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 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