B2T Training

Excellent Requirements Checklist

Your unique responsibility as a BA is to write and communicate excellent requirements. Requirement consumers depend on the requirements in order to effectively design and construct solution components. Excellent requirements leave no room for interpretation, create or cause for confusion and omit no critical detail. They ensure that the consumer of the requirement can understand what is being requested.

Excellent requirements possess these 10 characteristics:

Valuable
Requirements describe the right features and capabilities meaning that they: • Make progress toward satisfying the needs of your stakeholders • Support your business strategy • Don't over-solve problems

Concise
Excellent requirements provide a useful, easy-to-read, and easy-to-change understanding of what must be done. They exist to do three things: • Identify the needs that your stakeholders have (needs can include problems and opportunities). • Explain why those needs are worth satisfying. • Define when those needs are satisfied. Therefore, requirements should present the most important information in the easiest format for your audience to consume.

Design Free
A requirement should not specify an implementation (i.e., the how). Specifying only the what leaves options open for the delivery team to figure out the how.

Attainable
Requirements should describe a solution that is realistically attainable, and in conjunction with the idea of valuable requirements, the cost to implement the solution should not be more than the benefit received from satisfying the need. Unattainable requirements are generally quite expensive.

Complete
The full set of your requirements: • Identifies all of the stakeholder needs to be satisfied and their nature (absolute vs. diminishing returns) • Are logically complete in their coverage/articulation of those stakeholder needs

Consistent

Write requirements with grammatical consistency to reduce the chance of ambiguity. Also, write logically consistent requirements so that you avoid "impossible" requirements and gaps of unspecified meaning. Requirements need to support your business goals and your organization's vision.

Unambiguous

Requirements should have a single, reasonable interpretation. Avoid inserting ambiguity into requirements whenever possible.

Verifiable

You need to be able to determine whether you successfully delivered the project's requirements. They need to be testable.

Atomic

The requirements you use for organizing your work (i.e. user stories or use cases) represent a single stakeholder need that you either satisfy or you don't. There is no partial satisfaction of atomic requirements. Having requirements established in this manner aids in producing valuable requirements, helps traceability, and aids in validating that a requirement is met.

As an example, in user stories, the presence of "and" or "or" means that the user story isn't atomic. It can be split into smaller stories.

Understandable

Make sure the people who are looking at your requirements can understand what the requirements are saying.