MITRATECH

Stay in Step:

5 Must-Have Workflows for Legal Operations

What are the key automated processes to have in place in order to succeed?

Table of Contents

Introduction: Breaking it down: What is workflow automation?

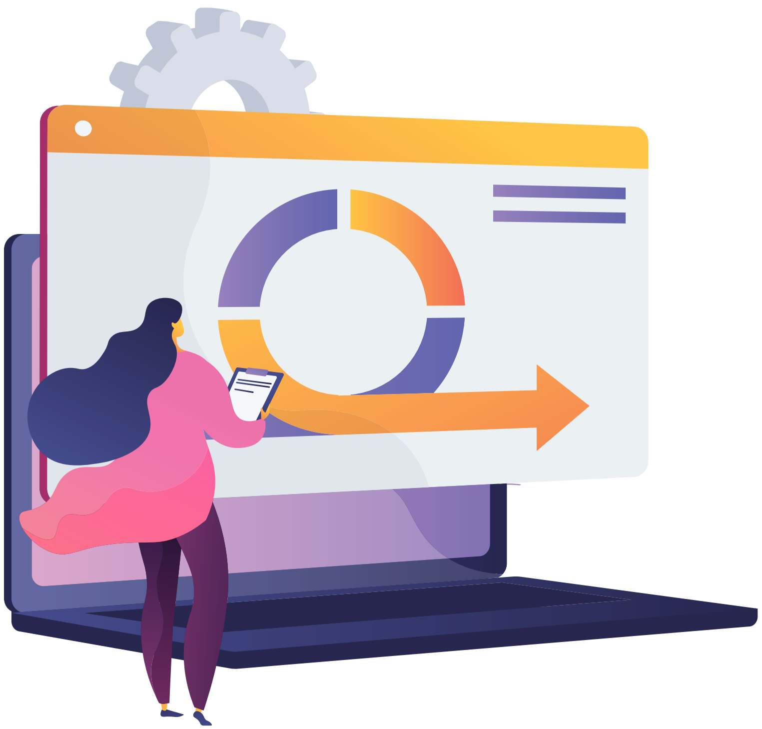
1 Looking under the hood: Foundations of a successful automation platform

2 Low effort, high reward: Get started with workflow automation

3 5 workflows to start your workflow automation transformation

Breaking it down: What is workflow automation?

Workflows are the most fundamental components of how any organization operates. The most basic definition of a workflow? An orchestrated, repeatable series of tasks involving people and processes, driving to desired outcomes. Or, to put it more simply, the process satisfies, "if *this*, then *that*."

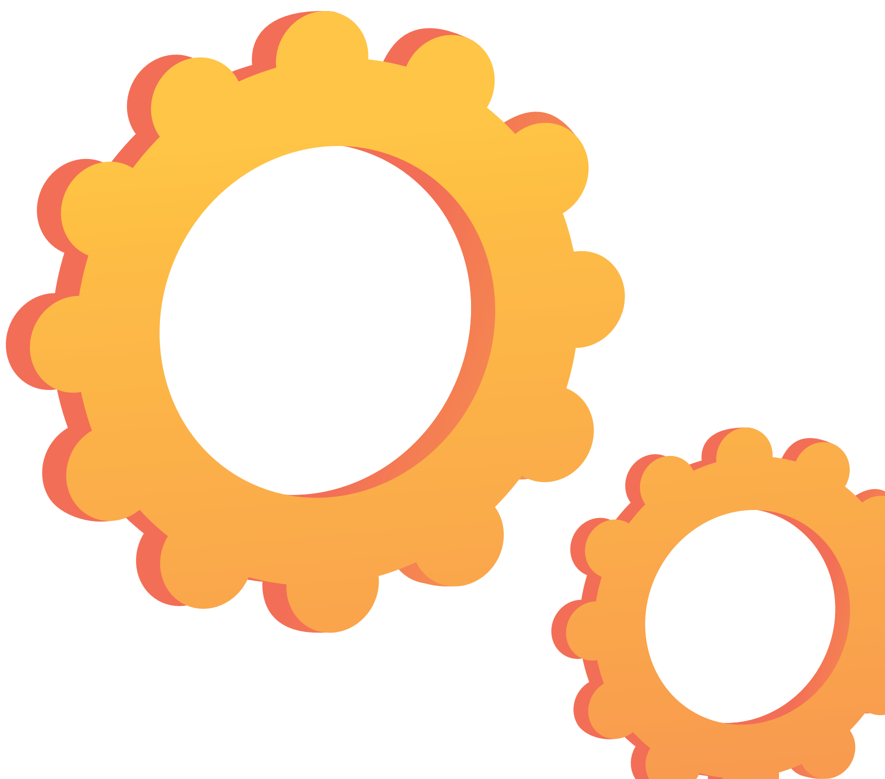


We manage and participate in workflows all the time, both in and outside of the office. When you drop a kid off at school, for example, you're operating as one part of the school day workflow. This is an example of a workflow that resists automation. When you get an email from the library letting you know that a book will be due in two days, you're a part of their automated workflow. Your next action - whether you decide to return the book, request to renew, or just forget about it - is one that the library can handle automatically without a specific librarian worrying about it or flipping anxiously through a card catalog.

We don't want to automate the human, everyday tasks that feel good or require the work of a particular person. But when it comes to triaging questions, approving requests, and signing and archiving documents, an automated workflow is often the best way to go.

The "repeatable" aspect of manual workflows is what often inflates costs, frustrations, and dire consequences for an organization. Simple human error inevitably produces hiccups in repetitive processes, whether it's a misrouted document, an incorrectly completed form, an un-archived contract or another such snafu.

Once you understand your business requirements, your next task is to find the right way to automate the process. By deploying an effective solution, you'll save time, money, and stop waking up in the middle of the night, wondering whether you should have followed up on a request. It's time for some restful sleep!



01 Looking under the hood: Foundations of a successful automation platform

Once you start looking, you'll start seeing workflows and process improvements everywhere. Everything from morning routines at home to requests at work can start to seem like robust systems, whether you're responsible for just a small part, or administer and manage the entire process.

When you start to think about these larger processes that could be automated, reducing the amount of time you spend searching for lost documents or following up with straggling approvers, you'll want to look for a workflow automation tool that suits your needs. While your needs will vary depending on the processes you want to automate, there are certain things to keep in mind:

1. No-code, low-code platforms

If your head is spinning with possibilities, think beyond the workflow and consider a tool that will allow you to get inspired - and then get results - quickly. A platform that uses drag and drop functionality is important if you want your business process owners to have real ownership: if no coding is required, you can empower your team, instead of relying solely on IT.

2. Available templates and support

The tool that you use should be flexible enough to handle the particular requirements of your business and department, but that doesn't mean you should have to start from scratch. Look for a tool that comes with templates that you can tweak so that best practices are built into your workflow's DNA.

3. Data, data, data

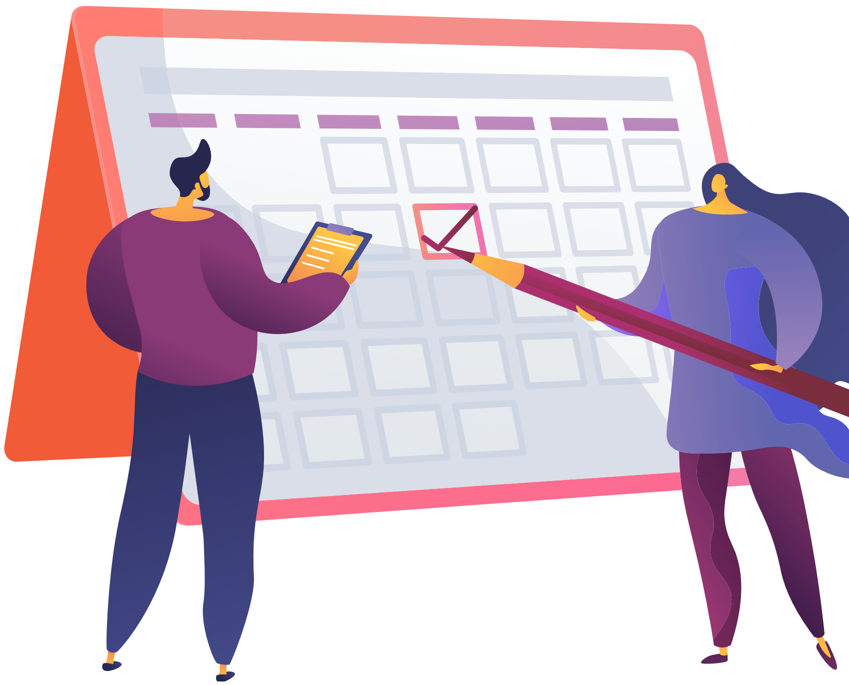
There are a few goals you might have in mind when you start thinking about workflows. You might be looking for better compliance by implementing a workflow with rigorous permissions and a complete audit trail. You might be trying to save time by automating manual processes. You might have a complicated process that needs to be streamlined so that there is no room for error. No matter your goal, look for a tool with analytics capabilities so that you can drive business insights and improve upon successes.

4. Easy integrations to plug and play

Just because you want your non-technical employees to build on a low-code platform doesn't mean you want them to start from scratch. Integration capabilities and compatibilities are a crucial part of a successful workflow automation platform. No matter what you need to build, chances are that you'll want to pull in information from other company systems. Look for a tool that makes this easy.

5. Built-in security and compliance

Searching for lost documents is not only time consuming, but it's also a sign that you might not be as compliant as you need to be. You need a workflow tool that lets you breathe easy, knowing that every request, approval, signature and question is tracked, auditable, and secured by role-based permissions, and knowing that every possible outcome has already been accounted for.



02 Low effort, high reward: Get started with workflow automation

What makes a great workflow?

One of the benefits of workflow automation is employee relief, freeing up valuable employee time to do the expert-level, interesting work they enjoy and removing the "pain of the mundane." When you're thinking about a workflow opportunity, think about what you'd most like to take off your plate.

Centering innovation through process automation

It is also helpful to think about tasks or processes that meet the following criteria. Our expertise in workflow automation has proven that tasks that meet one or more of the following criteria are great candidates for workflow automation.

Automate tasks that:

- Are high in volume and repetitive, with predictable variations
- Otherwise have approval chains that get emailed and forwarded on
- Require tracking data in spreadsheets
- Require manual follow-ups
- Are checklist-driven
- Require persistent data-gathering
- Require audit trails
- Have next steps based on predetermined criteria

03 5 workflows to start your workflow automation transformation

1. Legal Service Request Portal

Cut out the middleman for direct, immediate results.

Challenge: Legal team members spend too much time responding to ad hoc questions from individuals across the organization. So many of these questions could be solved with an FAQ if the FAQ could respond differently depending on the factors in question. Instead, hours of follow-ups and repetitive, copy-pasted answers, or even unanswered requests, plague legal teams.

It is not uncommon for individuals to become frustrated when their requests are routed to the wrong person or place, when they receive responses lacking adequate information, or for their requested feedback to just take too long.

Solution: Provide an easy-to-use portal for different types of common legal requests. As an individual keys in their particular request, make sure that specific, customized questions appear so that triage can happen automatically. Nine times out of ten, the requester can be automatically given the correct answer, the appropriate template, or the company policy. And the one exception? That can automatically be triaged through a pre-approved process, ensuring compliance, speed, and no sweat.

"Adopting workflow automation got us closer to our internal corporate partners, so we understood their processes and their pain points. It created so much efficiency so quickly that Legal Ops looked like real innovators."

Chief of Staff / Director of Legal Operations

2. Self-Service NDAs

44% of executed Self-Service NDAs are now completed within an hour

Challenge: Teams are constantly requesting non-company paper NDAs to be reviewed and go through cycles with prospective clients, vendors, and firms.

Some common questions:

- Why do NDAs take weeks or even months?
- Why do we negotiate the same items everyone pushes back on?
- Does the legal team need to actively participate in an NDA that relies on templated information?

There's nothing more frustrating for leadership than deals that could have gone faster - or even worse - deals that closed on account of lag time.

Solution: Implement a guided experience that allows employees looking for NDA assistance to use company paper for NDAs and allow legal team members to focus on non-standard, negotiated NDAs and other high-priority contracts and agreements.

In the Case Study, TAP is a Foundational Part of an Automated Future, Keesal Propulsion Labs found:

One company estimates a savings of $135K a year after automating and streamlining their NDA process. Of the NDAs distributed for signatures, 85% are now signed, up from 50% originally.

3. Vendor Onboarding

Simplify intake, share information across the enterprise

Challenge: Disparate systems across the company create multiple Vendor Onboarding processes. The result? Companies often have vendors that are misaligned with corporate legal, compliance, and procurement standards.

Employees and vendors both lose when email-centered processes lead to missed steps and employee errors. Compliance risks begin to multiply, and what should be caught like missed fields and misaligned names can creep under the radar until it's time for a company audit.

Solution: Streamline onboarding and ensure that the correct vendor information is entered and syncs with enterprise-wide systems, is compliant with all internal and external policies, and that the onboarding protocols your teams follow are complete and have a verified audit trail.

"We realize the opportunity to develop and share ideas on how we can use [workflow] to improve – if not eliminate – effort-heavy, high-volume/low-risk business processes in our organization and between our Legal systems."

Senior Manager, Legal Operations

4. Conflict of Interest

85% reduction in time spent on COI approvals.

Challenge: Conflict of Interest approvals can cause enormous delays that frustrate everyone involved -- especially because they could be so much faster. Manual processes revolve around spreadsheets and emails which silo information and make upkeep a constant project. Firms and outside counsel wait days or weeks to begin new work, sometimes straining the relationship between Legal Ops and their outside counterparts.

Some common questions:

- How do I report and audit our Conflicts of Interest requests?
- Is there a way to get this routed quickly for the right review or approval?
- Is this really a conflict at all?

Solution: Self-service forms allow employees or outside firms to submit the details of any potential conflict of interest and triage to the right person immediately. Time-based escalations prevent delays from building up, and required form fields diminish the need for extensive back-and-forth: firms supply the necessary information the first time.

Case Study

A conflict of interest waiver went from an average of 35 days of completion to 3.5 days, reducing average time spent per conflict request by 85%. Time spent decreased for all of the internal legal team members and approvers, and also created better relationships with firms.

5. Diversity Review

Securely and privately understand your timekeepers and firms.

Challenge: Companies need to track the diversity metrics for the firms and timekeepers that they use. These metrics are part of the 360° view that a company needs to confirm with whom they work, and it's important to keep this information secure and ready at hand.

Some common questions:

- What information should we include in our metrics?
- What's the best way to integrate this?
- How do I do this securely?

Solution: Capture and record relevant biographical and diversity data at either a firm or timekeeper level to allow your internal users to easily see whether or not a diversity metric has been met.

> "We decided to include diversity in metrics because lots of places look at the financial layer, but we explored what's important to legal groups and is really driving buying decisions. Diversity is really driving buying decisions."

David Cunningham,
CIO at Winston & Strawn

About **TAP Workflow Automation**

TAP legal automation empowers you to automate nearly any repetitive manual process, so you can focus on what's important: doing the work, not wrestling with workflows.

With TAP Workflow Automation, you can easily embed legal best practices in workflows inside and outside of the legal department, spreading compliance, visibility, and efficiency across your entire enterprise – and even to outside counsel.

About **Mitratech**

Mitratech is a proven global technology partner for corporate legal, risk & compliance, and HR professionals seeking to maximize productivity, control expense, and mitigate risk by deepening operational alignment, increasing visibility, and spurring collaboration across their organization.

With Mitratech's proven portfolio of end-to-end solutions, organizations worldwide are able to implement best practices and standardize processes across all lines of business to manage risk and ensure business continuity.

Mitratech serves over 1,500 organizations worldwide, including 30% of the Fortune 500 and over 500,000 users in 160 countries.

For more info, visit: **www.mitratech.com**

MITRATECH

CONTACT US

info@mitratech.com
www.mitratech.com

Mitratech US
+1 (512) 382.7322

Mitratech EMEA
+44 (0) 1628.600.900

Mitratech AUS
+61 (0) 3.9521.7077