BA04 - Eliciting and Writing Effective Requirements

Overview
With elicitation serving as a major component of the requirements process, it is imperative that business analysts maintain high competency levels in elicitation practices and technique use to help organizations overcome the requirements related challenges faced on projects. Regardless whether you are a practitioner just starting off your career in business analysis or whether you have been performing the role for some years, this course will provide insight into the latest thoughts on elicitation and writing effective requirements and present a number of current techniques that are being applied on projects across industries today.

Prerequisites
- BA01 - Business Analysis Essentials

Prerequisite Comments
There are no prerequisites for this course. This course suitable for both novices and experienced people who need to elicit and write effective requirements. It is recommended that participants complete the BA01 - Business Analysis Essentials course prior to enrolling or have equivalent experience.

Target Audience
This course is intended for beginner to intermediate business and requirements analysts who are looking to improve their elicitation and requirements writing and documentation skills. This course is also a great fit for technical writers, product and software testers, project managers, product owners who work closely with business analysts or who perform some for of business analysis themselves.

Course Objectives
- Understand the role of the business analyst and core competencies for performing successfully
- Discuss the criticality of business analysis and requirements for successful project outcomes
- Understand the main professional associations and standards supporting
business analysts in the industry
Discuss the common problems with requirements and explore approaches to
address these issues
Obtain a clear understanding of the various requirements types and the
significance for eliciting each type
Demonstrate your ability to identify stakeholders
Explore various methods for understanding and analyzing stakeholders
Discuss and apply good planning practices to requirements elicitation efforts
Obtain knowledge and understanding of over 15 current and commonly
applied elicitation techniques
Understand how to progress from elicitation to analysis to documentation
Write well-formed and validated requirements
Gain understanding of the best practices for writing quality requirements
Learn the technical writing techniques that apply directly to writing
requirements documents
Discuss writing pitfalls, risks that impact requirements, and how to address them
Learn best practices for communicating and collaborating with stakeholders,
sharing the results of elicitation and the resulting documentation
Learn approaches for validating requirements
Understand the difference between validating requirements and validating the solution

Course Outline

Review of Foundational Concepts

Definition of a business analysis
Definition of business analyst
BA role vs. PM role
Business analysis competencies
Benefits of business analysis
Purpose for having a BA standard
IIBA’s BABOK® Guide and PMI’s Practice Guide in Business Analysis
Business analysis core concepts
Discussion: Project challenges

Understanding Requirements

Common problems with requirements
Understand the problem first
Define the business need
Situation statements and moving to requirements
Understanding requirement types
Business requirements
Stakeholder/User Requirements
Solution Requirements
Functional Requirements
Non-Functional Requirements
Assumptions and Constraints
Discussions: Requirement problems, business needs, and identifying non-
functional requirements
Discovering Stakeholders

- Definition of a stakeholder
- Stakeholder types
- Identifying stakeholders
- Performing stakeholder analysis
- Stakeholders and requirements
- Tips for identifying stakeholders
- Grouping stakeholders
- Creating a RACI model
- Tips for analyzing stakeholders
- Documenting results of stakeholder analysis

Workshop: Discovering stakeholders

Preparing for Requirements Elicitation

- Planning for elicitation
- Benefits of elicitation planning
- What do you plan?
- The elicitation plan
- Setting objectives for elicitation
- Determining the scope for elicitation
- Establishing pre-work
- Determining the outputs for the session
- The iterative nature of elicitation
- Elicitation roles
- Elicitation planning techniques
- Discussions: Who to involve in elicitation, planning impacts, and unplanned elicitation

Workshop: Planning for elicitation

Conduct Requirements Elicitation

- Elicitation skillset
- Types of elicitation techniques
- Using active listening in elicitation
- Techniques for performing elicitation
- Benchmarking/Market Analysis
- Brainstorming
- Business Rules Analysis
- Collaborative Games
- Concept Modeling
- Data Mining
- Data Modeling
- Document Analysis
- Focus Groups
- Interface Analysis
- Interviews
- Observation
- Process Modeling
- Prototyping
- Survey or Questionnaire
- Workshops
Write Effective Requirements

Elicitation and Analysis
Requirements related issues
Implications of bad requirements
Elicitation and documentation
Writing skillset
Documenting requirements
Modeling requirements
Defining the project life cycle
Impact of project life cycle on documentation
Requirements specifications
Characteristics of good requirements
Guidelines for writing textual requirements
Structuring a requirement
Writing pitfalls
Traceability
Requirements attributes
Risks associated to requirements

Discussions: Project Life Cycle and Correcting Poorly Written Requirements
Workshops: Documenting Requirements and Identify Characteristics of Good Requirements

Confirm and Communicate Elicitation Requirements

Business analysis communication
Requirements communication
Communication skills
The 7 Cs
Timing of communication
Planning communication
Importance of Collaboration
Planning collaboration
Documenting communication/collaboration needs
Confirming elicitation results
Verify requirements
Characteristics of good requirements (revisited)
Requirements checklist
Requirements validation
Signing off on requirements
Discussions: Responsibility for Communication, Eliciting Communication Needs, Validation
Signoff

Workshops: Communicating Requirements and Obtaining Signoff
Evaluate the Solution

Business analyst role in solution evaluation
Why solutions under perform
What we are looking for in solution evaluation
When does solution evaluation occur
Performing solution evaluation
Planning solution evaluation
Metrics that might exist
Evaluating long term performance
Qualitative vs. quantitative measures
Tools & techniques used in solution evaluation
Comparing expected to actuals
When solution evaluation discovers a variance
Tools/techniques for analyzing variances
Proposing a recommendation
Communicating results of solution evaluation
Discussion: Addressing Variance

Wrap up and Next Steps

Useful books and links on writing effective requirements
BABOK® Guide
Business Analysis for Practitioners: A Practice Guide

Related Courses, Certifications, Exams

- BA01 - Business Analysis Essentials