

Advanced Business Analysis Techniques

Duration: 3 days

Overview

The primary purpose of business analysis is to determine what is wrong with the way things work today and to define what should change to make life easier for our hero, the end user. Business analysts need to be obsessed with understanding how business processes, information, and technology interact to empower an organization to fulfill its mission. As an experienced business analyst, you are engaged in a perpetual learning cycle, from learning more about the subject areas you support to learning better and faster techniques for doing your job.

Skills that will move you to the next level in your quest to improve your business analysis deliverables include planning your approach, interviewing subject matter experts, analyzing situations, organizing information, creating appropriate models of the domain, assembling the requirements, communicating the results, and, often, designing a business solution.

Approach

This seminar is based on the most powerful adult learning method currently known: discovery learning (also known as experiential learning). As experienced adults, we believe what we experience more than what we hear or read. To make effective use of this concept in a training setting means less lecture and more trial-and-error exercises. It also means accepting that sometimes the wrong answer is the best learning experience.

Audience

The target audience consists of business analysts, system analysts, business systems analysts and designers who have at least 1 year experience in analyzing, defining, designing, and/or testing information technology solutions for business use.

Customization

This class is a collection of techniques and scenarios that can be presented as-is or combined with modules from other Hathaway & Associates offers to create a unique training experience for your group. You can also eliminate non-essential modules to shorten the class. This approach lets participants optimize their time investment and maximizes the organization's return on its training dollars.

Presenters

Our instructors have extensive experience in applying many different techniques on projects with subject matter experts from a wide variety of fields. Their ability to recognize communication gaps between business experts and information system experts uniquely qualifies them for leading the group through an effective and exciting learning experience.

Developed and presented by:

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Outline

AB Requirements Gathering Methods: The State of the Art? *Duration ≈ 2 hour*

Before discussing advanced business analysis techniques, we need to review current business analysis and requirements definition techniques to establish a common ground for all participants. All participants should have some understanding and experience in the use of methodologies, modeling and requirements documentation approaches.

1. “State of the Art” in Business Analysis
2. Structured Versus Object Models
3. Levels of Abstraction in Requirements

AQ Analysis without Paralysis: Finding the Right Questions *Duration ≈ 3 hours*

The single greatest challenge facing today’s business analysts at the beginning of a new project is figuring out what to ask. We often fear that we are showing our ignorance when we ask questions. Actually, questions are an indication of interest and demonstrate intelligence and understanding. Any analysis technique that generates questions is manna from heaven for business analysts.

1. Cause Effect Chaining to Analyze Problems
2. Object Life Histories Uncover Hidden Requirements
3. High-Level versus Detailed Analysis
4. Models Help Identify the Important Questions

AI Effective Information Gathering Methods *Duration ≈ 3 hours*

Knowing what to ask is only half the equation. To get the answers, you also have to be good at identifying and asking the right person. From one-on-one to full-blown JAR/JAD sessions, best practices for conducting interviews and documenting the results will prove to be critical to the successful conclusion of your analysis effort.

1. 5 Critical Phases Of An Interview And What To Do In Each
2. Personality Profiling Makes Interviews More Effective
3. The Silent Interview
4. Stakeholder Identification – Roles and Responsibilities

AO Organizing, Structuring and Documenting Requirements *Duration ≈ 3 hours*

From business to system requirements and on to technical specifications, capturing the information is only the first step. Once captured, you need proven methods for representing the information at the appropriate level of detail. In the end, the knowledge representation will outlive the project. Properly done, it can also serve as a building block for future projects.

1. Information Mapping To Document Requirements
2. Pseudo-Code Versus Structured English
3. “Mind Mapping” And Why Should You Care

4. Basic Course of Events Document End-User Interaction Requirements

Outline *(continued)*

AM Managing Requirements for Fun and Profit

Duration ≈ 3 hours

Managing requirements is a critical component of any successful project, but the best laid plans of mice and business analysts will only succeed if you make your actions match your concepts. Well-managed requirements are the cornerstone of a realistic change management process. Without it, you could be preprogrammed to repeat your mistakes, over and over.

1. Requirements Management: A New Doctrine?
2. Requirements Change, Then What?
3. Risk Analysis Based On Requirement Validation
4. Developing Reusable Requirement Packets

AD Requirements-Based Design: A Novel Idea?

Duration ≈ 3 hours

As a business analyst, your primary job is to figure out what's wrong with the current world and then determine what the world should look like. Changing the way the business works is a challenging proposition, but there are concepts that will help you maintain a common thread from the inception of your project to the implementation of the chosen solution.

1. The What and How of Business Process Improvement
2. Designing Components To Meet Business Needs
3. Generating Conversion and Cutover Requirements
4. Best Practices, Benchmarking , and Functional Recomposition

AF Where Do You Go from Here?

Duration ≈ 1 hours

Once you have had an opportunity to acquire some hands-on experience with proven business analysis techniques, the obvious question arises, "What's next?" In this section, you will work together in groups to identify an action plan that will help you implement some of these new ideas in your organization. Strangely enough, nothing happens until someone does something.

1. Which Techniques Will Help You Now?
2. Which Will Have The Greatest Long-Term Benefits?
3. What Is Holding You Back?
4. How Can You Inflict Change in Spite of The Obstacles?

Appendix

- A. Case Study Scenarios
- B. Business Analysis Skills Assessment
- C. Index
- D. Bibliography
- E. Other Hathaway & Associates Training Offers

F. Name Tent and Evaluation

Objectives

After this section, participants will be able to to:

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| AB Requirements Gathering Methods: The State of the Art? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Reevaluate the use of process and data models in modern systems➤ Select the most appropriate modeling technique for your project➤ Gain an overview of the techniques in today's analysts' bag of tricks |
| AQ Analysis without Paralysis: Finding the Right Questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Let business models generate the critical questions for you➤ Develop drill-down questions to move from the general to the specific➤ Analyze the information usage of your organization |
| AI Effective Information Gathering Methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Schedule, prepare and conduct better interviews➤ Discover how different thinking styles leads to different perspectives➤ Use analysis by walking around to get answers without asking |
| AO Organizing, Structuring and Documenting Requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Document requirements as a natural by-product of doing the analysis➤ Evaluate the potential of information mapping as a tool➤ Clearly delineate business from system and technical requirements |
| AM Managing Requirements for Fun and Profit | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognize the impact of a proposed change to a requirement➤ Increase the reusability of your business and system requirements➤ Reduce the level of unforeseen scope creep on your projects |
| AD Requirements-Based Design: A Novel Idea | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Assimilate a random set of functions into a coherent system➤ Distinguish between business, control and exception-handling functions➤ Identify potential pitfalls with a proposed solution before developing it |
| AF Where Do You Go from Here? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Create an action plan for changing how you do what you do➤ Assess creative ideas for getting things done in spite of opposition➤ Develop a future vision of your business analysis efforts |