome to a journey of clarity, innovation, and meaningful transformation.

As someone who has practised modelling for 5 years+ using UML (Unified Modeling Language) such as class diagram, use case diagram, activity diagram, data flow, BPMN is not new to me. However, I faced challenges when applying BPMN at work, as developers found it hard to understand due to the rules and gateways. As a result, we reverted to using activity diagrams. I received the first 5 chapters from Kevin and I can see its values regardless you are a new or experienced business analyst. The book capsulizes all his experience, many trial-and-error after 20 years of process modelling. The book does not focus on the requirements of engineering, but more on how to make BPMN better, more accurate, easier to read to communicate and tell the business process story to readers. I recommend this to new and seasoned business analysts who want to go better and beyond in BPMN creation.

Duc (Alex) Doan
Business Analyst
Napier, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand

Kevin book is great for organisations, process leadership, and practitioners that have invested in the concept of process and want to get it right. In these pages he translates his extensive experience and his thought leadership on this topic into practical tips for creating process models that convey a story that can be used by a broad range of stakeholders for many transformational use cases. This is a must read for anyone that wants to not just create process models but ensure that these models make a lasting positive impact for their organisation.

Michael Schank
Digital Transformation & Operational Excellence Consultant
USA

It's a game changer, I must say, having lately had the honour of being among the first readers of this amazing guide! This book is for everyone who has ever felt overpowered by the intricacies of BPMN.
Kevin Tan's Process-bility method eliminates ambiguity and prioritizes storytelling, clarity, and simplicity. Instead of becoming bogged down in technical details, Process-bility concentrates on developing models that are visually balanced, understandable, and genuinely captivating. The goal is to transform process diagrams into comprehensible, captivating stories that inspire teams to take action.

Denys Ignatius
Business Analyst
Wellington, New Zealand

In a landscape where clarity in business process modelling is paramount yet often elusive, Kevin Tan's BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility stands out as a significant advancement in the use of the BPMN methodology. As an advocate for Universal Process Notation (UPN), I've often emphasized simplicity, consistency, and actionable insights in process maps—values that are mirrored in Kevin's novel approach to BPMN. His concept of "Process-bility" distills BPMN's complexities into accessible, meaningful narratives that can engage everyone from executive leaders to frontline teams.

Kevin's three guiding principles—Storytelling, Visual Balance, and Simplicity—serve not only as a model for BPMN but as a reminder of what process modeling should achieve: intuitive communication that drives understanding and action. These principles align with the UPN framework, particularly the emphasis on answering fundamental questions of What, Why, When, Who, and How in every process step. Kevin's focus on why processes matter to a business exemplifies this alignment, as he encourages modelers to avoid excessive technical detail in favour of transparent, purpose-driven flow.

Through Process-bility, I believe Kevin has crafted a guide that is both thorough and accessible, bridging the often challenging gap between technical rigor and business relevance. His approach offers clarity in depicting complex processes, avoiding BPMN's common pitfalls of over-detailing and misused gateways by advocating just the right amount of notation, the right narrative flow, and the right visual organization. This dedication to clarity makes BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility a valuable resource for anyone addressing a wider audience, not just experienced analysts or technical experts.

Kevin's work is not just about refining a tool; it's about reshaping how we communicate and collaborate through process models. As you journey through his insightful chapters, you'll find practical techniques that transform BPMN from a technical exercise into an essential language of shared understanding, a principle I believe will bring enduring value to organizations of all sizes.

Walter Th. Bril
Co-inventor and UPN Advocate
Maastricht, The Netherlands

Thank you for reading Chapters 1-5 of BPMN Made Easy with Process-bility!

I hope you've enjoyed this glimpse into a new way of understanding BPMN through storytelling, visual balance, and simplicity. The full eBook will cover even more insights, advanced techniques, and practical examples to help you truly master BPMN with Process-bility.

To celebrate the upcoming release, I'm offering a **20% discount** on pre-orders of the full eBook. Secure your copy today, and get access to the complete guide to process modeling, along with additional content, illustrations, and all the tools you need to transform your BPMN skills.

Pre-order your full copy today and receive it on November 11, 2024.

⏳ **Limited-time offer**: Pre-order now to take advantage of this discount and receive future updates, revisions, and additional chapters through to December 31, 2025.

Thank you for your support and for joining me on this journey to make BPMN easier, clearer, and more impactful for everyone.
Warm regards,

Kevin Tan