RICHFIELD

FACULTY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

BUSINESS ANALYSIS 621

1ST SEMESTER ASSIGNMENT

Name & Surname: _____ ITS No: _____

Qualification: _____ Semester: _____ Module Name: _____

Submission Date: _____

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	MARK ALLOCATION	EXAMINER MARKS	MODERATOR MARKS
MARKS FOR CONTENT			
QUESTION ONE	30		
QUESTION TWO	30		
QUESTION THREE	30		
TOTAL MARKS	**90**		
MARKS FOR TECHNICAL ASPECTS			
1. TABLE OF CONTENTS Accurate numbering according to the numbering in text and page numbers.	2		
2. LAYOUT AND SPELLING Font – Calibri 12 Line Spacing – 1.0 Margin should be justified.	3		
3. REFERENCE According to the Harvard Method	5		
TOTAL MARKS	**10**		
TOTAL MARKS FOR ASSIGNMENT	**100**		
Examiner's Comments:			
Moderator's Comments:			

Signature of Examiner: Signature of Moderator:

QUESTIONS	90 MARKS

QUESTION ONE	(30 MARKS)

CASE STUDY: REVIEWING REQUIREMENTS OVER A CUP OF COFFEE

Years ago, Phil was the technical team lead for a team working on an executive compensation system for top-level management. The team needed input from a small, closed community of senior and executive management customers in order to define the current and future processes. Unfortunately, his key contact from this group felt that the job of customer interface had been given to a young, up-and-coming star who didn't have a clue. This made developing a rapport with the key customer contact almost impossible. However, the project deadlines remained inflexible, as they usually do.

Taking what little input was offered and doing significant research from other sources, the team compiled their draft of the business requirements document. The document was huge. It was single-spaced and double-sided, and it filled a 3-inch binder. There was a meeting to step through it. The customer contact was there and took her place at the head of the table. Phil sat at the opposite end of the table.

During the meeting, the customer's demeanour grew increasingly agitated. She hurled the requirements document down the table along with the exclamation, "I don't do this kind of menial work." Unfortunately, Phil reacted by returning the document in the same manner. His aim wasn't quite as true, and the document slammed into her coffee cup sending a spray of hot, sugary liquid into her lap. Her colour changed from the red of aggravation to the scarlet of rage. She stalked out of the room. So much for creating rapport with the customer! In the end, it all worked out. Both parties apologized, and the project (meeting the business requirements that had been approved) was delivered. But how much better things could have been if this situation had been avoided in the first place.

Technical skills and expertise are necessary on the project team, but they are not the skills and knowledge that separate effective business analysts from the pack. Superior business analysis skills are not necessarily derived from a superior set of technical skills.

QUESTIONS:

1. A business analyst is currently defining a set of changes to the current state of an organization that allows the organization to take advantage of a business opportunity. Explain what is most likely being defined? **(10)**

2. What knowledge area contains the next most logical steps after the business analyst has built a business case and gained management approval for a project? **(10)**

3. You are a business analyst measuring alternatives against objectives and identifying trade-offs to determine which possible solution is best. Discuss the factors most likely to be engaged in the various activities and those are most likely engaged in specific activities?   **(10)**

QUESTION TWO   (30 MARKS)

CASE STUDY: WHAT EXACTLY AM I SUPPOSED TO BE DOING?

Russ discovered early in his career as a project manager that all plans are not created equal. He was a replacement for the project manager on a fairly complex data centre consolidation project. Russ stepped in near the end of the first major phase of project work, which was developing the user requirements for the new data centre.

One of his first tasks was to review the current project plan and evaluate the progress to date. Russ noticed that the requirements development work was shown as a single two-week task in the project plan with no additional details about the requirements process itself. Because the resulting user requirements document was shown as a completed deliverable and this task was marked as 100 percent complete, he decided to look at the new capabilities the project would provide to the business and its users. So he did.

After reading the first four pages of the document, Russ knew there was a problem. He finished reading the user requirements document, closed the file on his computer, and reached for the phone to call the lead business analyst for this effort into his office. When Mary arrived, he asked her, "What exactly is this document supposed to be? Is this just a high-level concept that we need to now go out and define?" Mary replied that the document was the final, approved user requirements document. All the business analysis team had to do now was give the document to the developers. The developers would figure out the rest.

Russ asked Mary to explain the process she and her team had gone through to produce the deliverable. She explained that she had worked in tandem with the development director to elicit, analyze, and specify the user requirements for the project. Basically, the key users had not been involved or consulted at all. As Mary was quick to point out, "That wasn't in the plan, so that wasn't how I did the work." Basically, the user requirements work had to begin all over again and had to be done correctly the second time.

Russ worked closely with his business analysis team to plan the requirements development work in far greater detail. This time around, the team gave themselves adequate time to elicit and analyze the requirements and planned the time to validate the requirements when everything was complete. Completing the rewritten user requirements took five additional weeks of work. Funnily enough, this didn't impact the scheduled end date. The original requirements would have been impossible to use for the design and construction of the data centre.

Remember that your focus is on planning and monitoring the business analysis work for a project, not on planning and managing the whole project. That is the responsibility of the project manager. However, in either case, the plans need to be built and implemented at the appropriate level of detail.

QUESTIONS:

1. You are a business analyst addressing who will receive weekly business analysis status reports containing performance against actuals for your current project. Explain each of the tasks that needs to be completed. **(10)**

2. Discuss what technique might be used when determining the business analysis approach on a project? **(10)**

3. When identifying business analysis performance improvements, what technique allows you to determine the metrics used for measuring performance and determining how those metrics may be tracked? **(10)**

QUESTION THREE	(30 MARKS)

CASE STUDY: PALMER DIVIDE VINEYARDS—BUSINESS GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND NEED

As you become more involved with your Palmer Divide Vineyards work, you decide that you need to take a quick look at the organization's existing business goals, objectives, and needs as part of your current state analysis. As discussed in a recent team meeting, you would like to make sure you have it right. The team is curious about how the green initiative and your IT requirements development part of it fit into the organization's strategic plan. The team likes the idea of becoming a certified Green Business. However, they would like to validate how this business goal fits with the organization's long-term strategy and make sure that the project is really worth doing.

There are many aspects to attaining green certification, and the winery has initiated this current project to help achieve this strategic goal. A business objective for this effort is to conserve 20 percent of the current energy and water resource consumption within the next 18 months. The business need triggering the project came from combining the owner's strategic plans, a desire to operate an organic winery, and a perceived market advantage from selling green-labelled organic wines to the public.

QUESTIONS:

1. According to the case study what output contains the results of the business analyst assessing the capability gaps between existing and new capabilities of the organization? **(10)**

2. When analyzing the current state, the business analyst looks at the scope of decision making at different levels in the organization. Explain what elements of the current state are they looking at? **(10)**

3. Which business analysis technique allows the business analyst to leverage existing materials to analyze the current state of the enterprise relative to a business need? **(10)**

TOTAL MARKS: 100