Mastering *the* Requirements Process

Getting Requirements Right

Agile • Traditional • Outsourcing

Requirements are the foundation for whatever you intend to build, whether it be software, hardware, consumer product, service or anything else. Just as you would not attempt to build your house on unfinished or faulty foundations, you should not attempt to build your solution without correctly understanding what it has to do, and the way in which it must do it.

Requirements discovery is no longer about producing large, unreadable (and often unread) specifications. Requirements today is about uncovering the real needs of the problem space, understanding the needs of the people who use your solution, recognise the environment for the solution, then, in a timely manner, delivering requirements that are concise, clear and testable.

This workshop, presented by a real business analyst, gives you a thorough and well-established process for uncovering the real requirements, testing them for correctness, and ensuring that all the requirements have been discovered. The process is used with variations by both agile and traditional projects. It starts with the business, for it is only within the business that you discover the real needs. When you know the real needs, it becomes possible to determine what will best serve those needs, and to write the requirements or stories to build the right solution.

"The continual use of real examples and experience made it all come to life. The best course I have ever attended. All questions were answered and none dodged".

-- Wes Mar, Senior Analyst, Insurance Australia Group

You Will Learn How to:

- Determine the real needs of your stakeholders
- Uncover the essence of the business
- Learn diverse elicitation techniques to uncover the real requirements
- Write agile stories that are more effective and accurate
- Understand the role of the business analyst in agile projects
- Write requirements that are complete, traceable, and testable
- Use the Volere Knowledge Model to ensure you have all the needed information, and nothing that is not needed
- Understand the need for, and how to write, functional and non-functional requirements.
- Precisely define the scope of the problem
- Discover all the stakeholders and keep them involved
- Use prototypes, sketches and storyboards to discover hidden needs
- Get the requirements quickly, and incrementally
- Use state of the art requirements techniques
- Write the right requirements and stories

Is This for Me?

Yes, if you want to be involved in delivering the right systems—the ones that get used. Your title is probably **business analyst**, **systems analyst**, **product owner**, **project leader or manager**, **requirements engineer**, **consultant, product or program manager** or similar. Team members on agile projects benefit from understanding how requirements are best done in agile projects.

Users, **software customers and business stakeholders** have found that this course equips them to participate more effectively in the requirements process, and so ensure that the end solution matches what they really need.

What Will I learn? What Will I be Better at?

The Requirements Process

The course begins with an overview of the process. It looks at how agile and traditional projects both need requirements but are done differently, the requirements food chain, and the topics to be covered by the course. Students discuss with the instructor their particular problems and objectives for the course.

Project Blastoff

The blastoff builds a foundation for your requirements project by establishing its scope, its stakeholders and the goal. The scope is the problem space or the business area to be studied. The stakeholders are the people with an interest in the outcome. The goal is testable, and ensures that the project will deliver stakeholder value. The Blastoff is also there to ensure that the project is viable and worthwhile.

Trawling for Requirements

At the core of any requirements process is the ability to get people to tell you what they really need, rather than their perceived solution, or what they think you might be able to deliver. We show you how to use business events, apprenticing, use case workshops, interviewing, brainstorming, personas and other techniques to discover exactly what your stakeholders do, and what they need to do it.

"The course not only treated the technical aspects but also the softer subjects in requirements gathering like psychological aspects"

Ron Buskens, Oce Technologies

This section introduces the *brown cow* model that gives the business analyst different ways of thinking about the problem, and allows the essence, the real problem to emerge. We also look at innovation – fresh thinking about the problem – and how it is a necessary component of any requirements process.

Functional Requirements

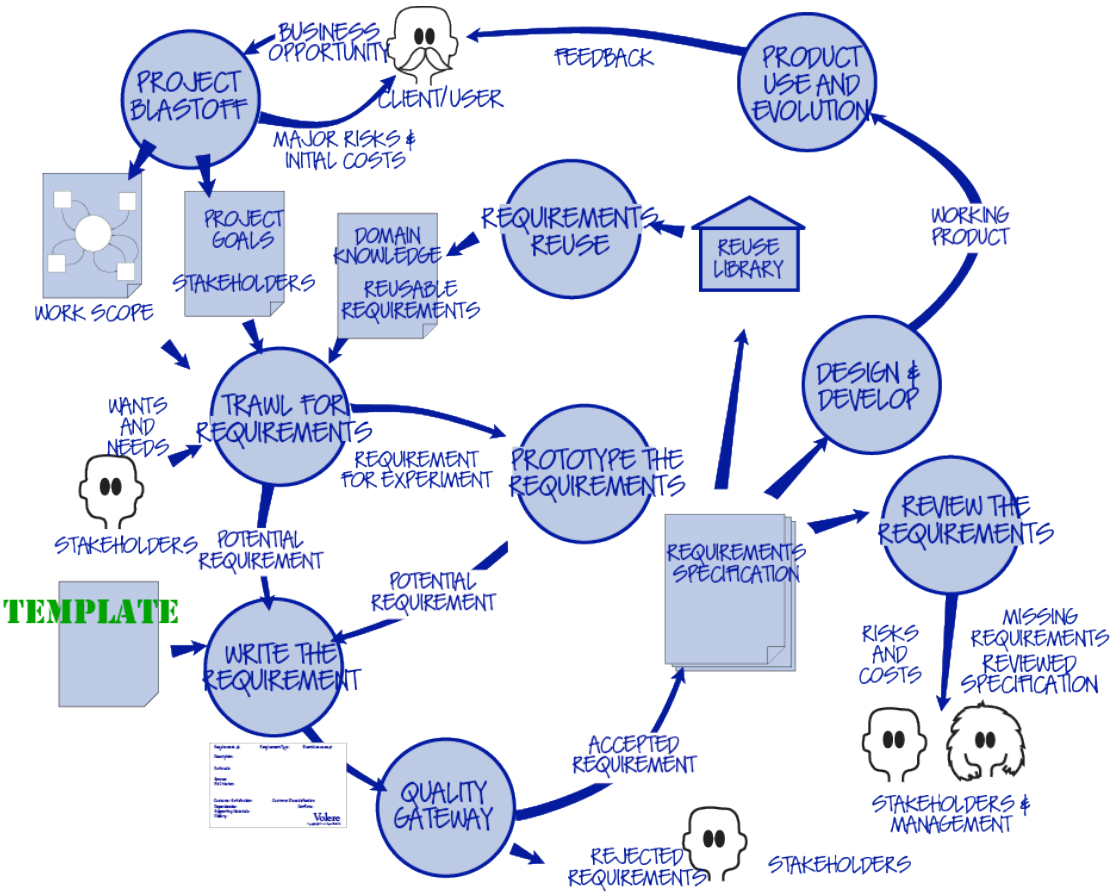
Functional requirements are the things the product must do. You discover them by understanding the real work of the organisation, and determining what part of that work your solution can best do.

The solution is usually established using scenarios – these are great if you need a sign-off – and then specified by well-formed requirements or stories.

Non-functional Requirements

Non-functional requirements are properties the product must have. These include the desired look & feel, usability, performance, cultural, conformance, and so on. Non-functional requirements often determine the success or failure of solutions, so this section demonstrates their importance, and how to find and then precisely specify the qualitative requirements for your solution.

THE VOLERE FRAMEWORK:



Requirements for Agile Projects

Requirements are equally important for agile projects if your solution is to match the real business needs. Effective agile projects understand that there are two parts: *Discovery* and *Delivery*. Discovery involves understanding the real work and the real problem to be solved if you are to deliver the value proposition. It uses business stories to communicate the Discovery findings. Delivery focuses on iterative development and how a story map provides the best guide to the product under development. We also teach you how to write better, more effective stories.

Prototyping and Deviations

Prototyping is a way of discovering requirements by sketching wireframe solutions. Here you assess the merits of low and high-fidelity prototypes, and how scenarios can be used to discover previously-hidden requirements. You also look at the wanted alternatives, unwanted exceptions and potential misuses of the product.

Writing Requirements

There is a need to communicate requirements – how to formulate them and how to include an unambiguous fit criterion. The fit criterion makes the requirement measurable and testable, as well as ensuring the implemented solution precisely matches the client's expectations.

The Quality Gateway

Testing is most effective when it is done early in the development cycle. Here we demonstrate how to test requirements so that the developers receive the correct requirements. The Quality Gateway assesses the requirements and rejects any that are out-of-scope, gold-plated, non-viable, incorrect or incomplete.

Managing your Requirements

Requirements are the lynchpin of any development effort, and so must be managed effectively. You are given strategies for your requirements management, the requirements knowledge model, how to prioritise requirements, and how to resolve conflicting requirements. We take a quick look at tools to help manage requirements.

Your Requirements Process

You discuss and determine how to make your own requirements process as effective and efficient as possible. This involves incorporating your own organisational processes into the requirements activity. You build a demonstration of how you will use what you have learned when your return to your own work place.

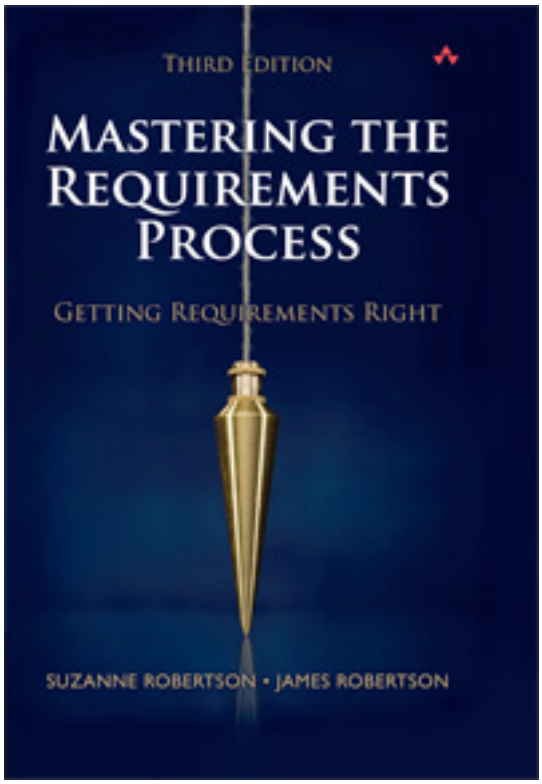
> "*Absolutely fantastic course, will be extremely useful for me.*"
>
> – Leanne O'Connor, Application Development Officer, Mt. Eliza

Workshops

We want you to be able to use this right away. Each of the teaching chapters is reinforced with a workshop where you apply the concepts presented in the seminar. You work in a small team to scope the problem space and then discover, specify and evaluate requirements for the solution.

There's More . . .

- Your instructor is not an "announcer". He or she is a practicing business analyst who also happens to be an excellent instructor.
- The course is written to show real-world situations and provide real-world solutions. You will be able to relate your own work situation to the course.
- You can discuss your own requirements issues with your instructor.
- You learn that requirements come from understanding the business and its internal processes, and how the business interacts with its external customers.
- The course provides a realistic framework for requirements discovery, not a strict methodology. The framework provides the freedom and encouragement to adapt to your own organizational needs.



- The techniques are applicable regardless of your development method – agile, traditional or anything else.
- The Brown Cow model to give you different and beneficial ways to look at the problem.
- The Volere requirements knowledge model which ensures you collect the right information, and the right amount of it.
- You receive the Volere Requirements Specification Template (downloaded over 20,000 times) with advice on how to make this your own template.
- A free copy of Suzanne and James Robertson's best-selling book, Mastering the Requirements Process – 3rd Edition, Getting Requirements Right.
- This course is endorsed by the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA™). It provides material and skill relevant to the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOK™) version 3.0. 21 CPU/PD Hours.