

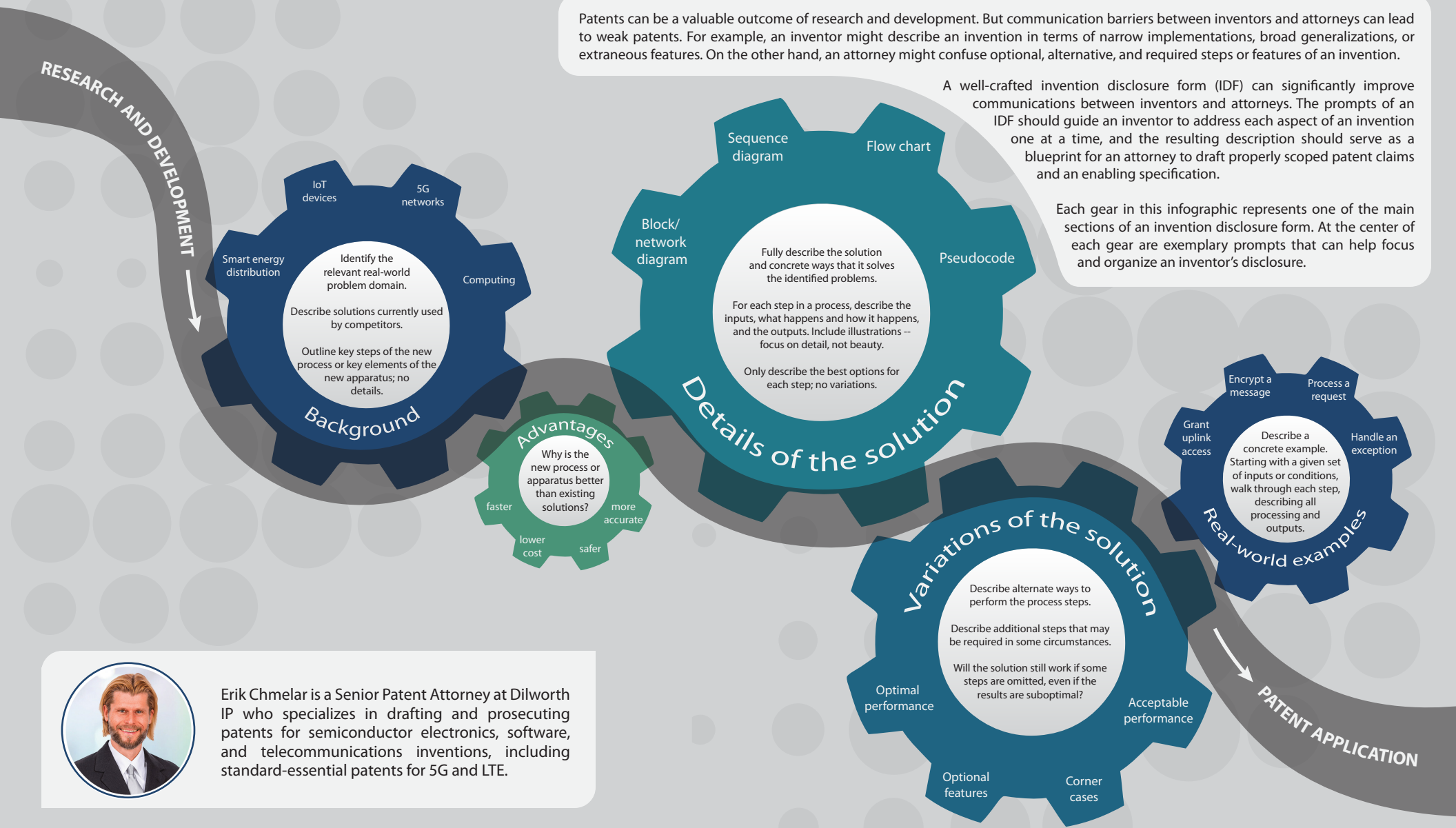
Best practices for invention disclosure forms

By Erik Chmelar, PhD, JD, MBA, PE, ...

Patents can be a valuable outcome of research and development. But communication barriers between inventors and attorneys can lead to weak patents. For example, an inventor might describe an invention in terms of narrow implementations, broad generalizations, or extraneous features. On the other hand, an attorney might confuse optional, alternative, and required steps or features of an invention.

A well-crafted invention disclosure form (IDF) can significantly improve communications between inventors and attorneys. The prompts of an IDF should guide an inventor to address each aspect of an invention one at a time, and the resulting description should serve as a blueprint for an attorney to draft properly scoped patent claims and an enabling specification.

Each gear in this infographic represents one of the main sections of an invention disclosure form. At the center of each gear are exemplary prompts that can help focus and organize an inventor's disclosure.



Erik Chmelar is a Senior Patent Attorney at Dilworth IP who specializes in drafting and prosecuting patents for semiconductor electronics, software, and telecommunications inventions, including standard-essential patents for 5G and LTE.