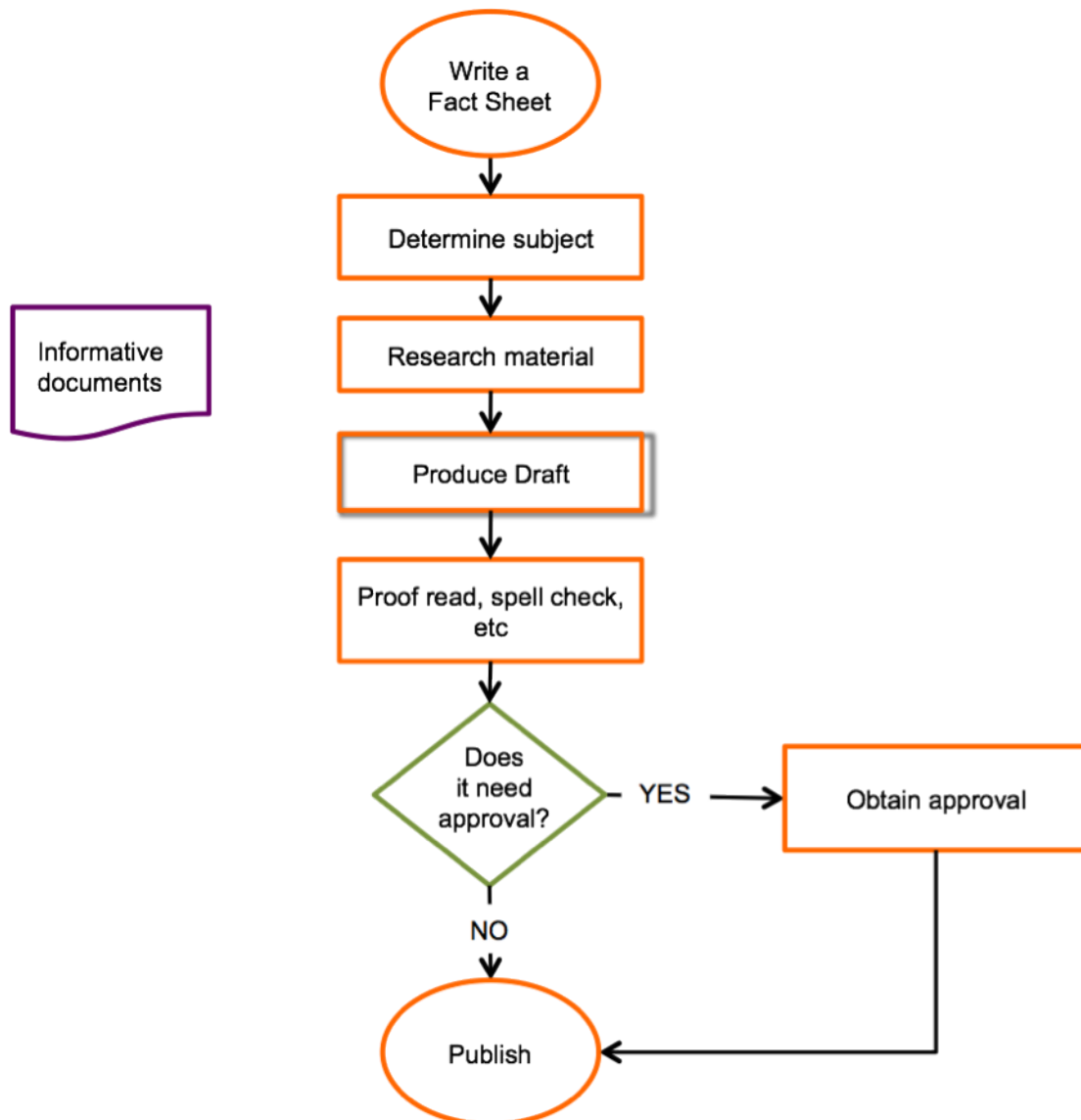




Flowcharting Unravelled

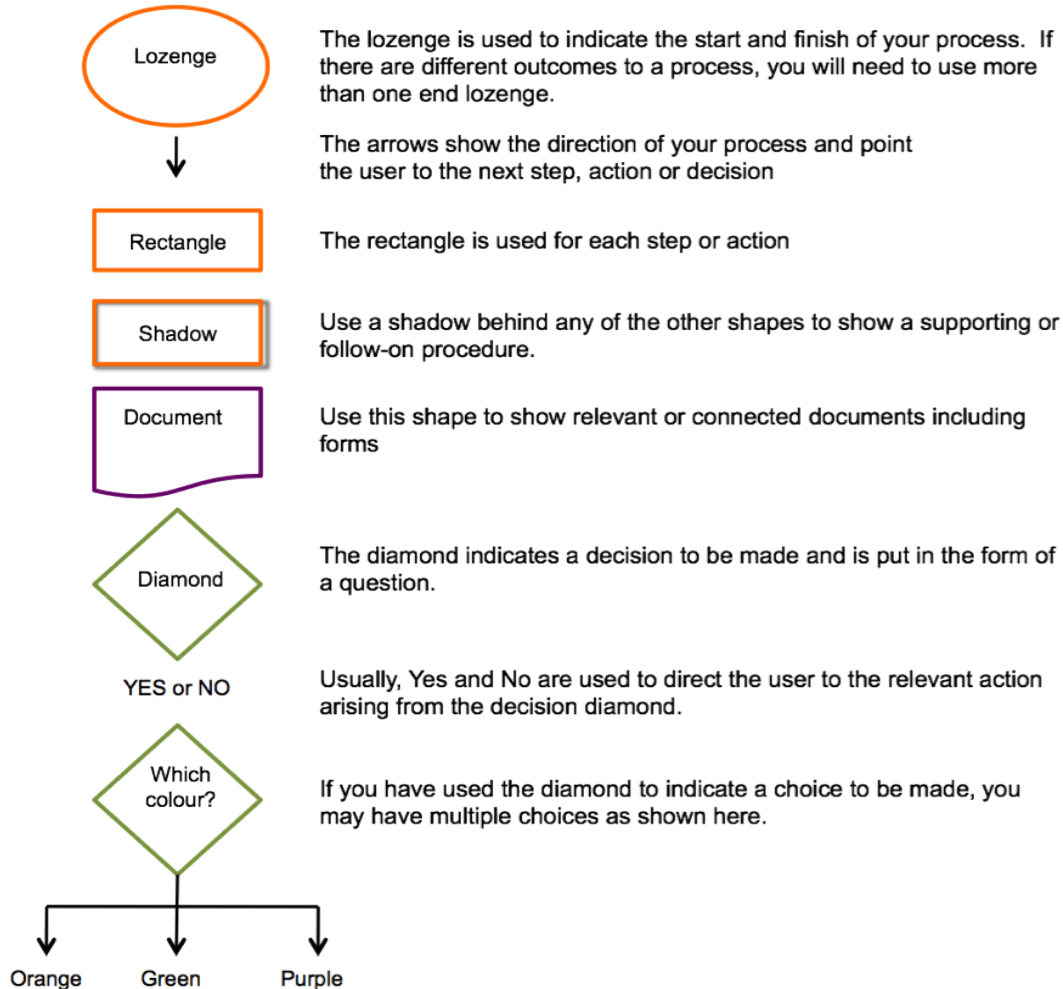
They say that a picture paints a thousand words and a flowchart is an effective way of presenting a process in pictorial form. A flowcharted process or procedure is clear and simple for the user to follow, showing where other documents, such as forms, fit in. You can even add tick boxes as a way of checking-off the actions taken. By flowcharting your processes and procedures, it will also be much easier to see where improvements can be made and where, for example, there are duplications of effort or unnecessary actions.

The idea of a 'flow process chart' was first introduced by an American engineer in 1921 and has since been adapted for all types of business use. At its simplest, a flowchart uses arrows to show the progress of steps in a process. It can also show the inputs and outputs to each step or action, and the decisions that need to be made along the way. The easiest way to illustrate this idea is, of course, with a picture!



They say a picture paints a thousand words and a flowchart is an effective way of presenting a process in pictorial form. A flowcharted process or procedure is clear and simple for the user to follow, showing where other documents, such as forms, fit in. You can even add tick boxes as a way of checking-off the actions taken. By flowcharting your processes and procedures, it will also be much easier to see where improvements can be made and where, for example, there are duplications of effort or unnecessary actions.

The standard shapes used commonly are as follows:



Drawing a flowchart need not be a complicated task. There are various commercial software packages available to help make flowcharting easy and it's available as a standard drawing option on Word, Excel and PowerPoint. It is generally best to keep your flowchart simple and to one page. If it looks incredibly lengthy and complicated you may want to break it down into smaller chunks or consider supporting the flowchart with a user guide for the detail.

For further information on flowcharting including fact sheets about other symbols and styles of flowchart email info@ssfb.co.uk.

Note:

Whilst this fact sheet gives general guidance on best practice relating to this topic at the time of drafting, it is not intended to be a comprehensive guide. You are advised to seek specific advice in relation to any particular issues that need to be addressed in relation to this topic by a competent person.

