Improvement and Standardization of the Remuneration Process of Engineering Lecturer Professors

Yahira M. Samó Velázquez
Master's in Manufacturing Engineering
Rafael Nieves, Pharm D.
Industrial Engineer Department
Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico

Abstract - *Human beings invest plenty of time carrying out various tasks for an employer or company to generate a salary. Salaries must satisfy the personnel who provide services to earn income [1]. After conducting a study on the remuneration processes of lecturers at a post-secondary institution using the DMAIC methodology, it was determined that the personnel in charge of the processes need to standardize it to satisfy professors' needs, such as counting a highly efficient. This standardization should come into force for the semester from August to December 2024 and will take 30 days to 3 months to be fully implemented. According to the research, the time taken by the remuneration process will decrease from 4 weeks and five days to 14 days, and the receipt of the salary will go from one month after the professors sign the contract to 15 days after signing the contract.*

Key Terms — DMAIC method, Improvement Remuneration, Standardization.

Problem Statement

The remuneration process for engineering lecturers at post-secondary institutions has faced significant challenges, including delays in contract delivery and dissatisfaction among lecturers. This process, traditionally completed every quarter or semester, has become inefficient, taking up to two months to finalize by the beginning of 2024. This delay is attributed to the lack of standardization and structured tools, which had previously enabled the process to be completed in about 10 days in 2016 [2]. Additionally, complications arise when lecturers exceed a 12-credit academic load, requiring directors to validate contracts through multiple procedures, further extending the process.

To streamline and improve the remuneration process, standardizations, and tools such as the Gantt chart and DMAIC methodology are proposed. These tools aim to eliminate inadequate processing, overproduction, and defects, ensuring contracts are delivered on time. By implementing these strategies, post-secondary institutions can enhance the efficiency of their remuneration processes and alleviate dissatisfaction among lecturers.

Research Description

This project focuses on implementing DMAIC to standardize and improve the compensation process for engineering lecturers at a post-secondary institution. The initiative to standardize and improve the remuneration process for professors will be carried out to satisfy, reduce time, and comply with a structured and effective system, so that remunerations throughout the semesters are fulfilled per what was proposed. The process implementation will take place for the semester from August to December 2024.

Research Timeline

The investigation into the DMAIC strategy and the response to delay and improvements in the remuneration process will be completed within four weeks. A chronogram in Figure 1 outlines the decision-making process for initiating the new remuneration process for lecturers. The investigation proposal was approved on March 4th. Information was collected from various remuneration systems used by the institution from March 4th to 9th. From March 8th to 13th, the systems was analyzed to design a process beneficial to each department. A design was developed, and the new plan was implemented from March 11th to 21st with the best standards to ensure high-quality and efficient remuneration was also implemented from March 21st to 26th.

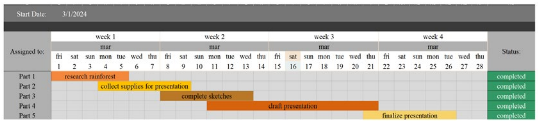

Figure 1

Project Plan Timetable

Research Contributions

Implementing the DMAIC strategy significantly aids in achieving set goals, establishing a standardized remuneration process, enhancing professor retention, and ensuring satisfaction [3]. This approach improved accounting processes, reducing contract delivery time to 14 days from the initial 15-day norm. Initially targeted at engineering lecturers, this strategy benefit the entire institution community by ensuring timely, efficient, and error-free remuneration processes.

Literature Review

This section will focus on stating the function of the professors' remuneration process and the fundamental nature of its effective administration. The final remuneration can be expressed as the remuneration that the staff receives for the functions carried out within the organization [4]. Labor remuneration is designed as one of the ambitions that specify the relationship between the staff and the organization. Therefore, the remuneration can be described as remuneration for a service the staff provides to the organization. Remuneration is of great importance because it encourages personal motivation, increasing the productivity of businesses [4].

Furthermore, it is a source of motivation, satisfaction, and stimulation. The workers' remuneration impacts the desire to acquire new skills and the retention of the company's capable personnel. No complaints about any remuneration processes may cause personal dissatisfaction or dissatisfaction. From the literature on the remuneration process, notes should be made on several terms to achieve the primary goal [4].

Remuneration has three fundamental criteria in human resources administration. These three criteria capture participants' attention with the necessary skills to obtain the position, encourage staff to use methods that increase their productivity and performance, and retain trained staff for longer. Companies expect staff to perform effectively together to achieve personal goals. Therefore, organizations reward the work carried out by staff that contributes to achieving these goals. An essential element of human resources administration is compensation management. This management is based on the salary, or wages paid to staff for their daily work. Staff remuneration is a significant part of their remuneration for the work performed. In addition, it is one of the primary providers of stimulus to the work community income; in addition to providing motivation, it is a method of satisfying physical obligations such as providing recognition, a feeling of success and fulfillment, and defining one's position in the community. An efficient remuneration process needs to consider both the total degree of remuneration paid by the company and satisfaction of the internal impartiality regulations and the impartiality of the position. Remuneration influences budget allocation, consumption, performance, position, and costs. Therefore, a company's budget policy should not create a negative financial environment [4].

Fair remuneration is the disbursement to staff for the work performed; impartial and fair factors determine it. Remuneration is fair when it reflects the level of work used and provides the employee with subsistence without depending on performing other tasks outside of their primary job. Fair remuneration is governed by laws and agreements, allowing staff to acquire a decisive income and a set of benefits in the company. It is a right to have fair remuneration and is regulated by the Civil Code and the Federal and State Laws. By the Labor

Laws, the organization is obliged to remunerate personnel appropriately for the work performed through the use and ethics of the establishment. Fair remuneration is a term that changes according to various elements; therefore, it is difficult to define its central meaning. However, overall, fair remuneration must be equitable; it must fulfill the tasks performed and allow staff to cover their daily needs and those of family members [5].

Remuneration has several benefits; not only is it based on the relationship between the staff and the organization, but it is also the center for recording the benefits. The benefits on salaries are as follows: the family allowance has a percentage that varies according to the country, and this is validated if the employee has minor children, a legal bonus, and an extraordinary bonus, which is carried out twice annually where all remunerated criteria are examined. Compensation for the time of service is made through calculable remuneration and must be made twice annually. Guarantee remuneration focused on company regulations and staff development. Bonuses provide incentives for relevant performance and contributions to the organization. Health benefits provide medical care coverage. Retirement plans contribute to protecting the staff budget as a pension program. Flexible work arrangements allow the employee to maintain a balance between family and professional life. Professional development is dedicated to investing in increasing staff skills, accreditation, and the possibility of improvements in skills and abilities [6].

METHODOLOGY

The DMAIC strategy will be used to implement improvements and standardize the remuneration process. This methodology is an essential part of the Six Sigma instruments and can be carried out along with Lean procedures or worked individually to satisfy and have a highly efficient project [6]. The abbreviation DMAIC is related to five phases that are part of this strategy. Table 1 will describe each of the phases of the DMAIC strategy.

Table 1
DMAIC
Methodology

Phase	Description
Define (D)	Define the problem and determine the objectives.
Measure (M)	The potential to examine a procedure's ability to achieve specifications
Analyze (A)	Identify the crucial reason for the variation and deficiencies
Improve (I)	increases the execution of the process by addressing and eliminating the reason from its source
Control (C)	Maintain the improvements obtained in previous phases.

DMAIC is a methodology based on the Six Sigma process improvement approach. Therefore, it is a way that helps companies quantify and boost their productivity. DMAIC is an acronym that refers to defining, measuring, analyzing, improving, and controlling, which are the phases that correspond to this methodology. The DMAIC is usually used in Six Sigma projects, but it is not only based on this type of project; it can also be used in economic areas. Therefore, DMAIC is a Lean method that is used to increase the productivity of an organization precisely since it assists in detecting the reason for the problem, examining the problem, and finding a way to solve it [7].

- **Define Phase**

The define stage is the first Six Sigma improvement procedure essential to a successful project. It is necessary to specify and establish the problems faced by an organization before starting to solve problems. It is only possible to combat problems with the obstacles in place. The purpose of this phase is for each person involved to reach the same goal: to decide what problem is affecting the process. Through this stage, the project staff will work to specify the magnitude of the problem. The result will be an accurate overview of the issue, purposes, and project scope [7].

- **Measure Phase**

The second phase of the DMAIC methodology is to measure. In this phase, it is necessary to know how the remuneration process is currently carried out and the dimension of the problem. Evaluations are essential during the project since signals of the process conditions and the direction in which remuneration process problems arise are crucial. A process distribution period is stipulated throughout the information collection process. This phase aims to create options and investigate the possibilities of improving the process. For this project, a series of surveys will be carried out with personnel using two different remuneration methods within the same institution [7].

- **Analyze Phase**

The Analyze phase involves conducting a thorough investigation before implementing process changes. Rushing changes without understanding the current process can waste time, increase resource usage, and create additional problems. The remuneration process is studied step by step until delivery to staff, identifying and verifying the causes of existing problems. Information is evaluated to ensure alignment with the project scope. Quantifying the time taken by an efficient versus deficient process helps assess employee satisfaction with two different remuneration systems. This phase is critical for informed decision-making and effective process improvement [6].

- **Improve Phase**

After the analysis phase, the necessary improvements continue to be made. In this stage, a series of ideas will be made, and, in addition, solutions for improvements to the professor's remuneration process will be presented. A design of experiments (DOE) will be prepared to identify the expected utilities of a solution. In addition, the maps and diagrams will be evaluated according to the information acquired from the analysis phase. The benefit and effort analysis can be applied to improve the process, contributing to the project's progress [7].

- **Control Phase**

The control phase is the last phase of the DMAIC methodology. The essential work in this phase is to supervise and control the process that was improved. This ensures that the current process is applied effectively and that there is no return to previously used processes. The objective of the control phase is to implement the changes made in any of the previous phases to obtain a process that satisfies the staff and is efficient. Additionally, it is verified that the new process has been established correctly and is sustained. The control phase procedure will be under the command of the organizations to validate the current process [7].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents study results and discusses the problem stipulated in the Introduction and how was achieved the improvements and standardization of the remuneration process for engineering lecturers through the DMAIC methodology.

- **Define**

In this phase, the objective was to apply the DMAIC methodology to improve the remuneration system for engineering lecturers. Using the SIPOC acronym (Supplier, Input, Process, Output, Customer) [6], the project objectives were established. SIPOC diagrams, typically used in Lean project management under Six Sigma, aim to reduce errors and improve processes. They help identify suppliers, inputs, processes, outputs, and customers. Figure 1 illustrates these elements for the remuneration process of engineering lecturers, aiding in understanding, and improving the process.

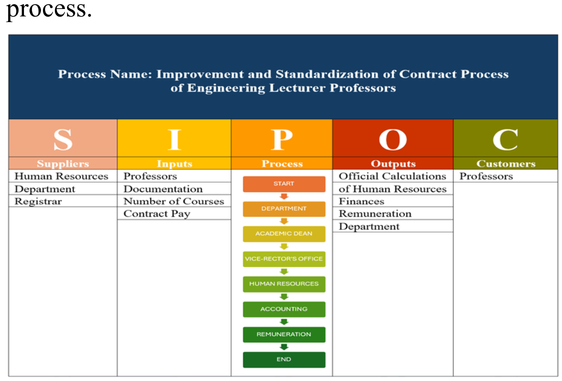

Figure 2

SIPOC Diagram

- **Measure**

A survey was conducted among engineering lecturers to determine the needs of the current remuneration process Voice of the Customers (VOC). In addition, for one week, data was collected on the parties involved in the remuneration process in the engineering department and how the tasks are being performed within the process. A template was created on Google to obtain the opinions and observations of professors. These were carried out anonymously. The template contained four simple questions; one of these was an open question. Ten professors were surveyed, obtaining responses from 7 professors to the survey. The response rate was 70% of the engineering lecturers surveyed.

$$Response\ Rate = \frac{Number\ of\ Response}{Total\ Survey\ Sent}\ x\ 100\%$$

$$Response\ Rate = \frac{7}{10}\ x\ 100\%$$

$$Response\ Rate = 70\%$$

Figure 3

Response Rate Calculation

The open questions were: How long have you worked at the institution? Are you satisfied with the remuneration process for lecturers? Should the remuneration process for lecturers improve? Moreover, what recommendation would you provide to improve the remuneration process for lecturers? The results of the surveys were presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 shows the professor's responses to the question about their length of work at the institution; according to the image, 60% had 5 to 10 years of experience, while 40% had 10 to 15 years of experience.

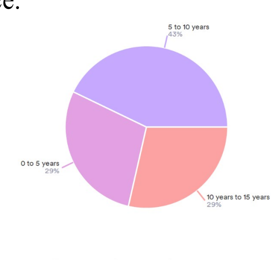

Figure 4

How Long Have You Worked at the Institution?

In Figure 4, engineering lecturers were asked if the compensation process satisfied them. 100% of engineering lecturers were dissatisfied with the current remuneration processes. 100% of engineering lecturers were dissatisfied with the current remuneration processes.

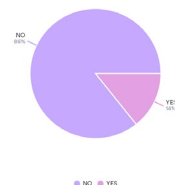

Figure 5

Are You Satisfied with the Remuneration Process for Lecturers?

Figure 5 shows the professors' responses regarding whether the professors' remuneration process can be improved, where 100% of the professors answered yes.

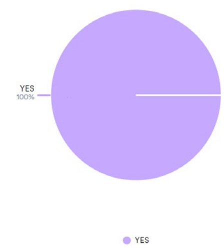

Figure 6

Should The Remuneration Process for Lecturers Improve?

The last question of the survey, being an open one, presented several of the professors' recommendations. The open question was: *What recommendation would you provide to improve the remuneration process for lecturers?* The recommendations provided by the professors were that remuneration processes "must be improved since they do not satisfy professors". "They should standardize the process, have trained personnel who can carry out this work, double check before submitting the information in the contracts and thus avoid having to carry out the process again." In addition, "add personnel for the administration project who are in charge of facilitating contracts to professors and/or verify and determine what is the cause of delay for this process by hiring personnel who are qualified for this process." Also, "they must be equated with the current market, and cost inflation in Puerto Rico (costs of living)" and finally "create or standardize the process to avoid long waiting times for authorizations. "To conduct a comprehensive review of the current salary structures to ensure they are competitive with other institutions. Also, implementing transparent criteria for performance-based bonuses or incentives could help motivate and reward lecturers for their exceptional teaching and research efforts.

Figure 6 presented the survey carried out with the lecturers about the institution's remuneration process [9].

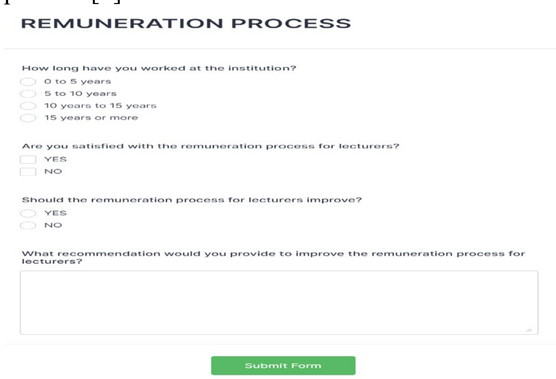

Figure 7

Google Forms Survey

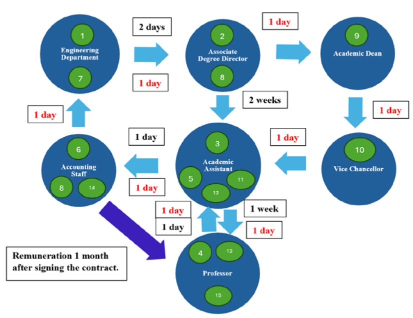

Figure 8

Current Value Stream Map of the Remuneration Process.

The remuneration process for lecturers is a process that, over the years, has had a drastic change in the time it takes. Figure 7 presented the process flow as it is carried out stage by stage. The first stage takes two days and begins in the engineering department, where it is verified that the professors have the necessary studies and documents to be part of the department. After it is verified that the professor is required to be part of the faculty, the associate degree director provides the available courses that match the professor's level of ability. This process can take up to 2 weeks. The associate degree director provides the information to the administrative assistant who oversees structuring the contract that must be signed by the professor, which may take up to one week. The professor acquires the contract for his signature and returns it the same day to the academic assistant, who will send the contract to the accounting staff. The accounting staff will verify if the contract complies with the regulations and standards established by the institution. If the contract needs to be corrected, it will be directed again to the engineering department for verification and validation. This stage takes one day. The department will direct the information to the associate director of degrees, who will send it to the academic dean. The following steps will validate the academic dean and the vice chancellor according to the credits provided by the associate degree director. After obtaining the validations, the information is passed to the administrative assistant in charge of structuring the contract, which the professor must sign. The professor signs the contract and returns it to the academic assistant, who will send it to the accounting staff. Carrying out the entire process again takes one additional week. The accounting staff will oversee verifying whether the contract complies with the regulations and standards of the institution; if all the information is correct, the process ends with the professor's remuneration after 15 days have passed since the professor signed the contract.

- **Analyze**

In this section, the researcher evaluated the information obtained from personnel involved in the remuneration process for engineering lecturers and the information acquired from the survey carried out by Google Forms to professors. According to the professors' stipulated, the majority agreed that the remuneration processes for professors were deficient, so all professors were dissatisfied with the process. In addition, there are ways in which the process can be improved. Therefore, it is essential to analyze the steps followed to find flaws and improve and standardize the process, thus obtaining professor satisfaction. The information collected from the personnel in charge of the remuneration process revealed the different failures incurred. Defects and process failures were placed in a fishbone diagram to manage them better.

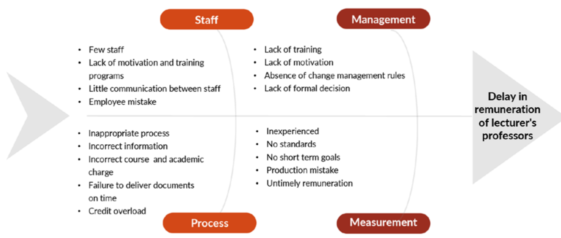

Figure 9

Fishbone Diagram

Figure 8 analyzes the remuneration process, a crucial aspect of the engineering department's efficient functioning. The findings reveal several key failures, starting with the staff. The current staff size needs to be improved, leading to task limitations. Moreover, the staff's lack of motivation and training is negatively impacting on production. Poor communication further hampers the effectiveness of the process. Lastly, the absence of proper training results in errors, prolonging the time taken for tasks.

Process management is significantly affected when personnel need more motivation and training. This mismanagement leads to a deficient process that fails to satisfy the parties involved. The impact of untrained employees is particularly severe because the institution's existing tools for change management still need to be implemented. This lack of efficient change management results in the transmission of failures from person to person, further deteriorating the process. The absence of concrete and transparent decision-making is a direct consequence of this.

The third segment of the process reveals a multitude of issues that are hampering its effectiveness. The process fails to meet specific standards, leading to problems on a larger scale. Incorrect information is a significant issue, with staff failing to verify the precision of the submitted data, resulting in the need to repeat the process. The need for more data, especially regarding professors' courses and academic load, further complicates the process. Delays in document delivery, caused by unclear course offerings, make it difficult for professors to be paid promptly. The issue of excess credits, due to the institution's limited professorship, adds to the complexity, requiring additional approvals and delaying remuneration.

The last segment, when counting personnel with a lack of training, entails limitations in the process flow because the series of decisions necessary to have an efficient process are not made, which leads to an absence of risk detection and verification of possible failures that may occur. occur during the time of the process. No standards are implemented in the remuneration process for lecturers in the engineering department, so the process is adrift since there is no strategic plan for carrying out the tasks. Without established standards, the system lacks clear short-term goals, leading to a lack of specific focus. Making errors in the information about the remuneration of professors will lead to production errors, putting the institution's methods at risk in terms of planning and connection with professors. Errors in the information will result in the professor receiving incorrect compensation out of time.

Lean Manufacturing is a methodology focused on increasing numbers and reducing losses in ineffective processes. The standard beginning is to employ only relevant resources to produce an item or provide a service. TIMWOODS is an acronym that indicates the eight ordinary wastes generated in production. The TIMWOODS analysis has eight wastes: transportation, inventory, movement, waste, over-processing, over-production, defects, and skills. TIMWOODS is an easy and accurate way to determine waste areas in the value stream [8].

Table 2 presents the TIMWOORDS analysis. The excessive movement of documents from one office to another corresponds to transportation waste. In the inventory part, waste can be the contract quantity produced in the established time to satisfy the professor. The excess time spent in the process is a waste of motion because the parties involved are extending the remuneration process for professors when performing their duties repetitively due to errors that arise during the process. A waste of time in this process is that each part of the remuneration process needs to obtain information from various parties to complete its work. Therefore, the remuneration process takes a long time to complete. The remuneration process involves over-processing and over-production because the same contract is repeatedly worked on or duplicated due to information errors, lack of documents, or professors with an over-academic load. The defects obtained from this process are the increase in the time that the process must be carried out, poorly drafted contracts due to lack of documents and information, or excessive academic load, which leads to poor remuneration of professors. This process has two wastes of skills, one of which is that it has overqualified professors who can teach associate degree classes, but also high school classes, which leads to academic overload; in addition, the staff does not have the necessary training to be able to carry out remuneration processes efficiently.

Table 2

TIMWOODS ANALYSIS

WASTE	POTENTIAL WASTE
TRANSPORTATION	Movement documents excessive
INVENTORY	Limited contract production
MOTION	Excess time spent in the process
WAITING	Obtain information from another department to complete one's work
OVERPROCESSING	Reworking of contracts
OVERPRODUCTION	Duplicate contracts due to wrong details
DEFECTS	Process time increases. Poorly drafted contracts Lack of documents Poorly professors' remuneration
SKILLS	Overqualified professors Low qualified staff

- **Improve**

A Benefit and Effort matrix is defined as a graph highlighting the benefits a potential resolution provides concerning the effort in terms of time and resources required by incorporating a project schedule where a start and end date is established. In addition, this is part of decision-making to highlight projects and manage time efficiently. In the Six Sigma methodology, the matrix is used to assist in making the correct decision when there is a range of alternatives that can solve an institutional challenge. It is used regularly to determine project emphases from the beginning [10].

Below are the improvements that will be implemented in the remuneration process. Finalization can take 30 days to three months.

1. Decrease speed remuneration delivery.
2. Eliminate wrong information, course, and academic charge.
3. Provide training and motivation to employees.
4. Streamline communication between departments.
5. Set goals.
6. Standardize and normalize the process.
7. Hire trained employees.

The Benefit and Effort Matrix in Figure 9 identified seven possible improvements that can be implemented in the remuneration process. The Benefit and Effort matrix for Zero means it does not benefit the process, and a value of 5 means it has a high benefit. Figure 9 presents the improvements engineering lecturers must implement in the remuneration process. The number 1 improvement is to reduce the delivery time of remuneration to professors. This has a benefit value of 3 and an effort value of 3. The second improvement is to eliminate erroneous information, courses, and academic load; the benefit of this improvement is 3. and with an effort of 2. The third improvement is to provide training and motivation for employees; this counts as both benefit and effort, with a value of 3. The fourth improvement is to increase communication between employees, which counts as a four and effort benefit. of 2. Having one provides a benefit of level 5 and an effort of 3. The standardization and normalization of the process has a benefit and effort 4. Moreover, hiring trained personnel has a benefit and effort in the process with a value of 2.

The improvements found in the green color, which in this case were numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5, will be established in 30 days. The improvements found in the yellow and light green colors, which were numbers 1, 6, and 7, will be established in 3 months. In this matrix, no improvement was obtained within the red color, which refers to the fact that the improvements will be established during a period of 1 year.

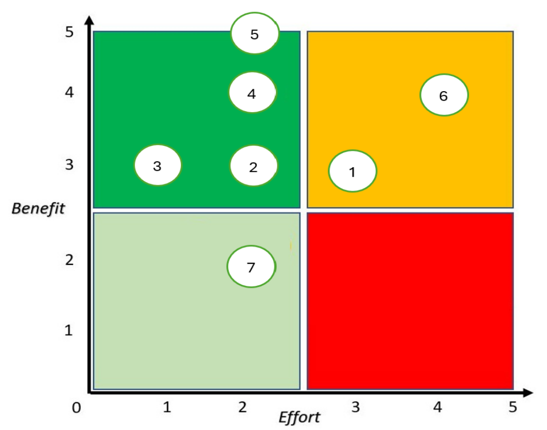

Figure 10

Benefit and Effort Matrix

Control

Standard operating processes (SOP) are essential for maintaining uniformity and compliance within an institution's operations. These written instructions detail the necessary steps for effective task execution and cannot be altered. SOPs provide policies, methods, and standards for thriving institutions, reducing waste, increasing performance, ensuring safety, and facilitating problem-solving. To improve the remuneration process for lecturers, several standards must be implemented:

1. Payment should be granted 15 days after contract signing.
2. Establish an itinerary with key dates and steps for an efficient process.
3. Deliver professors' documents one week before classes begin.
4. Provide training for current and new personnel.
5. Double-check contract information to reduce processing time.
6. Implement brief communications to keep parties informed.
7. Professors with excessive academic loads receive an additional contract without validation, taking a maximum of 2 days if necessary.
8. Each department should take one day for relevant procedures.
9. Acquire trained personnel as needed.
10. The process should take a maximum of fifteen days to complete.

Adhering to these standards will ensure an efficient and productive remuneration process, satisfying the needs of both current and prospective professors.

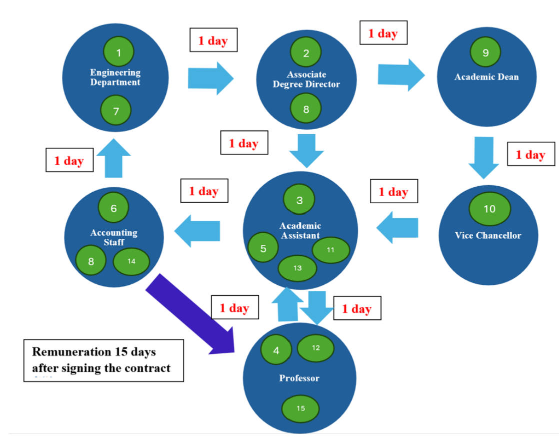

Figure 11

Critical Path Standardization of the Remuneration Process.

Figure 10 shows the critical path of the already standardized remuneration process, where 14 days were obtained to complete the remuneration process. In addition, it was established that payment to professors must be made 15 days after signing the contract or the next fortnight after signing it, which complies with the practices previously carried out in the institution. This will be possible if the above standards are carried out.

Conclusion

The research and implementations discussed offer several advantages, primarily in standardizing remuneration processes for engineering lecturers. The tools utilized have notably improved the process, with benefits including reduced communication time between departments, increased staff productivity and motivation, and clearer goal establishment. Importantly, these standards and improvements are not limited to engineering professors but can be applied institution-wide, benefiting both the client and the institution itself. Expanding these practices to other departments could lead to a more efficient remuneration process, despite potential external factors.

The project has successfully met its objectives, streamlining the remuneration process from four weeks and five days to 14 days, and reducing payment processing time from one month to 15 days. These improvements could potentially reduce processing time from 30 days to three months, marking a significant achievement considering the previous inefficiencies over the past five years. The project's success is further evidenced by the smooth collaboration and commitment of all involved parties in obtaining the necessary information for the investigation.

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