

Initiative horizon Introduction



Photo: <https://unsplash.com/@muhammadbinmasood>

Initiative Horizon

The purpose of analysis at the Initiative Horizon is to inform decisions regarding solution options, features, priorities, and lifespan.

**Agile Extension to the
BABOK® Guide**

Expectations from a BA

- Use business priorities to define solution options
 - Scope initiatives
 - Use feedback to identify if the solution is producing the anticipated outcome
-

Strategy horizon



Prioritised Needs

Initiative horizon

The goal of analysis is to deliver a solution in a way that minimizes output and maximizes outcome.



What solution options satisfy the need?

Which solution option appears to provide the maximum outcome with the minimum output and fits within the given constraints?

What are the solution components as described by features of the preferred solution option?

What features should be delivered now, next, and in the future?

Has enough value been delivered to satisfy the need?

Based on ongoing feedback and learning, should the solution continue, change, or be cancelled?

Initiative horizon Elements

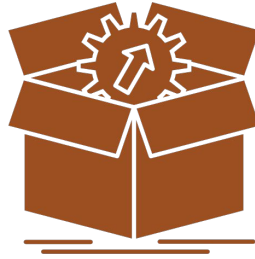


Photo: <https://unsplash.com/@bogzilla>

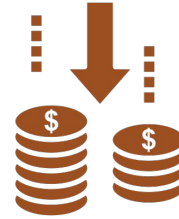
Elements of the initiative horizon



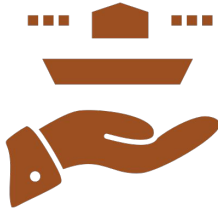
Identify Solution
Options



Identify Solution
Components



Determine if the
need is satisfied



Recommend
Solution Options



Prioritise Solution
Components



Ongoing assessment
of viability

Identify Solution Options



Identify solution options **worth considering** for implementation.

Multitude of options allows the agile team to analyze each one to determine whether it is viable or not.

The team needs **a shared understanding** of both the need to be satisfied and the desired outcome.

This includes clear and measurable objectives. They are used to do an initial viability assessment of solution options.

What to consider:

- the shared understanding of the need
- assumptions about a viable solution
- the risks
- broad description of solution options
- the constraints

This process includes the discovery of previously unknown information.

Recommend Solution Options



Recommend the solution options based on which solution option provides **the maximum outcome with the minimum output** and fits within identified constraints.

The BA role is advisory.

Steps:

- validate any assumptions
- identify methods of assessing the implementation practicality
- consider information about the people, processes, tools, organizations, systems, vendors, and other external entities that are impacted by the solution to identify potential conflicts or risks
- assess the solution's projected impact on the identified need
- estimate the cost of each solution option in terms of time, money, or any other resource relevant for the team
- consider experimentation

Identify Solution Components



Solutions are composed of multiple **solution components**.

Some agile contexts refer to solution components as **features**.

- Each identified component is evaluated in the context of the desired outcome, costs, impacts, and constraints.
- This creates a list of components which could be used to develop the selected solution option.
- Analysing the details of those a BA creates a backlog.
- Identifying and clarifying the solution components is an ongoing iterative process

Prioritise Solution Component



Once the potential solution components are identified, BAs prioritise and sequence the backlog. This is called **backlog refinement**.

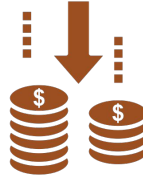
The decision maker responsible for the solution generally makes the decision on the priorities.

What to consider:

- the impact that each solution component has on the overall outcome.
- the cost (either actual or in terms of team capacity) in implementing the solution component.
- the current state of the initiative.
- feedback from stakeholders.
- current performance toward the desired outcome.
- current understanding of the constraints and risks.

Refinement is an ongoing process.

Determine if the Need is satisfied



Assess if the outputs delivered meet the desired outcome.

This is **validation**, not verification of the solution.

- Do it every time a solution component has been delivered and feedback has been received
- This reduces the risk of producing more output than necessary to meet the need and reduces waste.
- Once the desired outcome is achieved, efforts are shifted to meeting the next identified need.
- If the desired outcome has not been met, consider whether to continue, change, or cancel the initiative

Ongoing assessment of viability



Continuously assess the solution to understand **if it is delivering the desired outcomes** and sufficient value or not.

Base the judgement on the identified measures of success, as well as feedback received.

If the answer is **YES**:

→ continue to refine and deliver solution components

If the answer is **NO**:

- change the solution by adding or removing solution components, or changing the priority and sequencing of solution components.
- or cancel the initiative so that resources can be redeployed.

Initiative horizon

Timeframe



The time frame

The Initiative horizon looks into the mid-term future compared to the strategy and delivery horizons. What mid-terms means depends on the organisation and the context.

At the Initiative Horizon, the time frame is scoped by the answers to these questions:

- What outcomes are we driving now?
- What outcomes will we be addressing next?
- What outcomes will we be addressing in the future?

Agile BA Study guide



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