
Q-flow 3.0: Business Process Administrator

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Q-flow 3.0

Business Process Administrator

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Introduction

The purpose of this manual is to explain how the business process administrator works. The business process administrator makes it possible to alter workflows by performing operations such as pausing them, making them go back, etc. These operations may be performed massively, that is, it is possible to simultaneously select several workflows in order to perform an operation on all of them.

Connecting to the server and security

The first time you run the business process administrator, you will have to specify how the tool must connect to the server. This section describes how to do that, and also how to configure access permissions for the tool.

Configuring the connection to the server

The first thing that will appear the first time you try to run the administrator is a window in which you may set up the connection to the backend services (Figure 1). This window shows the following options:

- **Server name:** the name of the server to which you wish the tool to connect.
- **Connect Using:** connection method (.net Remoting, Web services or MSMQ). To choose the right option, you must know which options are available in the selected server.
- **Sub Address:** the sub address of the server. This datum must also be known beforehand, but by default it is 6006 and, in general, modifying it is not necessary. If 6006 does not work, consult the network administrator.
- **Logon information:**
 - Use my network credentials: uses the credentials of the current user.
 - Use the following Credentials: makes it possible to specify a user name and a password that will be used to connect to the server.
- **Automatically connect to this server:** this option causes the tool to use this configuration to automatically connect to the server the following times you run it.

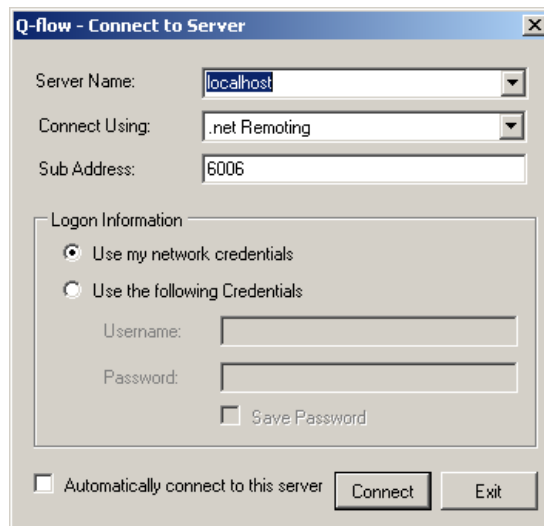


Figure 1 Connecting to the server

Security options

The security options allow you to define who can and who cannot access the business process administrator, and which operations those that are allowed to use the tool are allowed to perform.

To open the security options window, select, in the “Tools” menu, the “Options” option. Q-flow shows a window like the one in Figure 2.

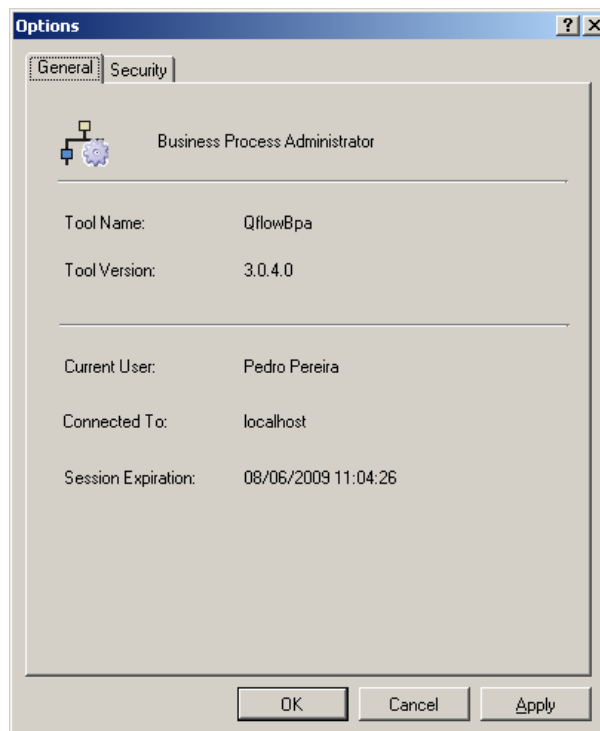


Figure 2 Options windows

The first tab of the window shows several data:

- **Tool name**
- **Tool version**
- **Current user:** the user that is currently running the tool.
- **Connected to:** the name of the server to which the tool is connected.
- **Session Expiration:** the date and time at which the current session will expire.

The second tab (Figure 3) allows you to configure access permissions to the tool:

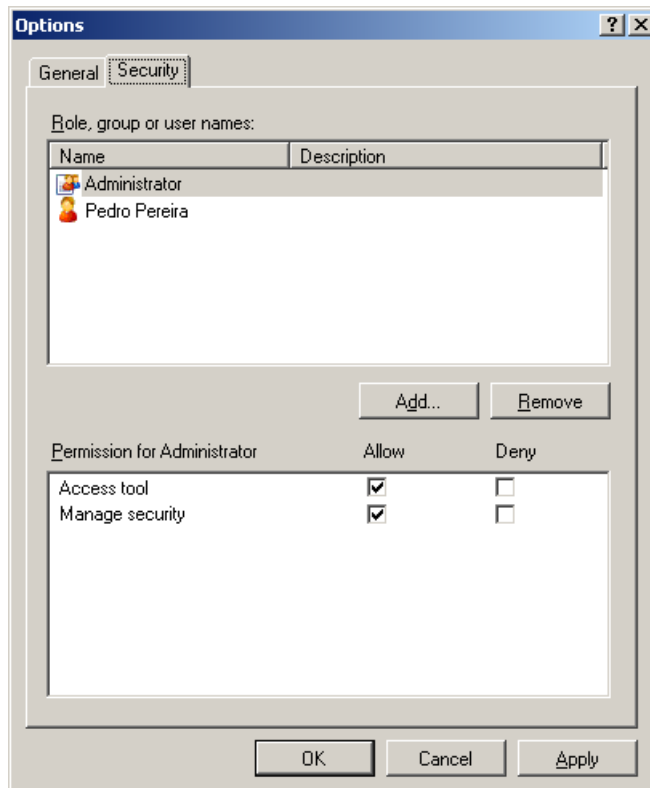


Figure 3 Security

The upper part of the window (the one that bears the text “Role, group or user names”) shows the security roles, groups and users that are allowed access to the tool. The “Add...” button allows you to add security roles, groups and users to the list. The “Remove” button allows you to remove the selected element from the list. For more information about security roles, see the organization model manual.

The lower part of the window shows the permissions of the selected element. There are two types of operation:

- **Access tool:** allows a user to run the business process administrator.
- **Manage security:** allows a user to modify permissions of access to the tool.

Description of the user interface

Figure 4 shows the business process administrator's main screen. To the left of the screen is the package tree (the concept of a package is explained in the business process modeler manual).

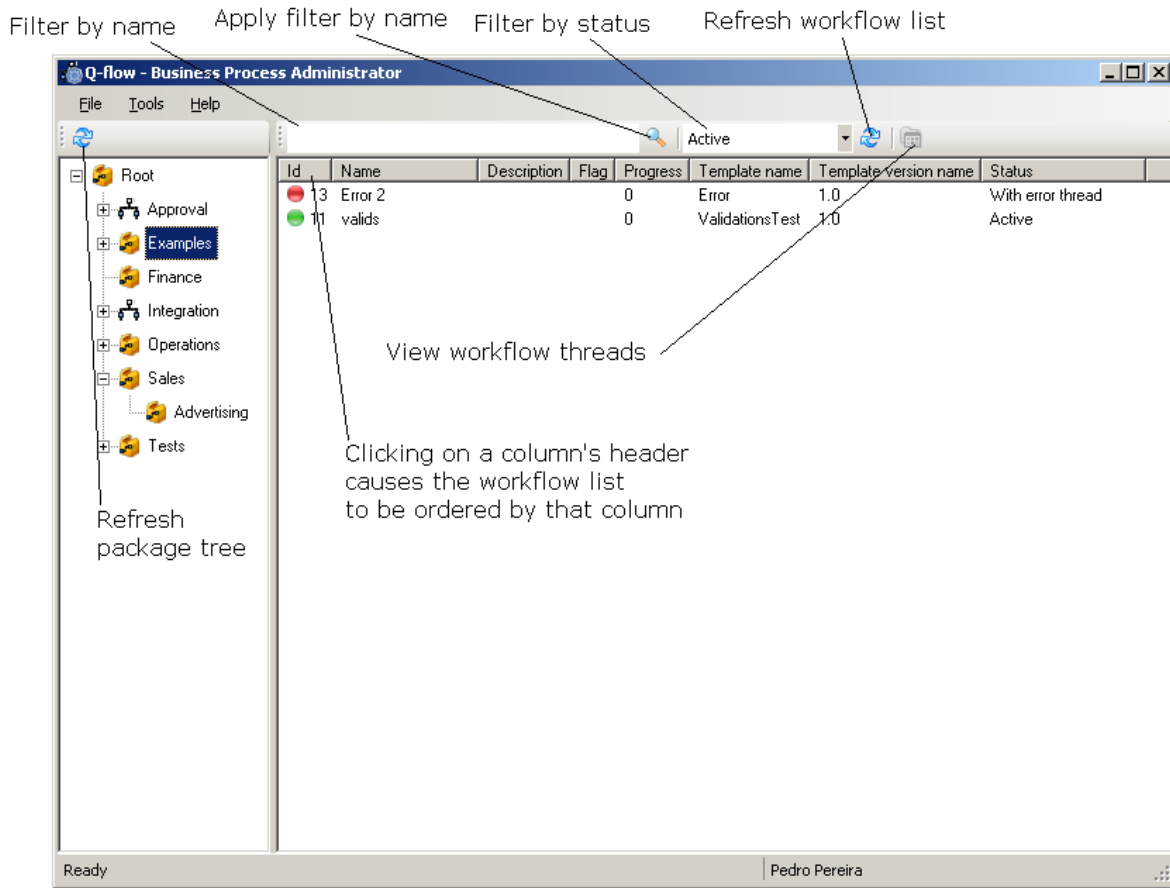


Figure 4 Main screen

Workflow data:

For each workflow, the following data are shown:

- **Id:** the numeric, correlative workflow's identifier.
- **Name:** the workflow's name.
- **Description:** the workflow's description.
- **Flag:** the workflow' flag. For all steps of the process, a starting flag may be defined. For some steps, a finishing flag may be defined too. When a workflow reaches a step, the workflow's flag becomes the text of this step's starting flag. When the workflow leaves a step, its flag becomes the text of that step's finishing flag. Thus, the flag indicates, in a way, the state of the workflow, or in which point of the process it currently is.

- **End date:** if the workflow has finalized, this column shows the date in which it ended its execution.
- **Template name:** the name of the template to which the workflow belongs.
- **Template version name:** the name of the template version to which the workflow belong.
- **Status:** the workflow's status. Possible statuses are:
 - **Finalized:** the workflow has finished its execution.
 - **Finalized by use:** the workflow was forcibly finished by a user.
 - **Active:** the workflow us running and has no errors. It may be waiting for a ser to act.
 - **With error thread:** at least one thread is stopped due to an error.
 - **Pauses:** someone has paused the workflow.

In addition, for each workflow, a semaphore is shown that indicates its status:

- Workflow active with no errors
- Workflow active with a thread in a state of error
- Finalized workflow
- Paused workflow

Figure 5 The semaphore that indicates the status of a workflow

For more information on each thread of a workflow, double-click on the workflow, or click on the button that is to the right of the button that lets you refresh the workflow list (Figure 4).

Filtering the workflow list

As shown in Figure 4, it is possible to filter the workflow list.

Filtering workflows by name

Above and to the left of the workflow list is a text box (in the figure, the text box is labeled “Filter by name”). If you click on the icon representing a magnifying glass (“Apply filter by name”), Q-flow filters the workflow list so that in only shows workflows whose names contain the text you entered in the text box.

Filter workflows by status

To the right of the text box that allows you to filter workflows by name, there is a combo box that allows you to filter the workflow list by status (“Filter by status”, Figure 4).

The options you may select from the list are all possible workflow statuses:

- **All:** this is the default option. All workflows of the selected package are shown.
- **Active:** only active workflows are shown. Active workflows are the ones that are running (not finished). Workflows with waiting threads and threads in error are active workflows.
- **With waiting thread:** only workflows that wait for a user's action are shown (for example, a workflow may be waiting for a user to respond to a question step). Workflows with waiting threads are active workflows. Therefore, they are also shown if the “Active” option is selected.
- **With error thread:** only workflows that contain a thread in error are shown.
- **Paused:** only paused workflows are shown.
- **Finalized:** if you select this option, the list will only show workflows that have finished their execution. Workflows that have been forcibly finalized by a user are also shown.

Operations on workflows

There are four operations you may perform on workflows:

- **Pause:** pauses a workflow. When a workflow is paused, it does not move forward, and its pending tasks are not shown among waiting tasks. A workflow can be paused only if at least one of its threads is not moving forward.
- **Resume:** it reverts the state of a paused workflow back to its original state.
- **Finalize:** it forcibly finalizes a workflow, that is, it stops its execution and sets its status as finalized.
- **Delete:** it removes a finalized workflow from the database.

To execute one of this operations, right-click on the workflow on which you wish to apply the operation and choose the operation from the context menu.

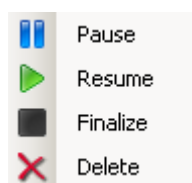


Figure 6 Operations

It is possible to cause a workflow to go back, or to retry the execution of one of its steps. These operations, though, are operations on a workflow's threads, and in order to perform them you must open the threads window.

You may also perform an operation on several workflows at the same time. To do that, select several workflows by leaving the "Ctrl" key down while selecting the workflows one by one. Then, right-click on any one of the selected workflows so that the context menu is shown and select the operation you wish to perform.

If the operation you wish to perform is not available for all of the selected workflows, it will not be enabled in the context menu. For example, you may not apply the "Resume" operation to a workflow that is not paused. Therefore, if you simultaneously select a paused workflow and an active workflow, the "Resume" operation will not be available. In these cases, you must deselect the workflows that cause the operation you wish to perform to be disabled.

Threads of a workflow

The threads window of a workflow shows information regarding the threads of a workflow. To open it, do any of the following things:

- Double-click on the workflow.
- Right-click on the workflow and select the "View threads" option.
- Select the workflow and click on the "View workflow threads" button (this button is to the right of the "Refresh workflow list" button; see Figure 4).

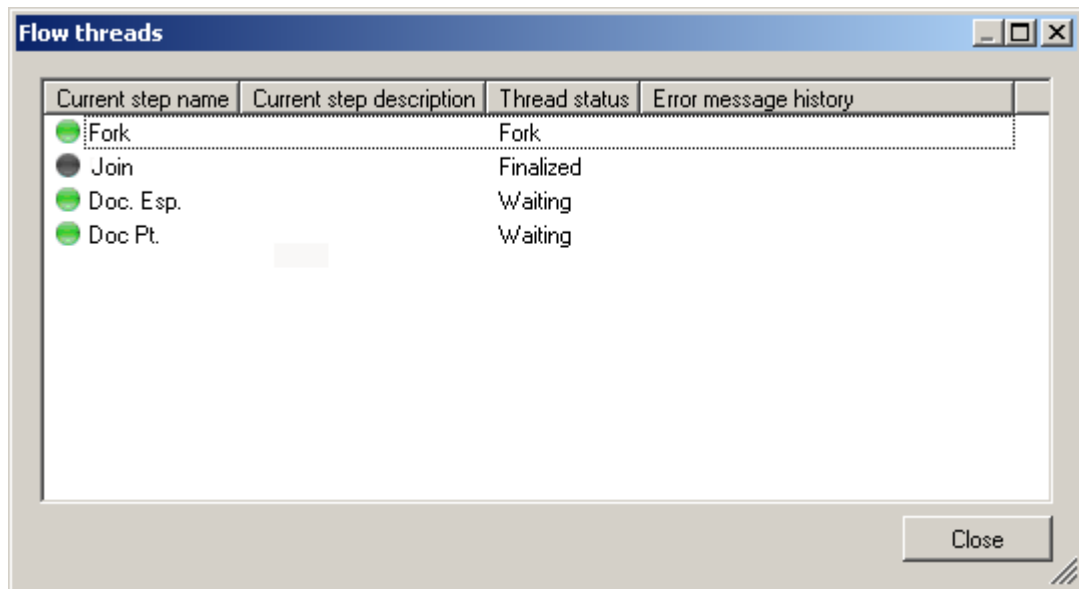


Figure 7 A workflow's threads

The column that indicates the name of the current step has a semaphore that will turn red if a thread is in a state of error.

Operations on threads of a workflow

A right-click on one of the workflow's threads opens the thread's context menu, which has two options corresponding to the operations that may be performed on the thread:

- **Retry execution:** this operation is useful with threads that are in a state of error. It retries the execution of the latest step of the thread, so that, if the conditions that caused the error changed, the thread may normally continue.
- **Step back:** causes the thread to step back to the step previous to the current one. After stepping back, the workflow is set to a state of error and does not move forward. The operation may be repeated as many times as you wish, under certain circumstances.
 - It is not possible to cause a thread to step back if there are not any steps previous to the current step (that is, if the current step is a start step).
 - It is not possible to cause a thread to step back if the previous step is a fork step or a join step.