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5 Things You Can Do with IBM Blueworks Live Playback

Playback is a feature of IBM Blueworks Live (BWL) that allows you to demonstrate certain paths of a business process.

What can sometimes be a difficult feat of understanding is made easier and more comprehensible through the use of playback. This is due to the ability to isolate only the aspects of a process that you want to showcase within a designated playback path.

The Blueworks Live Playback feature is useful for a number of reasons, including the fact that you can eliminate misunderstandings and miscommunication with the people who matter. With work being largely remote at the moment, it is important that communication and processes run as smoothly as possible. Playback allows you to communicate with colleagues and stakeholders through Blueworks Live. The ability to comment in real time ensures that all input from the subject matter experts and/or stakeholders is recorded and seen. Not only will you be able to show and explain, but with the help of others, you can improve your process in order to enhance your business.

With the ability to create up to 10 playback paths, you can explore a number of possible process paths in order to compare and analyse the steps of each, looking at costs, resources, participants etc.. This will allow you to explore and save 10 playback paths per process, so if you have a particularly intricate process you can look at each route in turn. Conversely, if you have a simpler process, you can explore the same paths in different combinations to find where efficiency could be improved.

Here are 5 things you can do with Blueworks Live Playback:

1) Share Remotely

Through the use of Blueworks Live playback, collaborators can easily interact whilst working remotely. Playback helps limit the misunderstanding of a business process whilst giving all the in-depth information that may be attached to activities within the process, including participants, documents, policies, etc..

As you run through a process on playback, each activity is highlighted respectively and makes their details available to view on the sidebar. This ensures that no information

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is left out, whilst also ensuring that everyone is aware of where in the process you are talking about.

As you are sharing your playback, viewers can leave comments affixed to each activity/milestone/gateway (any type of node). These comments stay associated with the artifact indefinitely or until someone with the proper access decides to delete it. Comments can be viewed within the artifact's details pop-up window, within the 'Comments' tab.

The editor of the process (or anyone with the correct permission) can also add text annotations to their activities to further provide detail about that stage of the process. These can be seen during playback. Text annotations are seen on the diagram and not in the sidebar.

2) Export to Microsoft Word

With new updates of the Blueworks Live software, you are now able to export your playback pathways to Microsoft Word. This means that you can view the path you isolated within a word document for any purpose you require, also giving you the ability to share them with people who do not have access to Blueworks Live. Just be sure that when you go to use these copies that they are the most recent version of the process.

The whole process is exported, but the activities not featured in the playback are greyed out so they do not distract from the path you have chosen. This allows you to see the context of the whole process whilst still focusing on your selected path and its role within the bigger picture.

You can also choose whether to export all saved playback paths or just a specific one so you can use them as required – see images 1 and 2 to see where to find the export links.

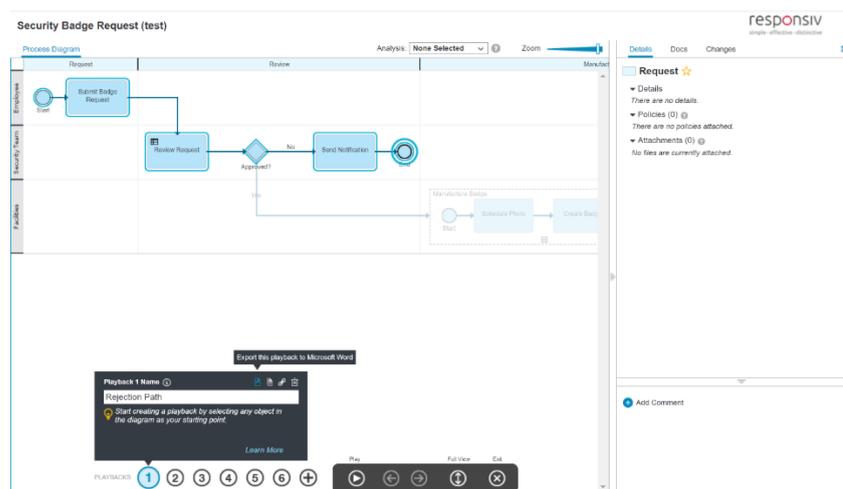


Figure 1: Where to click to export a specific playback path to Microsoft Word;

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Figure 2: Where to click to export all saved playbacks to Microsoft Word;

3) Compare Properties

Through playback you can further analyse a process by selecting properties you wish to be shown on the diagram. This means that it is easier to make comparisons on issues such as cost or resources. Blueworks Live automatically calculates the total cost of a process path throughout a playback, showing exactly where costs are arising, and which option is more cost effective (i.e., is onboarding cheaper to do on or off site?). This feature therefore helps to focus the attention of you and your audience to a particular property so that you do not get distracted by too many factors. If the purpose of outlining a process was to find ways to minimise costs, you can clearly see where this may be necessary and how you could potentially accomplish the reduction of costs.

Again, with the help of group collaboration, you can ensure not only that the values are correct, but that any new process decisions have the input of and are confirmed by everyone involved. This will make any transition between processes easier due to the relevant people being involved in the decision and mapping phases.

Image 3 shows where to find the analysis drop-down tab for you to select the property you wish to further analyse, as well as the view you will have on the playback path.

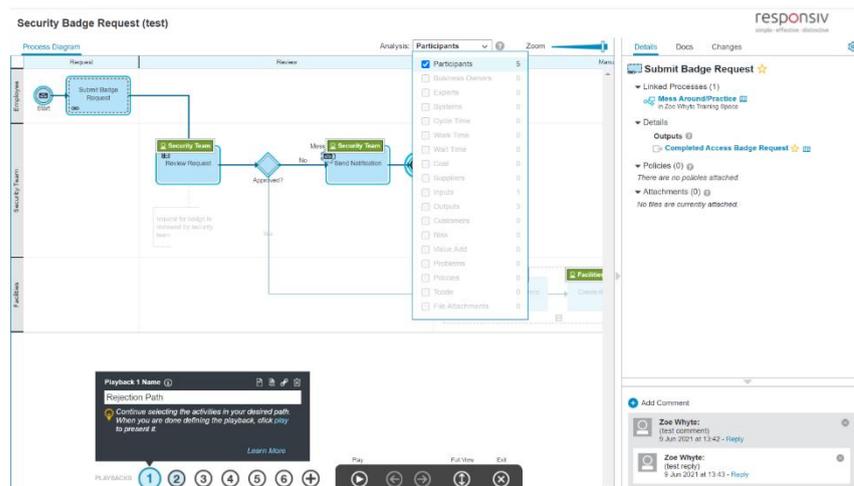


Figure 3: Where you can select properties to show for analysis (these properties are highlighted in association to an activity on the process blueprint);

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4) Change Routes Easily

It has been made easier than ever to create your specific playback paths, but what about when you reach an exclusive gateway or a subprocess where multiple outcomes are available, and you only want to show one? Simply Ctrl-click (Cmd-click on Mac) on the node (gateway or subprocess) to switch between paths. This also means that you do not have to manually select each activity in the path, as it is done automatically once you select which outcome you want to follow.

You can also include a sub flow for linked processes. A linked process is where you link another process from somewhere else in Blueworks Live – this is generally done if the process is too large to be a subprocess, or if it is used widely across Blueworks Live by other people as well (e.g., how to raise a ticket). Whilst making a playback path, hover over the link icon seen attached to the activity, and you will be redirected to the linked process where you can select the path you wish to follow. This will once more give you another dimension to your process and playback path, thus improving the information you have to work with.

Alternatively, you can choose not to show a linked process as a sub flow just by not selecting a path within the linked process (should you be viewing that page). This will leave the linked process out of the playback. However, the information in the sidebar will still show a process is linked, so that you are aware of further information. If someone wants to view this process you have the option to click the link and get redirected to said process.

Images 4 and 5 show where to access the linked process as well as the view of the potential sub flow for you to map out the path you choose. You can also see how to return to the parent process whilst in the linked process view page.

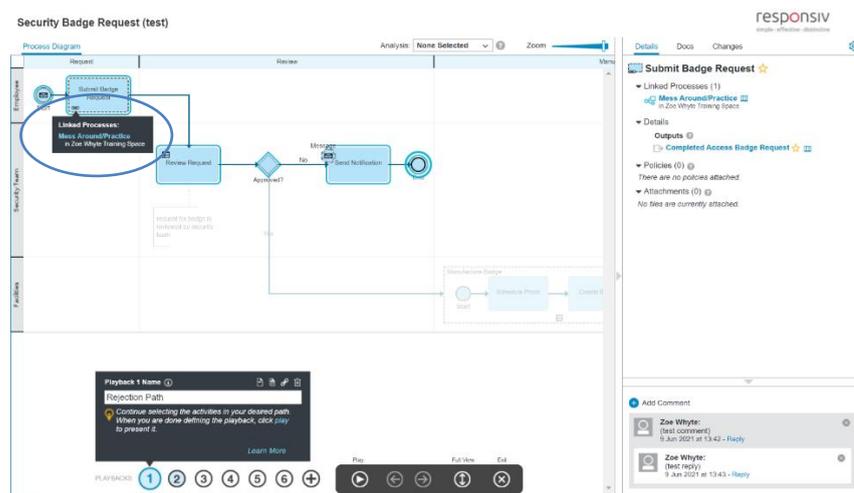


Figure 4: Where to view and include a linked process in a playback - hover over the link icon to see the attachment and click on the process name listed to be redirected to said process (you can also see the linked process listed in the sidebar with the other in);

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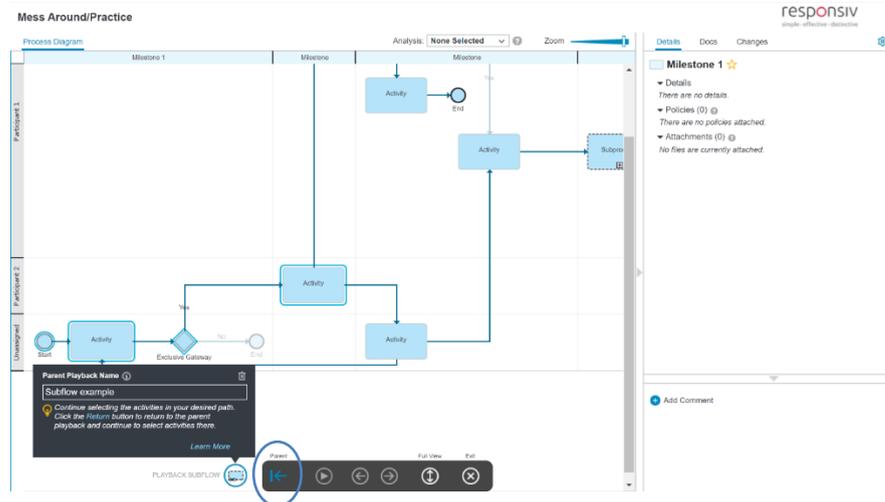


Figure 5: Linked process and the highlighted sub flow path which will show in the parent path run through (this sub flow path is shown and controlled the same way the parent path is, the only difference being the control panel at the bottom of the screen which now has an extra button to return to the parent path;

5) Quickly Select a Pathway

In order to save yourself the hassle of clicking through each node/activity you want to show, click the start and end activity/event of the process path you want and Blueworks Live will fill in the gaps! Not only will you save yourself time, but you will look like a whizz on all things Blueworks Live.

This may not be the most technically difficult thing you can do in Blueworks and may not add to your playback in terms of content, but in the long run it will help make your experience better.

For more information on how to create a process playback path on Blueworks Live, follow [creating and running process playbacks](#) .

This link can also be found through the 'Help' icon in Blueworks Live, along with any other information you may need in regard to mapping a process using Blueworks.

For more information on ways to learn the functions and features of Blueworks Live as done by someone new to the software see: [My Blueworks Live Learning Experience](#).

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