

# ECE 321: Software Requirements Engineering

## Assignment 1

Arun Woosaree

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## 1 “Passing the word” Review

### 1.1 Main Contributions

- describes the importance of a manual, or written specification
- describes good manual style
- formal definitions
- the importance of meetings
- importance of multiple implementations
- product testing

### 1.2 Criticisms

The author makes mostly good points in this article. Naturally, there are a few points I must disagree with, the first being the author’s opinion that the manual be written by only one or two men. This approach is simply not scalable, and is impractical for large projects. Furthermore, having multiple people collaborate on the manual provides the opportunity for people with multiple perspectives to review and edit the document, so that inaccuracies can be found and fixed quicker. Having multiple perspectives also makes it easier to identify portions of the document which

may need to be reworded to make it easier or more interesting to read. Additionally, the style in which one person writes one week might be different the next, based on that person's emotions. With multiple writers, each writer can keep a lookout on each other to make sure the language is consistent. Next, I must disagree with the author's suggestions regarding meetings. While his suggestions may have been effective years ago, nowadays, the agile workflow seems more attractive. Meetings are held every day between the people developing the product, but they are short. This way, problems can be found quickly and it allows the team to prioritize issues effectively, in addition to making the right people aware of issues that may concern them. My suggestion for a second type of meeting would be before any major product deployment, and the frequency and length of these meetings should depend on the scale of the project. If deployments are happening frequently, this might be a monthly affair, or an annual event like the author suggested. This meeting should consist of the people developing the product as before, and also any managers, representatives, product owners, stakeholders, etc.

### **1.3 Answers to questions**

#### **1.3.1 Good manual style**

In the author's view, a well-written manual must use precise, consistent language, have quantized changes, and it should also describe every detail the user sees, omitting the details that the user does not see. The author mentions that this can be done in a formal and/or informal style. In my opinion, an informal style is more desirable, since quick amendments and changes can be made to the document as necessary, and using informal language makes it easier and less daunting to read overall for the average person.

#### **1.3.2 Effective meetings**

The first type of meeting the author claims is effective is a weekly half-day conference led by the chief architect, as well as all the architects, official representatives of the hardware and software implementers, and market planners. The second type of meeting is what the author refers to as an annual "supreme court session", which lasts two weeks. In this type of meeting, the project manager leads, with members from the architecture group, the programmers' and implementers' architectural representatives, and the managers of programming, marketing, and implementation efforts joining.

### 1.3.3 Independent product-testing organization

In the author’s view, an independent product-testing organization acts as a “surrogate customer”, which allows for early detection of bugs and departure from the design. I mostly agree with this viewpoint, since programmers are human, and are prone to making mistakes like everyone else. Although it might slow development time, having a dedicated team for finding these flaws before deployment is important, so that the customer has a better overall experience.

## 2 “Requirements Engineering: The State of the Practice Review”

### 2.1 Main Contributions

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### 2.2 Criticisms

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## **2.3 Answers to questions**

### **2.3.1 Most frequently used lifecycle model**

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### **2.3.2 Prototyping**

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### **2.3.3 Elicitation of users' requirements**

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### **2.3.4 Informal modelling of requirements**

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### **2.3.5 Are longer projects less often finished on time and within budget?**

Yes/No one sentence answer ok cool.