

Business Analysis, Requirements Definition and Testing Techniques

Duration: 3 - 4 days

Overview

This seminar will teach you how to:

- analyze work flow problems
- design efficient manual solutions
- recognize how information technology can be used effectively
- communicate your needs to information system experts and
- evaluate whether their solution meets your needs.

Approach

The seminar presents an integrated set of techniques that will help you from the beginning of an information system project to the end. Each technique is explained in non-technical language and demonstrated on a simple example. Working with others, you will try it out on a clearly defined case study. Your results are then evaluated, discussed and compared to the desired results. In extended workshops, you will apply the technique to situations from your real-life environment with instructor guidance.

Audience

The target audience includes project leaders, business analysts, managers and end-users who are not information system experts but are interested in using information technology to create a competitive advantage.

Customization

Each section listed in the outline can be presented as a stand-alone workshop. The duration of each section depends on the amount of time needed for the participants to absorb the material. The listed times represent the absolute minimum per section. Any section can be expanded with additional exercises and/or discussions with your in-house information system experts to increase the learning effect.

Presenters

Our instructors have extensive experience in applying these techniques on projects with business experts from a wide variety of fields. Their ability to recognize communication gaps between business experts and information system experts uniquely qualifies them for presenting this material.

Developed and presented by:

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Outline

GI Introduction

Duration: 1.5 hours

In a competitive world, the company that gets the goods to the customer with the highest quality at the lowest cost will survive. This is true whether you sell products or services. It implies an organization with a cost-effective work flow that adds value to the goods at every step. Information technology can help, if it is efficiently designed with the business need in mind.

1. Why is it difficult to get good information systems?
2. What is a business analyst?
3. What tools and techniques can a business analyst use?

BA Defining Business Problems

Minimum duration: 3 hours

Jobs are usually not designed, they evolved. The people doing the work do whatever they have to do to get the job done. Quite often, that means being creative and figuring out how to get the job done in spite of the “system”. There is nothing wrong with that approach, unless the solution they pick causes problems somewhere further down the line. The business analyst has to figure out if the cure is worth the price.

1. What is the problem?
2. Can you separate symptoms and solutions from “real” problems?
3. Who is affected by the problem and who can fix it?
4. What questions should you ask?

BP Diagram the Business Perspective

Minimum duration: 3 hours

Process models help people without business expertise understand how things work. A work flow diagram makes problem areas visible and shows the impact of proposed changes. The diagram can be modified and tested without affecting the real world. Used effectively, it will reduce the probability of omitting critical aspects of your solution. To be effective, all involved parties have to understand what the model represents and what it ignores.

1. What is a work flow diagram?
2. How will the diagram help you identify problems?
3. What other benefits do process models provide?
4. Which analysis techniques use the model and why do you need them?

BD Defining Business Data

Minimum duration: 3 hours

With or without computers, you can't do a good job if you don't know what you need to know. Data describes everything in a company from the initial customer order to the final invoice and beyond. Getting correct data when you need it lets you meet or exceed your customers' expectations. Inaccurate, late and missing data causes expensive rework and delays. As a business analyst, you have to understand the role of data.

1. What is a business data model?
2. Why do you need one?
3. What are the long-term benefits of a data model?
4. How can you create a business data model?

Outline *(continued)*

BR From Business Rules to System Requirements*Minimum duration: 3 hours*

The purpose of a requirement is to communicate a business need to a technical expert. It has to enable the technical expert to recognize the technological impact. Missing or misunderstood requirements cost considerably more than programming or testing errors. Fortunately, the ability to define usable requirements is a learnable skill.

1. Why is requirements definition so difficult?
2. What does a business requirement really say?
3. How can you prioritize requirements?
4. Can you test what the requirements imply before the solution is developed?

UT Define Tests Based on Business Risks*Minimum duration: 3 hours*

Testing is your primary weapon in the war against errors. It does not require knowledge of the technology. You need to enter data and recognize the difference between a good response and a bad one. But, before you think about how to test, you need to know what to test.

1. Where can you find test cases?
2. How do the test cases relate to the requirements?
3. Can you rely on your business expertise to identify test cases?
4. Which test cases will give you the biggest bang for the buck?

UD Document the Tests for Improved Performance*Minimum duration: 3 hours*

Careful selection of the data you enter will drastically reduce the number of test cases that you need to thoroughly test a solution. *Engineered* data exercises the critical parts of the solution without unnecessary repetition.

1. What is a test script?
2. How do you engineer test data?
3. How can you identify the best data for each test?
4. Where will you keep track of all of this stuff?

UP Creating and Following Test Plans*Minimum duration: 3 hours*

The test plan is your roadmap to success. It helps you select, sequence, resource, schedule and manage your test cases. A good test plan also lets you identify problems before they occur and fix them before they get expensive.

1. What is in a test plan?
2. Which test cases should you choose?
3. How can you compress testing time?
4. When have you tested enough?

Appendix

- A. Case Study
- B. Bibliography

Objectives

Attend this section:

To be able to:

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| GI Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Define the evolving role of today's business analyst➤ Identify the critical skills required by business analysts➤ Organize questions, issues and assumptions efficiently |
| BA Defining Business Problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Write clear, easy-to-understand problem statements➤ Determine which problems are worth solving➤ Plan and conduct effective interviews |
| BP Diagram the Business Perspective | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Present business processes in work flow diagrams➤ Identify timing problems and requirements➤ Analyze a system for potential short-term or quick fixes |
| BD Defining Business Data | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Recognize how a data model impacts business decisions➤ Understand the role of data in work flow problems➤ Make better business use of data as a resource |
| BR From Business Rules to System Requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Write clear, verifiable requirements➤ Prioritize requirements based on business needs➤ Discuss the technological impact of business requirements |
| UT Define Tests Based on Business Risks | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Expose business risk associated with change➤ Define test cases from business requirements➤ Reduce the risks with a limited selection of test cases |
| UD Document the Tests for Improved Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Write test actions and expected results in test scripts➤ Engineer test data using equivalence groups➤ Optimize test cases with boundary value analysis |
| UP Creating and Following Test Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Assemble test cases into test plans➤ Determine the resources needed for each testing activity➤ Recognize when testing is finished |