

Gathering Business Requirements



What are business requirements?

- For our purposes, a business requirement is **a statement of need or desire from your client.**
Your job is to fulfill (most of) it. This is not necessarily doing exactly what the client says. It might require some diplomatic explanation of why one stated requirement is less important in a specific context.
- How are they different from strategies? How are they different from goals?
Are those differences important?

Requirements are a means to an end

- Requirements are not the end; they are a step in the process
- Requirements are a way of communicating the right problems (which we hope to solve)
- I usually don't make a big fuss over semantics of strategies vs goals vs requirements

Business requirements should...

- Be measurable
For example by time, cost, satisfaction ratings, visits, customer kudos/complaints
- Be clear/unambiguous
- Be complete, atomic statements that describe only one thing
- Have priorities assigned to them, relative to one another

Critique these requirements statements

From a hard drive manufacturer site:

The solution must present non-technical messaging for product research, user benefits and support which can be understood by the novice end consumer

Measurable?

Clear/unambiguous?

Describe one thing?

From a travel site:

We want a significant increase in the number of visitors who click to book a trip after doing their research with us.

Measurable?

Clear/unambiguous?

Describe one thing?

From BC Ferries:

We want a better user satisfaction rating (higher than 2 out of 5) with the way our visitors find schedules and fares.

Measurable?

Clear/unambiguous?

Describe one thing?

From a University:

We want to increase awareness and interest in our Interactive Design program next Fall.

Measurable?

Clear/unambiguous?

Describe one thing?

How to Gather Business Requirements

- Surveys
- Observe people at work
- Read documents (e.g. project briefs)
- Client/Stakeholder interviews

Examples of Project Briefs

- One with blackouts
- One blank template to build a brief

Stakeholder Interviews

- Why we meet
- How to prepare
- What to do at the meeting
- What to do after the meeting

Why we meet

- Meeting is just one of many steps
- Inputs to a document, maybe
- Inputs to your designs, certainly
- *Can you think of another reason to meet?*

Scoping people

- Meeting important people is important
- Discover people's fears
- Mitigate panic attacks later
- Sometimes people just need to talk

How to prepare

- Find out who is attending
- Send out an agenda (and follow it), set expectations
- Research, research, research
- Get sketching tools (paper, pens, pencils, whiteboards, markers that work)
- Print out your questions sheets with lots of room for notes
- Be on time

What to do at the meeting

[illegible][illegible]

Lather

Rinse

Repeat

About listening

- Do more listening than talking
- Real listening is hard (this links to a good article to read)
- Perform active listening and rephrasing

About asking questions - what to ask about

- Business
- Project
- Audience
- Technology
- See specific stakeholder question examples (posted to the Hub)

About asking questions - don't be a lawyer

- Don't assume you know the answer
- Ask open-ended questions
- Ask probing follow-up questions

After the meeting

- Do more research to define the problem
- Follow up with people for unanswered questions
- Create a requirements document, or maybe not