

ADVANCED WORKFLOW

Workshop

Advanced Workflow Workshop

Overview

This workshop will go over several more advanced Workflow techniques that are not typically covered in the initial training. It is meant for people who have already gone through an initial Workflow training, are familiar with setting up queries and adding fields, and have had hands-on experience creating Workflows.

Getting Started

Today we're going to cover some more advanced Workflow concepts. We are going to be jumping back and forth between the Windows Administrative Tool and the Web Version of Centerbase, so have both ready to go.

- To start off, open the **Workflow Manager** and create a new Workflow.
- Name it **Advanced Workflow Workshop**.
- Select **Matter** as the Item Type.
- Click **Create**.
- Open up the new Workflow and you'll notice that it has automatically created a Start Node, a Wait Node, and an Automatic Action to connect them.

Note: You never want to "wait" in the start Node of a Workflow. Most of the Workflow functionality assumes you are going to immediately leave the start node and handle any waiting somewhere else. For this reason, we don't recommend adding any conditions or multiple actions in the start node itself. Just have one Automatic Action with no query that gets you out right away.

- Rename the **First Step** Wait Node to **Wait for Retainer**.

Splitting a Workflow & Always Active Nodes

In our case, we do want to have multiple actions as soon as the Workflow starts.

- Click on **New Node** and make it a **Condition Node** called **Splitter** and mark it as **Multi-Result**.
- Then add a **Wait Node** and call it **Actions that are Always Available**.

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- Now we're going to add two Automatic Actions to our Splitter. One called **Send Welcome Email** that goes to the **Wait for Retainer** Node and another called **Split to Actions** that goes to the **Actions that are Always Available** Node.

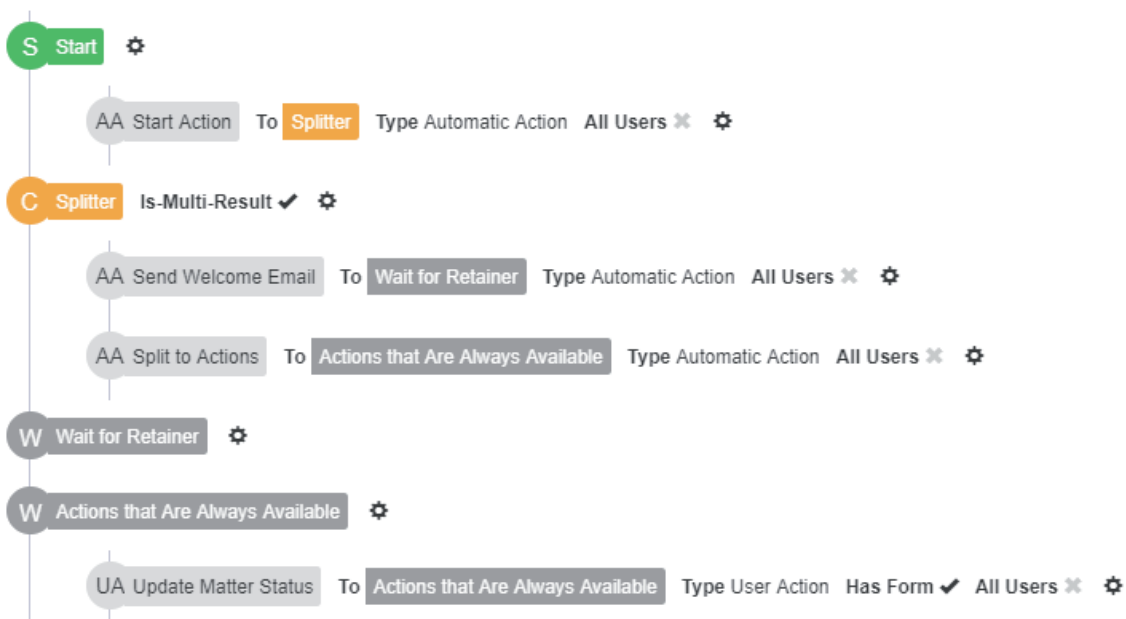
By marking our condition Node as Multi-Result and sending it in two directions, we have now split our Workflow. Instead of just being linear and going from one stage to the other, it now has multiple active Nodes.

- On the **Actions that are Always Available** Node, add a User Action called **Update Matter Status** that just loops back on the same node (**Actions that are Always Available**).
- Add a **Form** to this Action that prompts for the **Matter Status** field.

By doing this, we have created a User Action that will always be available to the user as long as the Workflow does not end. No matter where else we progress in the Workflow, the user will always be able to take this **Update Matter Status** action. This can save you a lot of duplication if there is an action you always want to provide. If you don't do it this way, you'll have to repeatedly add this action to each Node that is active that you want this action available on.

Workflow Details Edit New Node

Workflow: Advanced Workflow Workshop / Details



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Escalation

Now that we have our perpetual Action, let's go back down the other path. This next stage deals with welcoming the new client and waiting for a retainer to be received. We want to send escalating e-mails as time goes by and the retainer hasn't been received.

To prepare for this, let's go to the Windows Administrators Tool and create some fields and e-mail templates.

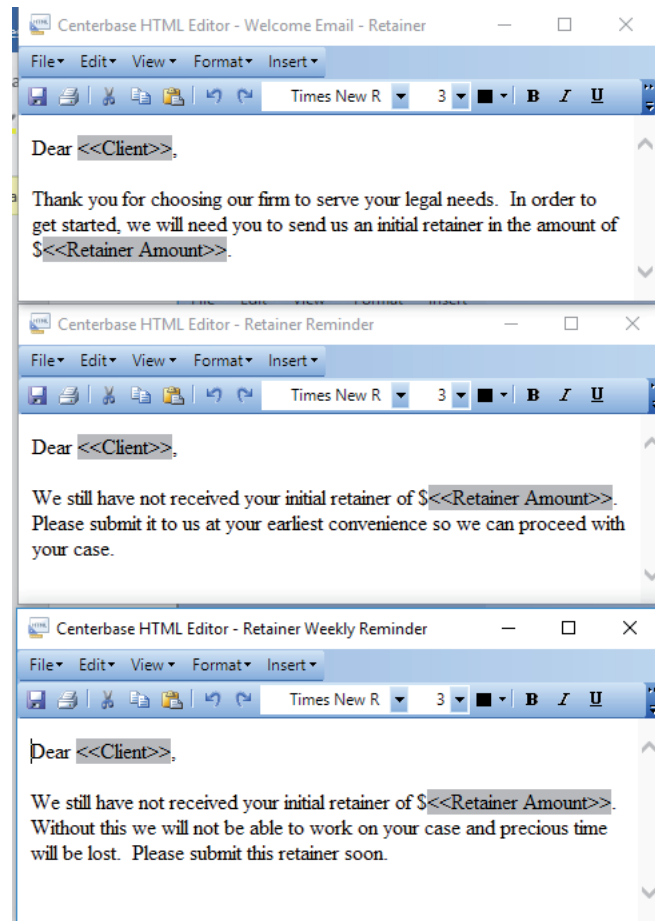
- Open the **Item Manager** and add the following fields:
 - **Retainer Amount** – Number, REQUIRED
 - **WF: Welcome Email Sent On** – Date w/ Time
 - **WF: Retainer Received On** – Date w/ Time
 - **WF: Retainer Escalation** – Text
 - **WF: Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent** – Date w/ Time
- Now, still in the Windows Administrators Tool, go to **Reports**, then **HTML Editor**
- Create 3 e-mails.
 - Welcome e-mail
 - Reminder e-mail
 - Escalated reminder e-mail that will be sent out weekly

The text isn't too important, so just set up the Subject and Body with something that identifies each one. Feel free to include some basic details about the matter such as the amount of the retainer.

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- Go back to the Workflow Manager.
- On our **Send Welcome Email Action**, we are going to add two Commands.
 - Add an **Update Command** that will set the **Matter Welcome Email Sent On** field to the current date/time.
 - Now add an **E-mail Command** to the Action. Choose your **Welcome Email template**. For the Sender/From, just use Text and specify your own e-mail address and name. For the Recipient/To, choose Lookup as the type. You might notice that the E-mail Command has some new functionality, you no longer have to type Field IDs in to it. You can simply use the dropdown to select the Lookup and E-mail field you want. In this case, choose the Client Lookup field and whatever e-mail address field you think is appropriate.

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Date-Based Queries

So now we've begun our Workflow and sent out a welcome e-mail. We are now ready to start building the escalation logic. In order to do this, we're going to need a couple of queries.

- Go to the **Advanced Search** for **Matters**.

The first query is a simple one to tell us if the retainer has already been received.

- Set up one condition that checks if the **Retainer Received On Date** is **Not Empty**.
- Save this as **WF: Retainer Already Received**.

The next Query will check if we've been waiting more than 5 days for a retainer.

- Set the first condition to verify that **Retainer Received On Date** is **Empty**.
- The second condition verifies that **Retainer Escalation** field is **Empty** (more on this later).
- The third and final condition will be a date-based condition. When setting up a Query that is based on a date, you have to use the **Advanced Date Range Options** (example: Next 30 days or Past 2 weeks). Choose **Welcome Email Sent On** as your field, then click the **Date Picker**, and choose **More Date Options**.
- In the Date Range dialog, choose the **Advanced** tab and say where the **Date is On or Before the Past 5 Days**. This will cause the Workflow to check the **Welcome Email Sent On field** and set a timer to go off 5 days after that date.
- Click **Apply**.
- Save your query as **WF: Retainer is 5 Days Late**.

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Existing Queries

WF - Retainer is 5 Days Late

Query Type: Private. Active status: Active

Conditions List the records where ...

ALL of these conditions are true:

WF - Retainer Received On

is empty

AND WF - Welcome Email Sent On

is on or before

On or Before Past 5 Days

AND WF - Retainer Escalation

is empty

Select...

[Add a new condition](#)

We're going to do one more query for the final escalation.

- Set the first condition to verifies **Retainer Received On** is **Empty**.
- For the second condition add a **Date Condition** to check if **Welcome Email Sent On** is on or before the **Past 30 Days**.
- The third condition is a group of conditions. Add a new condition checking if **Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent** is **Empty**.
- Click the **Add to Group button** on the far right of the condition to create a new group.
- Change the group to check if **ANY** of the conditions are **True**.
- Add one more condition to the group that checks if the **Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent** is on or before the **Past 7 Days**.
- Save your query as **WF: Retainer is 30 Days Late**.

This will do a couple of things. This will first check if we haven't gotten a retainer yet and if it has been more than 30 days. If so, it will then verify that we have either never sent a weekly reminder e-mail, or the last e-mail sent was more than 7 days ago.

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Existing Queries

WF - Retainer is 30 Days Late Query Type: Private. Active status: Active

Conditions List the records where ...

ALL of these conditions are true:

WF - Retainer Received On is empty

AND WF - Welcome Email Sent On is on or before On or Before Past 30 Days

[Add a new condition](#)

AND ANY of these conditions are true:

WF - Last Retainer Email Sent is empty

OR WF - Last Retainer Email Sent is on or before On or Before Past 7 Days

Setting up the Escalation

Armed with these queries, we are ready to setup our escalation.

- Go back to the **Workflow Manager** and open your Workflow.
- Add a Condition Node called **“Is Matter Assigned?”**. This will be the next stage after the retainer is received.
- Add a User Action called **Retainer Received** that goes to the **Is Matter Assigned** Node.
- Add an Update Command to update the **Retainer Received On** field to the **Current Date/ Time** and clear out the **Retainer Escalation** field.
- Next, we’ll add an Automatic Action called **Retainer Already Received** that goes to the **Is Matter Assigned** Node. Have this use the **Retainer Already Received** query. This is added for convenience. If the retainer was already received, there is no need to wait for someone to take a user action to move the Workflow forward. It’s nice to build in flexibility in your Workflows where they can either wait for a user to take an action or automatically realize if that action is not needed.

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Now for the escalation actions:

- First, we'll create an Automatic Action called **Retainer is Overdue By 5 Days** that loops back on the **Wait for Retainer** Node. Have it use the **Retainer is 5 Days Late** query.
- Add an E-mail Command to send our first reminder e-mail to the client.
- Then add an Update Command to set the **Retainer Escalation** text field to **Initial Email**.

Note: This step is extremely important as this is what will prevent the Action from going into an infinite loop. Remember, we told the query to fire if the retainer has not been received for more than 5 days AND if the Retainer Escalation field is empty. Since we are updating the field, this will prevent the Automatic Action from continuously resolving as true.

We've now got it setup where a user can manually take an action to say the retainer has been received or the Workflow can automatically detect if it has been. We've also setup the first level of escalation to say if it has been more than 5 days that it should send a reminder e-mail.

Now for the next level of escalation:

- Create an Automatic Action called **Retainer is overdue by 30 days – Send email every week** that loops back on the **Wait for Retainer** Node. Have it use the **Retainer is 30 Days Late** query.
- Add an E-mail Command to send our weekly reminder e-mail to the client.
- Add an update command to set the **Retainer Escalation** to **Weekly Email** and the **Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent** to the **Current Date/Time**.

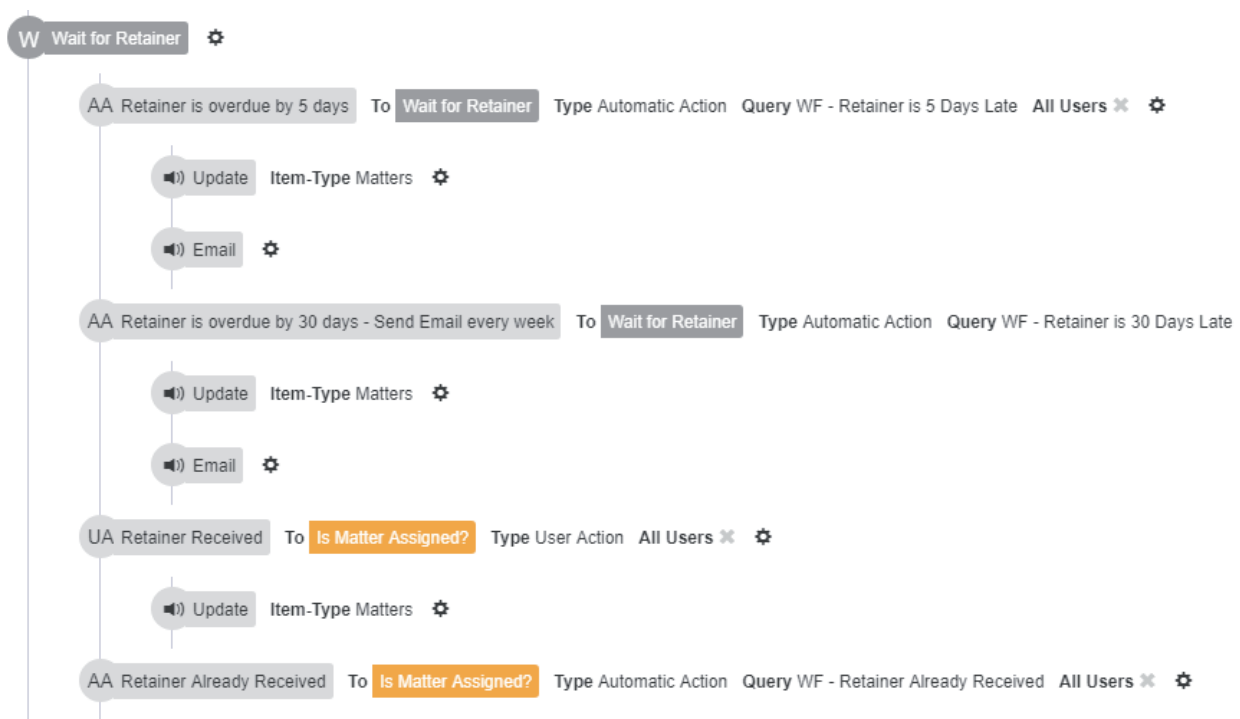
Now when the Workflow hits this stage and it has been more than 30 days since the matter was opened without a retainer being received, it will first note that the Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent is empty (like we specified in our query). It will send the email and set the Sent date to today. Now that it is not empty, the Workflow will not continue (thanks to the way we setup the query) unless a retainer is received, or 7 days goes by. When the Workflow notices that the last e-mail was sent over 7 days ago, it will send it again and update the date again. This will continue until the retainer is received or the Workflow is stopped.

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Note: This is just one example of an escalation. An escalation doesn't necessarily need to stay in the same Node. If you set up the actions and queries correctly, you can have it go to other Nodes (such as a task Node if you want to assign someone to do something). You can have it send e-mails internally to the firm or externally to the people associated with the matter. Perhaps you want a reminder e-mail to go to the managing partner and if it hasn't been resolved it might then go out to the whole firm so everyone knows something needs to be done. It's all about setting up the right queries, actions, and commands.



Testing it out

We've added enough to our Workflow at this point to where we can try it out and see how it is working.

- Create a new Matter and set the Client to **Centerbase**. Make sure to set your e-mail address on the client so e-mails don't go out to people while you are testing.
- Update your Matter Form Layout to show the **Welcome Email Sent On**, **Retainer Received On**, **Retainer Escalation**, and **Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent** fields so we can see some of the inner workings of the Workflow in action.
- Attach the matter to your **Advanced Workflow Workshop** Workflow.

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You'll notice right away that it sets the Welcome Email Sent On field and if you check the history it is both waiting for retainer and waiting in the Actions that are Always Available Node.

- Click the **Workflow** button at the top and you'll see that your **Update Matter Status** Action is available.
- Click **Update Matter Status** and change the status. After clicking the button, you'll still have the same actions available. This won't affect the rest of your Workflow.

Now, let's do some time travelling. We don't actually want to wait 5 or 30 days.

- Edit your Matter and change the **Welcome Email Sent On** field to **10** days ago.

You'll see that Workflow Escalation gets set to Initial Email and you'll get a second email reminding you about the retainer.

- Adjust the date again to **35** days ago.

Now you'll see the Workflow Escalation gets set to Weekly Email, you get another Email, and now the Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent has been set to today. If you adjust the Last Weekly Retainer Reminder Sent to **3** days ago, nothing will happen, but if you adjust it to more than **10** days ago it will immediately reset to today and send another email.

- Select **Retainer Received** from the **Workflow Actions**. This will set the Retainer Received On date to today and move forward in the Workflow, stopping the cycle of e-mails.

Restarting a Workflow

We also setup an Automatic Action that will let us more easily move forward with this Workflow if it is ever re-started.

- Click on the **Workflow** button and select **End Workflow**.
- Confirm that you want to end it.
- Re-attach the matter to the Workflow.

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If you look at the history, you'll see that the Workflow automatically skipped over the Wait for Retainer step because the matter indicated the retainer had already been received. We also could have setup additional conditions to prevent the welcome e-mail from being sent, but we skipped that due to time constraints. After this workshop, use what you learned today and try adjusting the Workflow logic to where it will only send the welcome e-mail if we haven't yet sent it for this matter.

Validating Fields

Another good use for a Workflow is validating that fields have a value. Centerbase allows you to specify a field is required, but this only applies to when an item is first created. Sometimes, however, there are fields that can't be filled in right away, but are required before moving forward (such as a Court Date or Amount of Judgement).

Let's setup our Workflow to validate some fields. We're going to need a couple more fields and queries, so let's get those out of the way.

- Go to the **Item Manager** and add **Paralegal 1** and **Paralegal 2** fields to the Matter (both are lookup fields for Users).
- While in the Admin Tool, go to **Manage Users** and add a **Group**. Name the Group **Matter Management** and add yourself to it.
- Back on the Web, go to **Matter Advanced Search** and set up a query that checks if **Paralegal 1** is **Empty** OR **Paralegal 2** is **Empty**.
- Save it as **WF: Matter is NOT Assigned**.
- Create another query where we check if **Paralegal 1** is **Not Empty** AND **Paralegal 2** is **Not Empty**.
- Save it as **WF: Matter is Assigned**.

Now back in the Workflow Manager, let's add 2 more Nodes:

- First, add a Condition Node called **Create Research Items** (more on this in the next stage).
- Then, add a task Node called **Assign Matter**.

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You'll notice that on the task Node you now have the option of setting a date on it. Previously a task would always be created with today's date as the due date, but now you can adjust this.

- Set the **Start Date** on the Task Node to the **Current Date/Time**. Click the **Add Time** button and choose you want to add a **Number** value of **2 Days**.
- Repeat the last step for the **End Date**.

With this functionality you can add or subtract time, not only from the current date but also from field values. This would allow you to setup multiple tasks/deadlines based on the Court Date (for instance) with each one taking place X days/weeks/months before or after the court date. You can even make the amount of time to add/subtract variable. Let's say you had a field called Payment Terms which represented the number of days someone had to pay. You could use that field and say you want to set the date as the current date/time and add the number of days in the Payment Terms field. The same date adjustment functionality is available on create and update commands on any date or date/time field including on Activities.

Now to hook up the Nodes.

- Add an Automatic Action to **Is Matter Assigned** that goes to **Assign Matter** and have it use the **Matter is NOT Assigned** query.
- Setup another Automatic Action that goes to **Create Research Items** that uses the **Matter Is Assigned** query.
- To finish this area off, let's assign the Task Node to the **Matter Management** group.

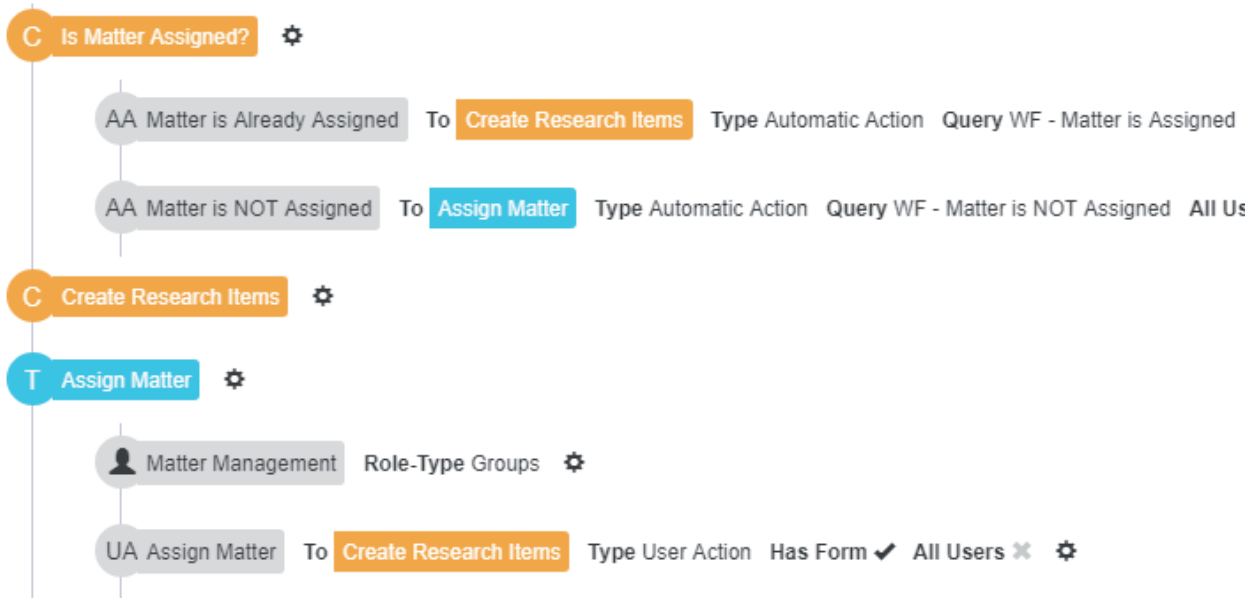
Note: It is always best to either assign things based on a Lookup Field (like Managing Partner) or a group. That way if people leave the firm you don't have to re-write the whole Workflow, you can just assign people to the proper groups and lookup fields.

- Now add a User Action to the **Assign Matter** task Node called **Assign Matter**. Have it go to the **Create Research Items** Node.
- Add a Form to it prompting for **Paralegal 1** and **Paralegal 2** (both required).

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Child Workflows

For the final stage of the Workflow, we are going to be working with Child Workflows.

- First, go to the **Item Manager** in the Windows Administrative Tool and add a new Item Type called **Legal Research**.
- Add the following fields to the **Legal Research** item:
 - **Matter** – Lookup field to a matter
 - **Assigned To** – Lookup field to a user
 - **Ready for Submission** – a True/False field
- On matters add one more field:
 - **WF: Legal Research Last Updated** – a Date/Time field
- Back in the **Workflow Manager**, add two more Nodes to your Workflow. A wait Node called **Wait for**

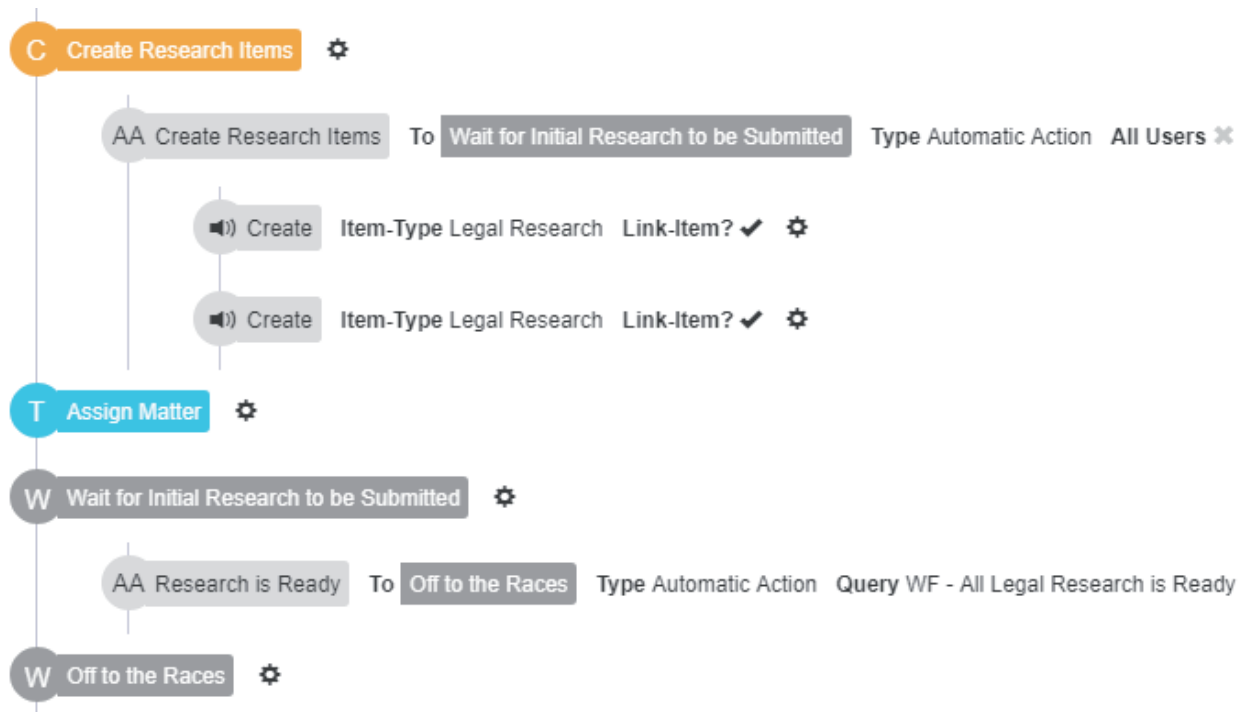
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Initial Research to be Submitted and another wait Node called **Off to the Races**.

- Go to the **Create Research Items** Node and add an Automatic Action called **Create Research Items** that goes to the **Wait for Initial Research to be Submitted** Node.
- Add two create commands that will each create a **Legal Research** record and set the following fields:
 - **Matter** – set to the **Matter.ID** field
 - **Assigned To** – set to the **Matter.Paralegal 1** field on the first command and the **Matter.Paralegal 2** field on the second command.



Now we need to setup a new Workflow for **Legal Research**. This will allow us to track the progress of both of them and move forward in the Workflow after both paralegals have submitted their research.

- Go to the **Workflow Manager** and add a new Workflow called **Legal Research**.

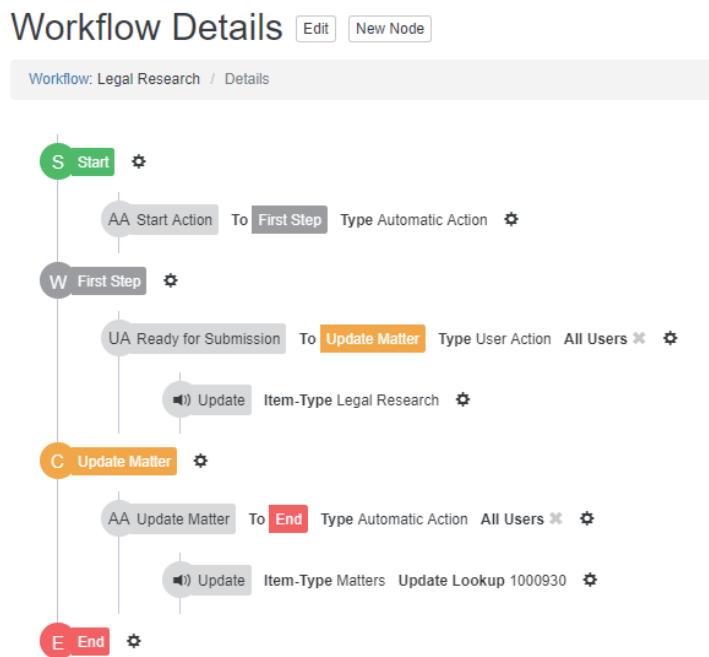
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- Set the type to **Legal Research** and check the box to **Run the Workflow on Object Creation**.
- Add a **Condition** Node called **Update Matter** and an **End** Node called **End**.
- In the **First Step** Node, add a User Action called **Ready for Submission** that goes to the **Update Matter** Node.
- Add an **Update** Command to this Action that sets the **Ready for Submission** field on **Legal Research** to **True**.
- Add an Automatic Action to the Update Matter Node called **Update Matter** that goes to the **End** Node.
- Add an **Update** Command to this Action to set the **Legal Research Last Updated** field on the Matter to the **Current Date/Time**.

This will now allow someone to mark the legal research as ready for submission and notify the matter that it should re-evaluate its Workflow (by setting a field on the matter). The reason we put the update matter command in a separate Node is because we wanted to ensure that it happened AFTER the Legal Research had been updated. This is important if the matter Workflow depends on this value.



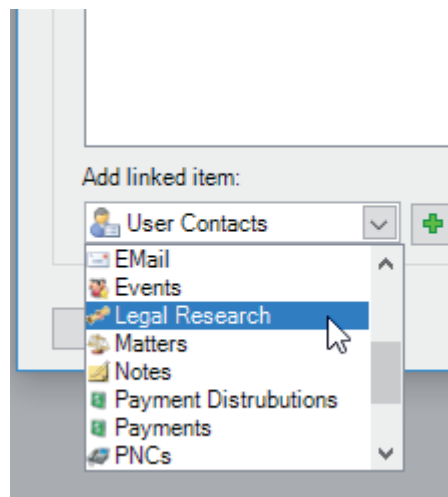
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We'll need to add a field to our Matter Data View in order to properly evaluate this.

- Go to the Windows Administrative Tool and click on **Admin -> Data Views**.
- Select **Matter** as the Item Type and then dropdown the **Add** linked item box in the bottom left.
- Select **Legal Research** and click the Green + button.
- Click on the Item in the list on the left that says **[Legal Research]** and check the field for **Ready for Submission**. This will allow you to query across ALL of the Legal Research linked to a matter and check if they are ALL ready for submission.



- Head back to **Matter Advanced Search** and add one more query. Set the condition to **[Legal Research]. Ready for Submission is True**.
- Save the query as **WF: All Legal Research is Ready**.

Now we can finish our Matter Workflow.

- Add an Automatic Action to Wait for **Initial Research to be Submitted** that goes to **Off to the Races**. Use the query we just created (**All Legal Research is Ready**).
- Finally Edit the matter Workflow and set it to **automatically run upon creation**.

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And with that, our Workflow is complete.

Testing and Conclusion

- Create a new matter and set it to the same client we used previously (so we get all the e-mails). This should automatically start the Workflow and wait for the retainer.
- Take the **Retainer Received** action and now it is waiting for the matter to be assigned.
- Assign yourself as both **paralegals** (just for testing purposes) and it will create two Legal Research records for the matter.
- Go to one of them and mark it as **Ready for Submission**. The matter will still be waiting for the research to complete.
- Go to the second Legal Research and mark it as **Ready for Submission** and now the matter will move on to the Off to the Races stage.

Congratulations, you've now created an advanced Workflow that uses a variety of techniques such as splitting a Workflow, having an always active Node, escalation when things are overdue, creating child records with their own Workflow that influences the parent's Workflow, and new advanced date features to add/subtract time.

You can use these in your own Workflows and build up on them to create even more powerful Workflows for your clients. They can help you make sure things don't fall through the cracks and the process is as user-friendly as possible for people using the Workflow.

Check out support.centerbase.com for more tutorials, tips, and tricks to help you create and improve your workflows.