

Method Used (Introduction)

This method helps us find and fix unclear parts in the requirements.

We find ambiguous words, ask questions, rewrite in clear text, add acceptance criteria for QA, and list open items to confirm.

- Steps (Short)

1. **Find ambiguous words**
 - Look for words like: *should, can, may, soon, easy, etc., and/or*.
 - Mark the sentence that has them.
2. **Ask clarifying questions**
 - Use: **Who? What? When? Where? How? How many?**
 - Write short, clear questions.
3. **Rewrite clearly**
 - Start with: **“The system must ...”**
 - Say **who** does it, **when**, and **what happens**.
 - Add numbers (e.g., **0, 48 hours, 1st of month**).
 - Say if it is in **UI, API**, or both.
4. **Add Acceptance Criteria (Given/When/Then)**
 - **Given** = start state.
 - **When** = action/event.
 - **Then** = result/output.
 - Write **2–4** lines per requirement.
5. **List open items**
 - What is still not decided.
 - **Owner** (who will decide) and **due date**.
 - Current **assumption** (your best guess).

Reference:

[Ambiguity in Requirements Specification](#)

1. The vacation type should be selectable based on the employee type:

Ambiguous words/phrases found:

- “should”, “selectable”, “based on”, “employee type”, “vacation type”.

Clarifying questions:

- What employee types do we have? (full-time, part-time, contractor,)
- What vacation types do we have? (annual leave, sick leave, personal days,)
- How do we link employee types to vacation types? Can an admin or a supervisor change this link?
- Does ‘selectable’ mean the employee chooses from a list, or the system chooses for them?
- Are there other rules that limit the choice? (for example: location).

Clear rewrite:

The system shows only the vacation types allowed for the employee’s type. Admin or supervisor can set or change this link. If there is only one allowed type, the system can choose it automatically. The rule works in UI and API.

Acceptance criteria:

- Given an employee is “full-time”, when they open the form, then they see only vacation types allowed for “full-time”.
- Given an API request uses a not-allowed type, when it is sent, then the API returns 400 with a clear message.
- Given an employee’s type changes, when they start a new request, then the allowed list updates at once.

Open items to confirm:

- Final list of employee types and vacation types.
- Who can edit the mapping (admin/supervisor) and audit log needed.
- What happens if no mapping exists for a type.
- Case of multiple roles for one person; type change mid-year.

2. The employee should be notified about his vacations balance:

Ambiguous words/phrases found:

- “should be notified”, “his”, “vacations balance”, timing not defined, channels not defined.

Clarifying questions:

- When do we send messages? (after balance changes, during a request, daily, weekly, monthly)
- How do we send them? (email, SMS, in-app)
- What should the message show? (current balance, days used, days left, expiry date)
- Do we send instant messages when the balance or request status changes, and a monthly summary?
- Do the rules change by employee type or by country?

Clear rewrite:

Send instant messages when balance or request status changes. Also send a monthly summary. Use in-app and email (SMS optional if enabled). The message shows per type: current, used, remaining, and expiry date. Rules can change by employee type and country (language, time zone, alert limits).

Acceptance criteria:

- Given a request is approved, when the balance changes, then the employee gets an instant in-app + email message.
- Given it is the first day of the month in the employee’s time zone, when the day starts, then the employee gets a monthly summary.
- Given the employee is in another country, when the summary is sent, then it uses that country’s language and time zone.

Open items to confirm:

- Exact channels per country; opt-out policy; rate-limit for alerts.
- Who else is copied (manager/HR).
- Threshold alerts (e.g., warn at ≤ 3 days).

3. The financial impact of the vacation type should be verifiable:

Ambiguous words/phrases found:

- “financial impact”, “verifiable”, which costs to include, who verifies.

Clarifying questions:

- Who checks the money impact? (HR, Finance, manager)
- What does ‘financial impact’ mean here? (pay during leave, cost to cover the work, billing changes)
- How do we check it? (automatic calculation in the system, manual review)
- What details do we need? (inputs, currency, date, and a simple record of who checked)
- Do the rules change by vacation type, length, or amount?

Clear rewrite:

For approved **paid** leave, the system calculates cost = pay rate × leave hours in the employee’s currency. It shows inputs, the formula, currency/FX date, and rounding. Finance can mark a record as “Verified”. The system keeps an audit log (who, when, what). For **unpaid** leave, cost = 0.

Acceptance criteria:

- Given an approved paid leave of 8 hours, when Finance opens the record, then cost and inputs are shown.
- Given a Finance user, when they mark “Verified”, then the audit log stores user and time.
- Given an unpaid leave, when it is saved, then cost shows 0 with the note “Unpaid leave”.

Open items to confirm:

- Which pay rate to use (hourly, or salary pro-rate); overtime rules.
- FX source/date; rounding rules.
- Who can verify (roles) and if un-verify is allowed.

4. There should be a notification about the employees that already consumed all of their vacation balance:

Ambiguous words/phrases found:

- “there should be a notification”, “consumed all”, whether future leave counts, who gets it.

Clarifying questions:

- Who should get this alert? (the employee, direct manager, HR)
- When do we send it? (right away, daily, weekly)
- What happens after? (refuse new requests, ask for info, or just inform)
- Do we include people with a negative balance? Do we count future approved leave that will make it zero?
- What details should the alert show? (employee name, vacation type, remaining)

Clear rewrite:

When remaining balance ≤ 0 (including future approved leave), send an instant alert to the employee, manager, and HR. Add the case to a daily list for managers/HR. The alert shows: employee name, vacation type(s), remaining or negative amount, and next leave date. New requests are blocked unless an exception is approved.

Acceptance criteria:

- Given a balance becomes 0, when the record is saved, then an instant alert goes to employee + manager + HR.
- Given the daily digest time, when it runs, then all employees with balance ≤ 0 appear with details.
- Given balance ≤ 0 , when the employee submits a new request, then the system blocks it and shows how to ask for an exception.

Open items to confirm:

- Exact digest time and recipients.
- Whether negative balance is allowed by policy.
- Exception approval flow and message text.

5. The eligible persons only should be able to approve vacations (whenever applicable):

Ambiguous words/phrases found:

- “eligible persons only”, “whenever applicable”, order of approval, delegation, self-approval.

Clarifying questions:

- Who is ‘eligible’? How do we decide? (role, department, manager chain)
- When is approval not needed? (auto-approve cases)
- Is there an order for approvals? (manager first, then HR) Are there time limits?
- Can someone else approve as a delegate? Is self-approval blocked/refused?
- Do rules change by vacation length, type, or date? What if the approver is away?

Clear rewrite:

Only users who are approvers for the requester (manager chain or named delegate) can approve. Self-approval is blocked. Workflows can change by vacation type and duration. If no action within the time limit (e.g., 48 hours), the request escalates to the next approver.

Acceptance criteria:

- Given the requester’s manager, when they open the request, then Approve/Reject is available.
- Given the requester themselves, when they open their own request, then Approve/Reject is not available and a clear message shows why.
- Given no action in 48 hours, when the time limit ends, then the request escalates to the next approver or delegate.

Open items to confirm:

- Who grants/removes approver rights; need for audit.
- Exact SLA time and escalation path.
- Single vs multi-step approval per type/duration; holiday/weekend handling.
- What employee types do we have? (full-time, part-time, contractor,)
- What vacation types do we have? (annual leave, sick leave, personal days,)
- How do we link employee types to vacation types? Can an admin or a supervisor change this link?
- Does ‘selectable’ mean the employee chooses from a list, or the system chooses for them?
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