

My Business Analyst Glossary



This is a selection of basic terms I chose for your daily basis.

A

- **Acceptance Criteria:** Criteria associated with requirements, products, or the delivery cycle that must be met in order to achieve stakeholder acceptance.
- **Actor:** A human, device, or system that plays some specified role in interacting with a solution.
- **Artifact:** Any solution-relevant object that is created as part of business analysis efforts.
- **Assumption:** An influencing factor that is believed to be true but has not been confirmed to be accurate, or that could be true now but may not be in the future.

B

- **Business:** A system of one or more organizations and the solutions they use to pursue a shared set of common goals.
- **Business Case:** A justification for a course of action based on the benefits to be realized by using the proposed solution, as compared to the cost, effort, and other considerations to acquire and live with that solution.
- **Business Goal:** A state or condition that an organization is seeking to establish and maintain, usually expressed qualitatively rather than quantitatively.
- **Business Need:** A problem or opportunity of strategic or tactical importance to be addressed.
- **Business Objective:** An objective, measurable result to indicate that a business goal has been achieved.
- **Business Process:** An end-to-end set of activities which collectively responds to an event, and transforms information, materials, and other resources into outputs that deliver value directly to the customers of the process.
- **Business Requirement:** A representation of goals, objectives, and outcomes that describe why a change has been initiated and how success will be assessed.
- **Business Rule:** A specific, practicable, testable directive that is under the control of the business and that serves as a criterion for guiding behavior, shaping judgments, or making decisions.

C

- **Change:** The act of transformation in response to a need.
- **Change Management:** Planned activities, tools, and techniques to address the human side of change during a change initiative, primarily addressing the needs of the people who will be most affected by the change.
- **Checklist:** A standard set of quality elements that reviewers use for requirements verification.
- **Component:** A uniquely identifiable element of a larger whole that fulfills a clear function.
- **Concept Model:** An analysis model that develops the meaning of core concepts for a problem domain, defines their collective structure, and specifies the appropriate vocabulary needed to communicate about it consistently.
- **Constraint:** An influencing factor that cannot be changed, and that places a limit or restriction on a possible solution or solution option.
- **Context:** The circumstances that influence, are influenced by, and provide understanding of the change.
- **Core Concept:** One of six ideas that are fundamental to the practice of business analysis: *Change, Need, Solution, Context, Stakeholder, and Value*.
- **Customer:** A stakeholder who uses or may use products or services produced by the enterprise and may have contractual or moral rights that the enterprise is obliged to meet.

D-E

- **Decomposition:** A technique that subdivides a problem into its component parts in order to facilitate analysis and understanding of those components.
- **Defect:** A deficiency in a product or service that reduces its quality or varies from a desired attribute, state, or functionality.
- **Deliverable:** Any unique and verifiable work product or service that a party has agreed to deliver.
- **Design:** A usable representation of a solution.
- **Domain:** The sphere of knowledge that defines a set of common requirements, terminology, and functionality for any program or initiative solving a problem.
- **Elicitation:** Iterative derivation and extraction of information from stakeholders or other sources.
- **End User:** A stakeholder who directly interacts with the solution.
- **Enterprise:** A system of one or more organizations and the solutions they use to pursue a shared set of common goals.
- **Event:** An occurrence or incident to which an organizational unit, system, or process must respond.

F-H

- **Feature:** A distinguishing characteristic of a solution that implements a cohesive set of requirements and which delivers value for a set of stakeholders.
- **Functional Requirement:** A capability that a solution must have in terms of the behavior and information the solution will manage.
- **Gap Analysis:** A comparison of the current state and desired future state of an enterprise in order to identify differences that need to be addressed.
- **Guideline:** An instruction or description on why or how to undertake a task.

I-L

- **Impact Analysis:** An assessment of the effects a proposed change will have on a stakeholder or stakeholder group, project, or system.
- **Indicator:** A specific numerical measurement that indicates progress toward achieving an impact, output, activity, or input.
- **Input:** Information consumed or transformed to produce an output. An input is the information necessary for a task to begin.
- **Interface:** A shared boundary between any two persons and/or systems through which information is communicated.
- **Iteration:** A single instance of progressive cycles of analysis, development, testing, or execution.
- **Lessons Learned Process (aka Retrospective):** A process improvement technique used to learn about and improve on a process or project.
- **Life Cycle:** A series of changes an item or object undergoes from inception to retirement.

M-O

- **Matrix:** A textual form of modeling used to represent information that can be categorized, cross-referenced, and represented in a table format.
- **Metadata:** A description of data to help understand how to use that data.
- **Metric:** A quantifiable level of an indicator measured at a specified point in time.
- **Mission Statement:** A formal declaration of values and goals that expresses the core purpose of the enterprise.
- **Model:** A representation and simplification of reality developed to convey information to a specific audience to support analysis, communication, and understanding.
- **Need:** A problem or opportunity to be addressed.
- **Non-Functional Requirement:** A type of requirement that describes the performance or quality attributes a solution must meet.

- **Operational support:** A stakeholder who is responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of a system or product.
- **Organizational modeling:** The analysis technique used to describe roles, responsibilities and reporting structures that exist within an enterprise.

P-Q

- **Plan:** A detailed scheme for doing or achieving something.
- **Prioritization:** Determining the relative importance of a set of items.
- **Process:** A set of activities designed to accomplish a specific objective by taking one or more defined inputs and turning them into defined outputs.
- **Process model:** A set of diagrams and supporting information about a process and factors that could influence the process. Some process models are used to simulate the performance of the process.
- **Product:** A solution or component of a solution that is the result of an initiative.
- **Product backlog:** A set of user stories, requirements, or features that have been identified as candidates for potential implementation, prioritized, and estimated.
- **Product vision statement:** A brief statement or paragraph that describes the goals of the solution and how it supports the strategy of the organization or enterprise.
- **Project:** A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.
- **Project scope:** The work that must be performed to deliver a product, service, or result with the specified features and functions.
- **Proof of concept:** A model created to validate the design of a solution without modelling the appearance, materials used in the creation of work, or processes and workflows ultimately used by the stakeholders.
- **Prototype:** A partial or simulated approximation of the solution for the purpose of eliciting or verifying requirements with stakeholders.
- **Quality:** The degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills needs.
- **Questionnaire:** A set of defined questions, with a choice of answers, used to collect information from respondents.

R

- **Repository:** A real or virtual facility where all information on a specific topic is stored and available for retrieval.
- **Requirement:** A usable representation of a need.
- **Requirements attribute:** A characteristic or property of a requirement used to assist with requirements management.
- **Requirements artifact:** A business analysis artifact containing information about requirements such as a diagram, matrix, document or model.

- **Requirements defect:** A problem or error in a requirement. Defects may occur because a requirement is poor quality or because it does not describe a need that, if met, would provide value to stakeholders
- **Requirements Management:** Planning, executing, monitoring, and controlling work associated with requirements.
- **Requirements traceability:** The ability for tracking the relationships between sets of requirements and designs from the original stakeholder need to the actual implemented solution. Traceability supports change control by ensuring that the source of a requirement or design can be identified and other related requirements and designs potentially affected by a change are known.
- **Risk:** The effect of uncertainty on the value of a change, a solution, or the enterprise.
- **Root Cause Analysis:** A structured examination of an identified problem to understand the underlying causes.


S-U

- **Scope:** The boundaries of control, change, a solution, or a need.
- **Scope model:** A model that defines the boundaries of a business domain or solution.
- **Secondary actor:** An actor external to the system under design that supports the execution of a use case.
- **Sequence diagram:** A type of diagram that shows objects participating in interactions and the messages exchanged between them.
- **SME (subject matter expert):** A stakeholder with in-depth knowledge of a topic relevant to the business need or solution scope.
- **Solution:** A specific way of satisfying one or more needs in a context.
- **Stakeholder:** An individual or group that has an interest in the outcome of a project.
- **SOW (statement of Work):** A written description of the services or tasks that are required to be performed.
- **System:** A set of interdependent components that interact in various ways to produce a set of desired outcomes.
- **Task:** A discrete piece of work that may be performed formally or informally as part of business analysis.
- **UML (unified modelling language):** A notation specified by the Object Management Group for describing software application structure, behaviour, and architecture.
- **Use case:** A description of the observable interaction between an actor (or actors) and a solution that occurs when the actor uses the system to accomplish a specific goal.

- **UAT (user acceptance test):** Assessing whether the delivered solution meets the needs of the stakeholder group that will be using the solution. The assessment is validated against identified acceptance criteria.
- **User story:** A small, concise statement of functionality or quality needed to deliver value to a specific stakeholder.

V-W

- **Value:** The worth, importance, or usefulness of something to a stakeholder within a specific context.
- **WBS (work breakdown structure):** A deliverable-oriented hierarchical decomposition of the work to be executed to accomplish objectives and create the required deliverables. It organizes and defines the total scope of the project.
- **Workflow:** A sequence of tasks that processes a set of data.
- **Workshop:** A facilitated and focused event attended by key stakeholders for the purpose of achieving a defined goal.

 You can find the full glossary from the IIBA (International Institute of Business Analysis) here:

<https://www.iiba.org/career-resources/a-business-analysis-professionals-foundation-for-success/babok/glossary/>