

Business Analysis Agility

and how it makes your development even better

Whether you work in an agile team, or write traditional specifications, the essential business analysis task is to uncover the real needs of the real customers. Without understanding the real need, it is extremely difficult to deliver real value.

Your organization is constantly having to adapt to the relentless changes to its environment – changes to the law, changes in the marketplace, changes in technology, and changes to the available opportunities. Any change results in a development effort to deliver a new or enhanced software system, business process, consumer product or service. Furthermore, the rate of change is so rapid that we simply don't have time to get the wrong result and deliver the wrong solution.

This course is about using analytical skills to understand the real, underlying problem to solve. It is about integrating business analysis skills into your team regardless of whether it is an agile team, or a more traditional one producing a complete requirements specification. It is about ensuring that you always deliver the right solution, and that you deliver quickly.

What Will I Learn?

By attending this two-day course, you will learn:

- How to identify the customer segments, and what is truly valuable to them
- How not to assume a solution, but to discover the real problem
- How to ensure your solution solves the right problem
- How safe-to-fail probes prove your solution delivers value

- How to design more usable solutions
- How to use story maps to display the narrative of your product
- How to integrate business analysis practices with agile delivery
- How business analysis agility helps you to write better traditional requirements specifications

Who Should Attend?

Business analysis is a skill that should be present in all development efforts, and in day-to-day organisational tasks. The skill is usually, but not necessarily, associated with job titles such as • Business Analyst • Product Owner • Agile Team Member • Systems Analyst • Requirements Engineer • Product or Program Manager . . . or similar titles.

We also find • Business Stakeholders • Users • Software Customers • Testers benefit from learning advanced business analysis techniques, and how they can contribute to the organisation's wellbeing.

Business Analysis Agility

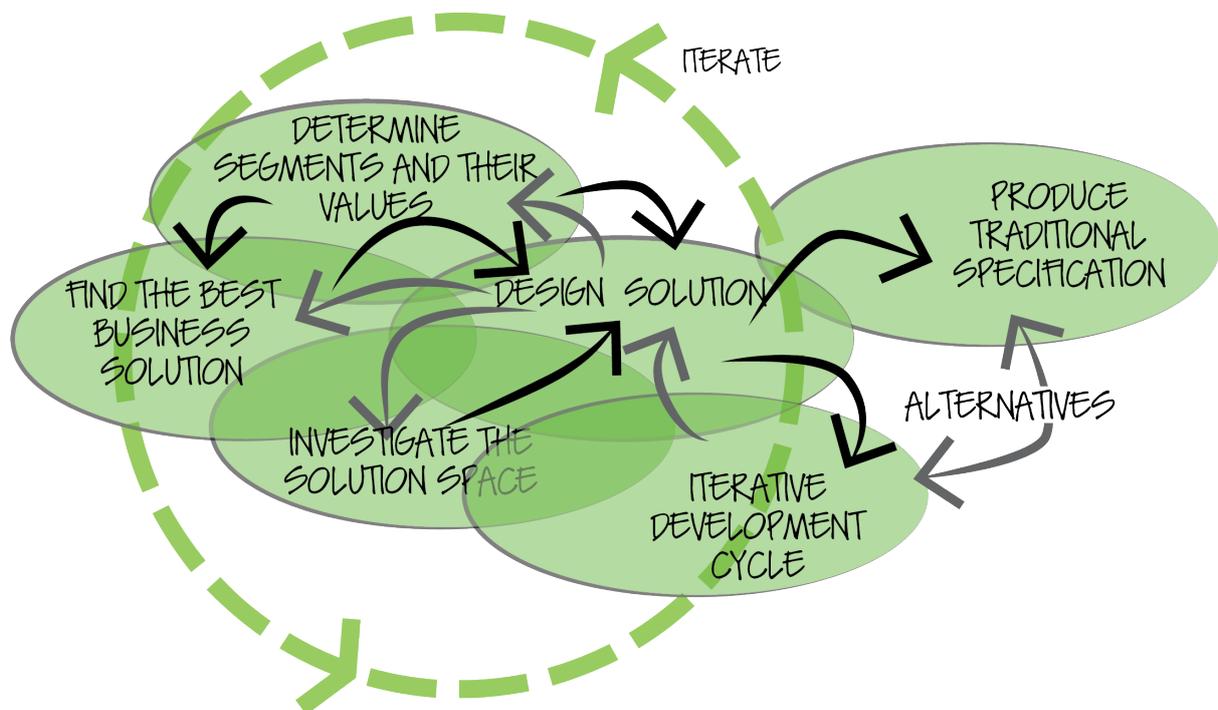
Despite our technological advances, the biggest problem is still the human one: how to correctly understand the customer's real problem, and how to ensure that your solution is correctly solving that problem.

The real problem is not found by running endless prototypes past our customers. Nor is it likely that an assumed solution will deliver much value. However, analytical thinking uncovers the real needs and allows the right solution to emerge. This means:

- Finding all the customer or user segments, and which of them yields the best, and the earliest value
- Using value propositions to meet the real needs of the customers
- Using safe-to-fail probes to ensure that any proposed solution solves the right problem and delivers the right value.

- Deploying an iterative approach to discovering the real problem, and progressively feeding the right stories to the delivery activity.
- Understating that by discovering the right needs and solving the right problem you deliver real value to your customer and your sponsor.
- Doing all this quickly and effectively.

This course gives you a different approach to business analysis. This one provides a business analysis framework that works regardless of whether you are part of an agile environment and need to provide stories for iterative development, or whether you are in a traditional environment and need to produce a requirements specification suitable for more formalized environments and outsourcing.



The concurrent, iterative activities of agile business analysis.

What's in it for You?

Our businesses thrive or flounder on the effectiveness of their business processes, both automated and manual. Businesses with good processes provide a better service and are more responsive to their customers. The converse is also true.

Business analysis is the craft of enlightened improvement to business systems and processes. Moreover, business analysis gives you ways of identifying the areas where development efforts will yield the highest value.

This two-day course in business analysis gives you the skills and tools to discover your client's real business, and to determine and demonstrate the best ways of improving it.

This course is a natural companion to *Mastering the Requirements Process*, where we teach the art of requirements writing. The models and understanding from *Business Analysis Agility* are the foundation for your requirements process.

What's in the Course?

agile Business Analysis

We explore business analysis and show you how you can be more agile, more adaptable in your business analysis activities.

We take you through a framework for discovering the customers and their needs, for finding solutions and evaluating them, designing the business solution and getting it built. We look at how business analysis integrates with either agile or traditional development.

Do You Know What Your Customers Value?

Identify and prioritise the customer segments. Customer, or user, segments are groups of people with the same characteristics and the same needs. For the highest priority segments, you produce value propositions that set down what you must deliver to satisfy the customers' business needs. This value proposition is the foundation for what is to follow.

You ensure that it is worthwhile to provide value to a customer segment by looking at the value the segment brings to your organisation.

Are You Solving the Right Problem?

The business problem is, “How might you deliver the value proposition?” You and your team generate candidate solutions. Instead of stopping at one, you always find that subsequent candidates improve on the original. To prove that a candidate is solving the right problem, each is the subject of a safe-to-fail probe. This is a quick, cheap experiment to determine the viability, the suitability and the outcome of a solution. You are also working with your customers to ensure that the candidate is solving the right problem and fulfilling the right need.

Investigate the Solution Space

The solution space includes the people, software and devices used to fulfil the needs of the customer segments. You investigate this space by looking at the necessary business processes and data.

The solution involves, and is used by, humans; your investigation studies the culture and characteristics of the people involved in the solution. The investigation is quick, but thorough enough to prevent any nasty surprises for the development team.

Designing the Solution

Anything worthwhile is designed. Here you design the business solution to make it usable and convenient. The designing business analyst uses elements of the problem, the desired impact of the solution, the behaviour of the target customer segments, and the value proposition to craft the best possible solution.

Any valuable solution will be innovative. This section looks at some innovation techniques, especially in the areas of providing better information, and making the solution more convenient for its users.

Writing the Right Stories

Stories are fundamental to most agile development. However, if they are to be useful, the stories must be the right stories. This section gives you an approach to writing the right stories, ones that address the real customer problems.

We also show you how story maps give you a more descriptive and usable backlog. Story maps are the ideal repository for the information you are discovering, and the stories needed for the development cycles.

Jack Be Nimble, Jack Be Quick

This section reviews the course and points out how by being agile, business analysis can be done quickly. We also look at other aspects of business analysis, how to break down silos, the minimal amount of effective documentation.

We take a look at lean thinking, and how the agile business analyst can avoid waste, unevenness and overburden.

While you can do your business analysis in an agile way, some organisations require a traditional requirements specification – so we show you how to build one from the results of your agile analysis.

Instructors — learning from experience

James Robertson is a consultant, teacher, author, project leader whose deep understanding of business analysis and customer-obsessive techniques has helped teams all over the world. He is a founder of The Atlantic Systems Guild, a think tank known for its innovative systems engineering techniques.

James is co-author of *Mastering the Requirements Process—Third Edition, Getting Requirements Right* (Addison-Wesley 2012), *Adrenaline Junkies and Template Zombies* (Dorset House, 2008) and the *Volere* techniques for requirements.

James Archer is a business analyst, consultant, teacher, writer and innovator. James is co-editor and contributing author of *Business Analysis and Leadership* (Kogan Page, 2014). He identifies the key to great business analysis as

an inclusive leadership style, innovative thinking, working collaboratively, to help people discover their real requirements.

James is one of the founders and organisers of the Business Analysis European Conference. In 2009, he was awarded Business Analyst of the Year. He has a Masters with Distinction in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership (Minnov) from City University.

How do I Get This?

To move towards better business analysis, email your preferred agent and they will let you know how to be part of business analysis agility.

- **Belgium:** I.T. Works. pvr@itworks.be
- **Czech Republic:** Aguarra s.r.o. mvallo@aguarra.com
- **Italy:** Technology Transfer S.r.l. f.lesnoni@technologytransfer.it
- **Netherlands:** Adept Events. werner.schoots@array.nl
- **Norway:** Den Norske Dataforening.
ragnhild.neergaard@dataforeningen.no
- **Sweden:** Require AB. staffan.melin@require.se
- **United Kingdom:** IRM UK. jeanette.hall@irmuk.co.uk

This course is part of the Volere series. www.volere.org