# Lab 02: Vision and Scope Document

**Objectives**

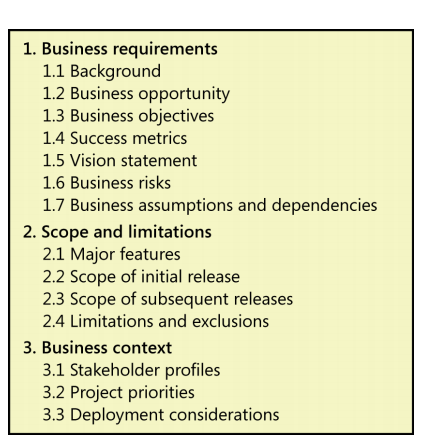
To elicit and document the Vision and Scope Business Requirements of a project

**Background:** The vision and scope document collects the business requirements into a single deliverable that sets the stage for the subsequent development work.

**Introduction:** The owner of the vision and scope document is the project’s executive sponsor, funding authority, or someone in a similar role. A business analyst can work with this individual to articulate the business requirements and write the vision and scope document. Input to the business requirements should come from people who have a clear sense of why they are undertaking the project. These individuals might include the customer or development organization’s senior management, a product visionary, a product manager, a subject matter expert, or members of the marketing department

Figure 3-1 suggests a template for a vision and scope document; the sections that follow describe each of the template headings in more detail. As with any template, adapt this to meet the specific needs of your own projects. If you already have recorded some of this information elsewhere, do not duplicate it in the vision and scope document. Some elements of the vision and scope document might be reusable from project to project, such as business objectives, business risks, and stakeholder profiles.

**Appendix B includes an example vision and scope document written according to this template.**



**Explanation:**

1. **Business Requirements:**

Projects are launched in the belief that creating or changing a product will provide worthwhile benefits for someone and a suitable return on investment. The business requirements describe the primary benefits that the new system will provide to its sponsors, buyers, and users. Business requirements directly influence which user requirements to implement and in what sequence.

**1.1 Background**

Summarize the rationale and context for the new product or for changes to be made to an existing one. Describe the history or situation that led to the decision to build this product.

**1.2 Business opportunity**

For a corporate information system, describe the business problem that is being solved or the process being improved, as well as the environment in which the system will be used. For a commercial product, describe the business opportunity that exists and the market in which the product will be competing. This section could include a comparative evaluation of existing products, indicating why the proposed product is attractive and the advantages it provides. Describe the problems that cannot currently be solved without the envisioned solution. Show how it aligns with market trends, technology evolution, or corporate strategic directions. List any other technologies, processes, or resources required to provide a complete customer solution. Describe the needs of typical customers or of the target market. Present customer problems that the new product will address. Provide examples of how customers would use the product.

**1.3 Business objectives**

Summarize the important business benefits the product will provide in a quantitative and measurable way.

**1.4 Vision statement**

Write a concise vision statement that summarizes the long-term purpose and intent of the product. The vision statement should reflect a balanced view that will satisfy the expectations of diverse stakeholders. It can be somewhat idealistic but should be grounded in the realities of existing or anticipated markets, enterprise architectures, corporate strategic directions, and resource limitations

The following keyword template works well for crafting a product vision statement (Moore 2002):

* For [target customer]
* Who [statement of the need or opportunity]
* The [product name]
* Is [product category]
* That [major capabilities, key benefit, compelling reason to buy or use]
* Unlike [primary competitive alternative, current system, current business process]
* Our product [statement of primary differentiation and advantages of new product]

Here’s a sample vision statement for the Chemical Tracking System, with the keywords in boldface:

***For*** *scientists* ***who*** *need to request containers of chemicals,* ***the*** *Chemical Tracking System* ***is*** *an information system* ***that*** *will provide a single point of access to the chemical stockroom and to vendors. The system will store the location of every chemical container within the company, the quantity of material remaining in it, and the complete history of each container’s locations and usage. This system will save the company 25 percent on chemical costs in the first year of use by allowing the company to fully exploit chemicals that are already available within the company, dispose of fewer partially used or expired containers, and use a standard chemical purchasing process.* ***Unlike*** *the current manual ordering processes,* ***our product*** *will generate all reports required to comply with federal and state government regulations that require the reporting of chemical usage, storage, and disposal*

**1.5 Business risks**

Summarize the major business risks associated with developing—or not developing—this product. Risk categories include marketplace competition, timing issues, user acceptance, implementation issues, and possible negative impacts on the business. Business risks are not the same as project risks, which often include resource availability concerns and technology factors. Estimate the potential loss from each risk, the likelihood of it occurring, and any potential mitigation actions

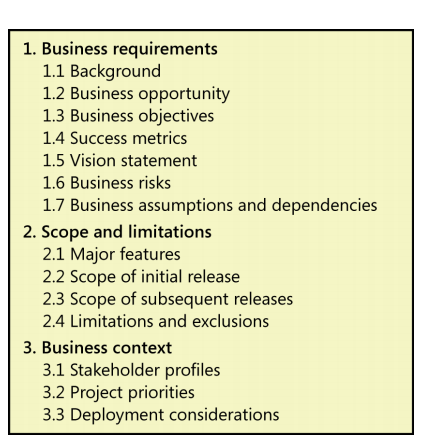
**1.6 Business assumptions and dependencies**

An assumption is a statement that is believed to be true in the absence of proof or definitive knowledge. Business assumptions are specifically related to the business requirements. Incorrect assumptions can potentially keep you from meeting your business objectives.

If you learn that certain assumptions are wrong, you might have to change scope, adjust the schedule, or launch other projects to achieve the objectives. Record any assumptions that the stakeholders made when conceiving the project and writing their vision and scope document.

Record any major dependencies the project has on external factors. Examples are pending industry standards or government regulations, deliverables from other projects, third-party suppliers, or development partners. Some business assumptions and dependencies might turn into risks that the project manager must monitor regularly. Broken dependencies are a common source of project delays. Note the impact of an assumption not being true, or the impact of a broken dependency, to help stakeholders understand why it is critical

**Appendix B includes an example vision and scope document written according to this template.**



**Explanation:**

1. **Scope and limitations**

When a chemist invents a new reaction that transforms one kind of chemical into another, he writes a paper that includes a “Scope and limitations” section, which describes what the reaction will and will not do. Similarly, a software project should define its scope and limitations. You need to state both what the solution being developed is and what it is not. Establishing the business requirements 89Many projects suffer from scope creep—rampant growth as more and more functionality gets stuffed into the product. The first step to controlling scope creep is to define the project’s scope. The scope describes the concept and range of the proposed solution. The limitations itemize certain capabilities that the product will not include that some people might assume will be there. The scope and limitations help to establish realistic stakeholder expectations because customers sometimes request features that are too expensive or that lie outside the intended project scope.

At the highest level, scope is defined when the customer decides which business objectives to target. At a lower level, scope is defined at the level of features, user stories, use cases, or events and responses to include. Scope ultimately is defined through the set of functional requirements planned for implementation in a specific release or iteration. At each level, the scope must stay within the bounds of the level above it. For example, in-scope user requirements must map to the business objectives, and functional requirements must map to user requirements that are in scope.

**2.1 Major features**

List the product’s major features or user capabilities, emphasizing those that distinguish it from previous or competing products. Think about how users will use the features, to ensure that the list is complete and that it does not include unnecessary features that sound interesting but don’t provide customer value. Give each feature a unique and persistent label to permit tracing it to other system elements. You might include a feature tree diagram, as described later in this chapter.

**2.2 Scope of initial release**

Summarize the capabilities that are planned for inclusion in the initial product release. Scope is often defined in terms of features, but you can also define scope in terms of user stories, use cases, use case flows, or external events. Also describe the quality characteristics that will let the product provide the intended benefits to its various user classes. To focus the development effort and maintain a reasonable project schedule, avoid the temptation to include every feature that any potential customer might eventually want in release 1.0. Bloatware and slipped schedules are common outcomes of such insidious scope stuffing. Focus on those features that will provide the most value, at the most acceptable cost, to the broadest community, in the earliest time frame. As an illustration, a recent project team decided that users had to be able to run their package delivery business with the first release of the software application. Version 1 didn’t have to be fast, pretty, or easy to use, but it had to be reliable; this focus drove everything the team did.

The initial release accomplished the basic objectives of the system. Future releases will include additional features, options, and usability aids. Be careful not to neglect nonfunctional requirements in the initial release, though. The ones that directly affect architecture are particularly critical to establish from the outset. Re-architecting to try to fix quality deficiencies can be almost as expensive as a total rewrite.

**2.3 Scope of subsequent releases**

If you envision a staged evolution of the product, or if you are following an iterative or incremental life cycle, build a release roadmap that indicates which functionality chunks will be deferred and the desired timing of later releases. Subsequent releases let you implement additional use cases and features, as well as enriching the capabilities of the initial ones. The farther out you look, the fuzzier these future scope statements will be and the more they will change over time. Expect to shift functionality from one planned release to another and to add unanticipated capabilities. Short release cycles provide frequent opportunities for learning based on customer feedback.

**2.4 Limitations and exclusions**

List any product capabilities or characteristics that a stakeholder might expect but that are not planned for inclusion in the product or in a specific release. List items that were cut from scope, so the scope decision is not forgotten. Maybe a user requested that she be able to access the system from her phone while away from her desk, but this was deemed to be out of scope. State that explicitly in this section: “The new system will not provide mobile platform support.

**Exercises**

• Visit your clients and discuss the Project’s Vision and scope.

• Gather the Project’s business requirements from your clients.

• Document the business requirements.

• Present it to the instructor.

• Once you have discussed the Project’s Vision and scope.

• Elicit the Project’s Scope and Business context

• Document the Project’s Scope and Business context.

• Present it to the instructor.

**Deliverables**

• Submit the complete document of Vision & Scope of your project.