

DETERMINING PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

HANS JONASSON



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Contents

Foreword..... xiii

Acknowledgments..... xv

About the Author xvii

Chapter 1: Introduction..... 1

- 1.1 Objectives2
- 1.2 Overview2
- 1.3 The Early Days3
- 1.4 The Project Management Institute®5
- 1.5 The International Institute of Business Analysis®6
- 1.6 The Role of the Business Analyst7
- 1.7 Where Is It All Going?9
- 1.8 Book Project10
- 1.9 Summary10
- 1.10 Activity11

Chapter 2: Laying the Foundation..... 13

- 2.1 Objectives13
- 2.2 Overview14
- 2.3 Life Cycle Definitions14
- 2.4 What Is a Body of Knowledge?17
- 2.5 Overview of PMI Applicable Standards17
- 2.6 Overview of IIBA Framework and Standards19
- 2.7 SEI-CMMI and Applicability22
 - 2.7.1 Requirements Management.....22
 - 2.7.2 Requirements Development23
- 2.8 Which Standard to Use?24
- 2.9 Comments on Tool Standards.....25
- 2.10 Business Analyst’s Skills26
 - 2.10.1 Analysis Skills26

- 2.10.2 Business Knowledge.....26
- 2.10.3 IT Knowledge.....27
- 2.10.4 Meeting and Presentation Skills.....28
- 2.10.5 Decision Making/Negotiation/Conflict Resolution and Escalation Skills.....28
- 2.10.6 Questioning Skills/Systems Thinking and Logic.....29
- 2.10.7 Leadership Skills.....29
- 2.11 Summary.....29
- 2.12 Activity.....30

Chapter 3: Enterprise Analysis 31

- 3.1 Objectives31
- 3.2 Overview32
- 3.3 The IIBA Key Processes33
 - 3.3.1 Creating and Maintaining the Business Architecture.....35
 - 3.3.2 Conducting Feasibility Studies41
 - 3.3.3 Determining Project Scope.....43
 - 3.3.3.1 Business Goals and Objectives..... 44
 - 3.3.3.2 Assumptions..... 44
 - 3.3.3.3 Constraints.....45
 - 3.3.3.4 Scope Statement45
 - 3.3.3.5 Impacted Organizations45
 - 3.3.4 Preparing the Business Case.....47
 - 3.3.5 Conducting the Initial Risk Assessment.....48
 - 3.3.6 Preparing the Decision Package.....49
- 3.4 Understanding the Business.....50
- 3.5 Business Models.....51
 - 3.5.1 Organization Charts52
 - 3.5.2 Infrastructure Models52
 - 3.5.3 Business Location Models.....54
 - 3.5.4 Business Events55
 - 3.5.5 Business Entity Models55
 - 3.5.6 Business Process Models57
- 3.6 Summary.....58
- 3.7 Activity.....58

Chapter 4: Creating a Plan for the Requirements Phase..... 61

- 4.1 Objectives61
- 4.2 Overview62
- 4.3 Why Plan?62
- 4.4 Roles and Responsibilities..... 64

4.5	User Profiling.....	65
4.5.1	Primary/Secondary User	65
4.5.2	Experienced/Novice User.....	66
4.5.3	Full-Time/Part-Time User.....	67
4.5.4	Organizational Entities	67
4.5.5	Internal/External User	67
4.5.6	Language and Cultural Differences	67
4.5.7	Geographical Differences.....	68
4.6	Elements of a Requirements Plan.....	68
4.6.1	Project Overview and Background	69
4.6.2	Scope and Deliverables	69
4.6.3	Stakeholder Analysis.....	70
4.6.4	Communications Plan	73
4.6.5	Project Activities.....	74
4.6.6	Roles and Responsibilities.....	75
4.6.7	Resource Plan	76
4.6.8	Requirements Risk Plan	76
4.6.9	Manage Changes to Requirements	77
4.7	General Guidelines for the Requirements Plan	78
4.8	Risk	79
4.8.1	Step 1: Develop the Risk Management Approach	79
4.8.2	Step 2: Identify Risks	79
4.8.3	Step 3: Assess Risks	81
4.8.4	Step 4: Respond to Risks	82
4.8.5	Step 5: Monitor and Control Risks.....	82
4.9	Estimating	83
4.10	Laying Out Tasks.....	84
4.11	Costing	85
4.12	Tracking and Reporting.....	85
4.13	Kick-Off Meeting	86
4.14	Summary	87
4.15	Activity.....	87

Chapter 5: Development Methodologies and Requirements Impact..... 89

5.1	Objectives	89
5.2	Overview	90
5.3	Selecting and Customizing a Process	91
5.4	Waterfall.....	92
5.5	Iterative.....	94

- 5.6 Agile97
 - 5.6.1 Rapid Application Development98
 - 5.6.2 Scrum™99
 - 5.6.3 Dynamic Systems Development Methodology100
 - 5.6.4 Just-In-Time (JIT) Requirements Gathering102
 - 5.6.5 Agile Summary103
- 5.7 Summary104
- 5.8 Activity104

Chapter 6: Categorizing Requirements 105

- 6.1 Objectives105
- 6.2 Overview106
- 6.3 Requirements Taxonomy106
- 6.4 How Much Detail Do You Need?.....109
- 6.5 Stakeholder-Based Classification 111
- 6.6 Sequence-Oriented Classification 112
- 6.7 Purpose-Based Classification 118
- 6.8 Combining Structures 118
- 6.9 Summary 119
- 6.10 Activity 119

Chapter 7: Ways to Gather Requirements..... 121

- 7.1 Objectives.....121
- 7.2 Overview.....122
- 7.3 How to Select the Right Technique for Gathering Requirements.....125
 - 7.3.1 Different Ways for Different Customers125
 - 7.3.2 Different Ways for Different Categories126
 - 7.3.3 Impact of Globalization126
- 7.4 Customer Interviews128
- 7.5 Observation/Job Shadowing.....136
- 7.6 Studying Existing Systems139
- 7.7 Studying Interfaces.....140
- 7.8 Surveys.....141
- 7.9 Discovery/JAD/Facilitated Sessions.....144
 - 7.9.1 History144
 - 7.9.2 Characteristics of a JAD Project144
 - 7.9.3 What Is Created in a JAD Session?.....145
 - 7.9.4 The JAD Participants145
 - 7.9.4.1 The Facilitator145
 - 7.9.4.2 The Business Analyst.....147
 - 7.9.4.3 The Scribe148
 - 7.9.4.4 The User (Customer).....148

7.9.4.5	The Subject Matter Experts	149
7.9.4.6	The Developer	150
7.9.4.7	The Sponsor	150
7.9.4.8	Observers	151
7.9.5	The JAD Process	151
7.9.5.1	Establish Goals and Objectives	151
7.9.5.2	Prepare for the Session	152
7.9.5.3	Conduct the Session	154
7.9.5.4	Follow-Up	157
7.9.6	Facilitation	158
7.9.7	JAD Summary	160
7.10	Focus Groups	161
7.11	Market Research	161
7.12	Evaluate “Best Practices”	163
7.13	Prototyping	163
7.14	Storyboarding	166
7.15	Idea-Generating Techniques (Brainstorming)	167
7.15.1	Basic Brainstorming	168
7.15.2	Anonymous Brainstorming	169
7.15.3	Affinity Diagramming	170
7.15.4	Brainstorming in a Non-Group Environment	171
7.15.5	Brainstorming for a Virtual Team	171
7.15.6	Brainstorming Summary	172
7.16	Tools for Virtual Environments	172
7.17	Requirements Prioritization Techniques	173
7.17.1	The Dollar Approach	174
7.17.2	Forced Pair	175
7.17.3	Density Dotting	176
7.17.4	Analytical Hierarchy Process	177
7.17.5	Prioritization Techniques Summary	177
7.18	Summary	177
7.19	Activity	178

Chapter 8: Requirements Modeling and Documentation 179

8.1	Objectives	179
8.2	Overview	180
8.3	The Traditional Techniques	182
8.3.1	Process Models	183
8.3.2	Data Models	186
8.3.3	Data Flow Diagrams	191
8.4	Unified Modeling Language Family	195
8.4.1	Structure Diagrams	196
8.4.1.1	Class Diagrams	196

- 8.4.2 Behavior Diagrams 197
 - 8.4.2.1 Use Cases..... 198
 - 8.4.2.2 Activity Diagrams..... 206
 - 8.4.2.3 State Diagrams 208
- 8.4.3 Interaction Diagrams..... 209
- 8.5 Matrix Documentation..... 210
- 8.6 How to Decide Which Model to Select 210
- 8.7 Text Documentation..... 211
- 8.8 Validating the Requirements..... 213
- 8.9 Summary 214
- 8.10 Activity 214

Chapter 9: Effective Requirements Communication.....215

- 9.1 Objectives 215
- 9.2 Overview 216
- 9.3 Determine the Audience for the Communication 216
- 9.4 Dealing with Disagreements about Requirements..... 218
- 9.5 Creating the Requirements Review Package(s) 218
- 9.6 Performing the Review and Getting Sign-Off..... 222
- 9.7 Summary 223
- 9.8 Activity 223

Chapter 10: Making Sure the Requirements Are Implemented 225

- 10.1 Objectives 225
- 10.2 Overview 226
- 10.3 The Importance of Alternative Solutions 226
- 10.4 Selecting a Solution 230
- 10.5 Matching the Solution to the Needs of the Customer 231
- 10.6 Support Testing and Quality Assurance..... 232
 - 10.6.1 Validation versus Verification 233
 - 10.6.2 Planning for the Test..... 234
 - 10.6.3 Types of Tests..... 237
 - 10.6.4 Evaluating Customer Satisfaction..... 240
- 10.7 Implementing and Supporting the Solution 240
- 10.8 Summary 241
- 10.9 Activity 241

Chapter 11: Swede-Mart Case Study..... 243

- 11.1 Introduction 243
- 11.2 Strategy 243
- 11.3 Industry Background 244
- 11.4 Project Background 244
- 11.5 Distribution Center/Inventory Operations 245

11.6	Product Lines	245
11.7	Purchasing.....	246
11.8	Receiving	246
11.9	Accounts Payable.....	246
11.10	Order Processing and Shipping.....	247
11.11	Reporting.....	248
11.12	Summary	248
11.13	Interview with Store Buyer.....	248
Chapter 12: Activity Solutions for Swede-Mart Case Study....		249
12.1	Chapter 1 Activity Solution	249
12.2	Chapter 2 Activity Solution	251
12.3	Chapter 3 Activity Solution	252
12.4	Chapter 4 Activity Solution	253
12.5	Chapter 5 Activity Solution	257
12.6	Chapter 6 Activity Solution	258
12.7	Chapter 7 Activity Solution	259
12.8	Chapter 8 Activity Solution	260
12.9	Chapter 9 Activity Solution	263
12.10	Chapter 10 Activity Solution.....	264
Appendix A: Acronyms		265
Appendix B: Business Requirements Document Templates....		267
	Business Requirements Document (BRD) Comprehensive (Courtesy of ESI International)	268
	Business Requirements Document (BRD) Simple.....	284
Appendix C: United Nations Organizational Chart.....		287
Sources and Bibliography		289
Index.....		291

Foreword

When I discuss the state of project management with corporate and government executives around the world, it is increasingly evident that organizations are wasting millions of dollars every year on failed projects. At ESI International, when we looked into the root causes of project failure, we found that one of the key reasons was poor or incomplete requirements definition. Project teams had no members whose sole job it was to nail down the requirements at the outset. Rather, the function was diffused throughout the team; in short, this critical role was given short shrift. We realized we needed to address this critical piece of the project puzzle to enable our clients to be successful in their project endeavors.

Accordingly, in 2003 we decided to augment our proven project management training with a comprehensive curriculum in business analysis, a rapidly growing discipline whose primary focus is on the tools, techniques, and approaches in requirements engineering. In this curriculum the focus is developing the skill set of the business analyst to make sure that we know what the customer needs rather than developing what we think the customer is asking for.

Given the positive response to our curriculum, it was obvious that this was something the industry had been longing for. The interest in the curriculum was immediate and a little bit overwhelming. The interest is still growing, even more so with the growth and increased maturity of the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA™), an organization which seems destined to do for business analysis what the Project Management Institute® (PMI) did for project management some 30 years ago.

Our success in the business analyst curriculum is due, in large part, to the experienced consultants with whom we work. One of the first consultants we certified was Hans Jonasson. Hans had 20 years of industry background when he first started working with us in 1999. In addition to his work with us in project management training, Hans had, and does to this day, a successful consultancy including presenting his own JAD (Joint Application Development) classes to government and industry, including PMI. Not only does he have mastery of the subject, he has the ability to communicate those concepts to a global audience. After teaching the business analysis curriculum for over three years to

hundreds of business analysts, Hans is now in a unique position to be able to present these topics in an easy-to-follow manner.

Although it is always tough to predict what the future will hold, I am confident that this profession, and the importance of it, will continue to grow. Already there has been an increased desire to formalize the profession through certifications like the ESI International and George Washington University Professional Certificate in Business Analysis and the IIBA Certified Business Analysis Professional program. The book that you now hold in your hands will not only help you achieve such certifications, it will also make you a better business analyst.

J. LeRoy Ward
Executive Vice President, ESI International

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This book is the result of a request by LeRoy Ward of ESI International, who was looking for subject matter experts interested in writing a book. I want to thank him for that opportunity, for his helpful advice, and for writing the foreword for the book.

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About the Author



Hans Jonasson, PMP, founder of JTC Unlimited, has more than 25 years of experience in the areas of project management, business analysis and professional development training. He started his career with Volvo LTD in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1980 as a systems analyst/programmer. In 1984 he moved to the United States to work on new development projects for EDS and General Motors. He has managed all aspects of software development projects for the automotive industry whose budgets have ranged from \$100,000 to \$10 million.

He has taught introductory and advanced-level courses on project management, requirements gathering, CMMI® and process development, to more than 10,000 professionals at companies that include IBM, EDS, Ford Motors, DaimlerChrysler, General Dynamics, Citibank, and JP Morgan Chase.

Since 1996, he has been a Project Management Professional (PMP®) and member of the Project Management Institute (PMI®), as well as a frequent presenter at PMI events in North America and Europe for the last eight years. He is a member of the Great Lakes Chapter of PMI and the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA™).

Chapter 1

Introduction

If you don't know where you're going, chances are you will end up somewhere else.

— Yogi Berra

In the last ten years I have taught project management and requirements gathering to over 10,000 people worldwide. In most of those classes there has been a discussion about why projects, especially IT projects, fail. Inevitably the number one reason always comes back to unclear requirements or changing requirements. When organizations try to address these problems, they often try for quick fixes such as buying new tools or hiring a consultant. The message conveyed in this book is that it takes more than that. Good requirements do not come from a tool, or from a customer interview. They come from a repeatable set of processes which take the project from the early idea stage through to the creation of an agreed-upon project and product scope between the customer and the developer. This repeatable set of processes, and the tools and techniques that help to execute them, are what I want to address by writing this book.

This chapter sets the stage for the rest of the book by getting you familiar with the format, the writing style, and the purpose of the book. Each chapter has a similar structure and format that are used throughout the book. The content is based on certain choices in regard to what standards to use and what techniques to include. These choices were made by me and are explained in this chapter through a review of the history of systems development and the evolution of today's standards. One of the primary goals in this chapter is to let you know how the book is organized, what it is covering, and what is expected of you afterward. This is very much in line with what is recommended when creating a good requirements document.