5 Common Process Fixes and What They Free Up

Five broken processes I see again and again in small and mid-sized businesses, the simple fix for each, and the kind of money and time it frees up. Steal whichever one fits you.

1. The onboarding nobody could follow

The problem. New hires sat idle for days because the steps were scattered across inboxes, wikis, and one busy manager's memory. Every hire relearned the same lessons.

The fix. One walkable onboarding playbook: each step with an owner, the how-to attached, and a sign-off so nothing is skipped.

Typical payoff. Onboarding time cut from about five days to two, and every future hire ramps the same way. Illustrative value: $8,000 to $20,000 a year in recovered ramp time for a growing team.

2. The offboarding that left the door open

The problem. People left but their access did not. There was no proof that accounts were removed, which is exactly what a SOC 2 auditor samples.

The fix. A step-by-step de-provisioning process with the removal captured and attested for each departure.

Typical payoff. Audit findings closed and a real security gap shut. Illustrative value: a failed control avoided, plus a faster, cheaper SOC 2 cycle.

3. The invoice approvals that leaked money

The problem. Invoices were paid late, twice, or without a clear approval. Nobody could say who signed off on what.

The fix. An accounts payable invoice-to-pay process with matching and clear approval gates before anything is paid.

Typical payoff. Fewer duplicate payments and late fees, and a clean approval trail. Illustrative value: $10,000 to $30,000 a year recovered for a mid-sized payables volume.

4. The client onboarding that depended on one person

The problem. Every client was served a little differently, and quality dipped whenever the best person was out. Handoffs dropped things.

The fix. A standard client onboarding playbook so every client gets the same path from signed contract to first deliverable.

Typical payoff. Faster time to first value and fewer dropped balls. Illustrative value: reduced early churn and less rework on every new engagement.

5. The know-how walking out the door

The problem. The real process lived in one veteran's head. When they left, the team lost months relearning what only they knew.

The fix. Capture the real process, judgment and exceptions included, into a followable playbook before the knowledge leaves.

Typical payoff. Continuity through turnover instead of a crisis. Illustrative value: months of rework and lost productivity avoided per departure.

Add those illustrative ranges up and it is easy to clear tens of thousands a year from a handful of fixes, on processes you already run every day.

Want to find yours? Book a free 20-minute call and I will help you pick the one process worth fixing first.

These are illustrative examples based on common SMB scenarios, not specific client results. Your numbers will vary with your volume, team, and starting point.