



How to Successfully Prioritize Requirements

- 1 Get all stakeholders involved in a joint session to discuss each participant's reasons for priorities so that they are all heard.
- 2 Don't try to prioritize all requirements in one sitting.
- 3 Determine if multiple requirements are addressing the same problem to reduce potential duplicates or conflicting requirements first.
- 4 Realize that priorities will change over time, even on short projects. Constantly revisit priorities to ensure validity.
- 5 Refer to the project objectives to identify high priority requirements. If a requirement does not help achieve an objective determine whether the requirement is out of scope or an objective was missed.
- 6 Determine high priority requirements by asking "If you could only have X items in your solution, which would you choose?"

Try different techniques! Here are some we use:

- A Rating - Try to get numerical priority (especially for high priority items) instead of high, medium, and low categories. If high, medium, and low are used, define what they mean.
- B Buy A Feature - Assign a value to each feature and give stakeholders a fixed amount of fake cash that they may use to "purchase" the features they most desire.
- C Cost of Delay – Divide the cost (in dollars) of a delay by the estimated duration of the delay.
- D Weighted Shortest Job First – Divide the cost of delay by the job size to identify lower effort, higher value items to address first.
- E Decision Criteria – Identify variables or characteristics that are important to the organization. Establish of each criteria and based on that, prioritize the requirements.
- F MoSCoW approach – Every requirement is designated as a Must have, Should have, Could have, or Won't have.
- G Priority Pyramid – Identify the most important feature or requirement for the top box. Then select the next 2 most important items for row 2. Continue expanding by one feature for each row until the pyramid is built.
- H Bubble Sort – Place one item on the wall or board. Then take the next item and decide if it's higher or lower in priority and place it on the wall. Continue with each requirement.
- I Dot Voting – Give participants a certain number of points or dots. Participants place their dots beside the items they feel should have priority.