

Requirements

- Overview
 - importance of getting requirements right
 - difficulty of getting requirements right
 - types and levels of requirements
 - characteristics of good requirements
- the Requirements Development Process
 - inception
 - gathering, classification
 - evaluation and rationalization
 - prioritization
 - integration, reconciliation, negotiation
 - validation

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Product Requirements

- before we can build anything ...
 - we must know what it is we are to build
- identify necessary conditions for success
 - bad requirements ensure product failure
 - no matter how well we do the rest of the job
- they are the basis for the product design
 - we design a product to meet the requirements
 - they guide most decisions, settle many arguments
- they are the basis for acceptance testing
 - if requirements are met, product is acceptable

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Why Requirements are Difficult

- Marketing requirements are soft & vague
 - statistical results from general surveys
 - inferences from incomplete information
- Customers can't tell you what they want
 - they don't yet understand how they'll use it
 - opinions may be poorly formed or expressed
- Requirements aren't stable
 - the customer's business needs change
 - new stake-holders bring new requirements
 - technology and competition keep evolving

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Get it Right ASAP

where found	where introduced		
	requirements	architecture design	construction
requirements	1x		
design	3x	1x	
construction	5-10x	10x	1x
system test	10x	15x	10x
post-ship	10-100x	25-100x	10-25x

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Levels of S/W Requirements

- Requirements exist in levels
 - business requirements
 - markets to be addressed
 - business constraints
 - user level requirements
 - supported capabilities
 - behavior in specified situations
 - component level requirements/specifications
- Lower levels are successive refinements
 - must be consistent with higher level goals

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Types of S/W Requirements

- Functional Requirements
 - it must be able to X
 - when X happens it must/must-not Y
- Non-functional Requirements
 - performance (e.g. speed, response times, loads)
 - RAS (e.g. rates, lifetimes, capabilities)
 - interface specifications (e.g. busses, protocols)
 - design constraints (e.g. technology, methodology)
 - support (e.g. services, materials, response times)
- Environmental Requirements
 - conditions, platforms, configurations

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Good Requirements

- Clear
 - bounded and unambiguous
- Traceable
 - we know who gave it to us
 - we know what problem it addresses
- Confirmed
 - not arbitrary or a mere wish, but a real requirement
- Prioritized
 - we know how important it is (e.g. can, should, must)
- Within appropriate scope and level
 - reasonably falls within established project scope
 - specifies what it must do, not how it should do it

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Usable Requirements

- Complete
 - no TBD details
- Testable
 - we can measure and confirm compliance
- Achievable
 - we believe we know how to do it
- Consistent
 - with higher level goals
 - no unresolved conflicts among requirements

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Well Managed Requirements

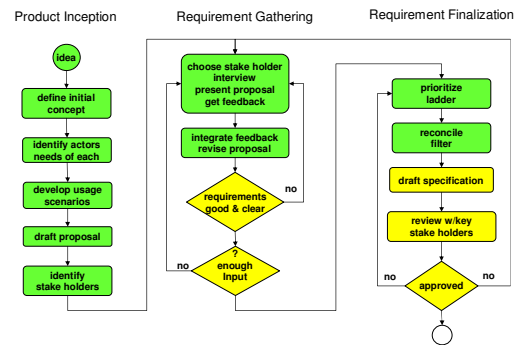
- Changes are managed carefully
 - there is a change control process
 - it may involve notifications and approvals
 - implications of changes must be understood
- Requirements are versioned
 - we all know what version we are using
- We track dependencies
 - of requirements on other requirements
 - of specifications on requirements

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Requirements Development



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Process – Inception

- Start by identifying the problem to be solved
 - a pressing problem that can be solved or improved
 - engineers often start with the solution ☺
- Put a fence around the product
 - what will it do?
 - in what operational context will it work?
- Gather background information
 - existing products, relevant technology
- Identify stake holders
 - potential customers (of various types)
 - potential advisors (sales, marketing, partners)
 - Collaborators (Q/A, support, management, legal)

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Process – Concept Development

- what kinds of people face this problem?
 - identify distinct sub-classes of users
- Understand the needs of each user
 - what must the product do for them?
 - how would they use this product?
 - what would make it well suited for them?
- Represent this information in use cases
 - each use case is one simple story
 - how a typical operation would be performed

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Process – Requirements Gathering

- Initial use cases are often brain-stormed
 - part of the process of developing the concept
 - resulting scenarios are hypothetical examples
- Requirements Elicitation
 - interviews with domain experts
 - they often have clear and well articulated opinions ●
 - interviews with representative users
 - a potential gold-mine of information
 - gather information about what they do/need
 - ask questions to ensure correct understanding
 - distill into requirements, classify by level/type

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Keys to Successful Elicitation

- You're there to learn
 - not to sell or defend a proposal ●
 - let the customer do most of the talking
- Start with general, open-ended questions ●
 - understand what the customer does & needs
- Keep the meeting moving on track
 - have an experienced facilitator lead meeting
 - finish a topic, and then move on
 - identify issues, don't try to resolve them

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Process – Requirements Evaluation

- Assess quality of each requirement
 - vague, poorly substantiated, un-testable
 - figure out how to fix poor requirements
- Ensure each requirement is rated
 - for value to the success of the product
 - for feasibility, risk and difficulty
- Prioritize the requirements
 - assign an priority to each, and ladder them

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Process – Integration/Validation

- Integration
 - combine all of the requirements
 - reconcile and resolve any conflicts ●
 - assess completeness and stability
 - Are we ready to go with these requirements?
 - decide which to address in this release ●
- Validation
 - final review of correctness and quality
 - ensure overall consistency with goals
 - obtain all required buy-ins

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Feature Phasing

- we can seldom satisfy all requirements
 - in a reasonable project budget or time frame
- some features can wait for next release
 - some features are merely desired
 - some features only become required later
- some features we cannot yet specify
 - need real data on how product will be used
 - need results of further prototyping/analysis
- use priority, cost, and risk to sort features
 - into this release, next release, and later

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For the next lecture

- Sisson: Categorizing your audience
 - web-centric analysis of categorization axes
- usabilitynet: Task Analysis
 - a simple introduction to the concept
- Wiegiers: Developing Use Cases
 - intro to use cases and their development
- Wells: User Story Cards
 - brief introduction to a popular representation
- UML use case diagrams
 - brief introduction to a popular representation

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Supplementary Slides

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Eliciting Requirements

- Use a formal process
 - create, distribute and follow an agenda
 - ask prepared, open-ended questions
 - take detailed written minutes
 - prepare a written report on each meeting
- Desired results
 - a clearer understanding of the problem
 - identify additional stake-holders & needs
 - feedback on the proposal (value assessments, constraints, concerns, updated use cases)

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Conflict Resolution

- Win-Win negotiation is a must
 - if key requirements aren't met, product fails
 - people will help you, if you help them
- Must have priority assessments
 - understand each group's key requirements
 - all requirements are not equally important
- Must be able to trace requirement origins
 - we may have misunderstood a requirement
- Divide and Conquer
 - de-couple problems to solve one-at-a-time

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Validating Requirements

- Are these requirements good?
 - clear, well justified, and widely agreed to
 - traceable and prioritized
 - measurable and testable
 - do we believe we can satisfy them?
- Are these requirements complete?
 - have all open issues/conflicts been resolved
 - do we believe all requirements to be stable
- When these answers are yes, we're ready

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Requirements Work Products

- user level specification
 - description used for requirements elicitation
 - user level requirements (typically use cases)
- requirements meeting reports
 - report from each elicitation or approval meeting
- system level specification
 - system model used for requirements analysis
 - may be more component oriented than user spec
 - system level requirements (typically in writing)
 - prioritized, cross-referenced to user requirements

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Requirements Management

- a must for large and complex projects
 - requirements become contractual obligations
- each requirement should have
 - a clear and measurable statement
 - a unique identification number
 - a priority, flexibility, certainty assessment
 - a history of its source, and all changes
- this often entails a specialized database
 - and highly specified change processes
 - with designated approvers for all changes

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Q: How much (reqts) process?

A: Enough to give us confidence

- How obvious is the problem?
- How many stake-holders are there?
- How clear are they on their needs?
- How complex are the use cases?
- How obvious is the feature set?
- How demanding are your customers?
- How good is your competition?
- What are the consequences of error?

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