

Requirements Validation

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Executive Summary:

An essential part of developing software for a client is ensuring that the requirements you have obtained are accurate and precise. Unfortunately, this task is easier said than done. Not focusing enough on validating your requirements throughout the project can result in a product that the customer is not pleased with. Dedicating members of your team to validate requirements throughout the project leaves the rest of your team short-handed, dragging out the project, and wasting resources. Clearly, the best solution to this is to allow a third party to assume this responsibility, to ensure that the client's needs are met and your development staff can focus on the task at hand.

Problem Statement:

As a software company, your ultimate goal is to create and provide a piece of software that fits the needs of your customer. How can you be sure, though, that the software you're creating is actually what they want? Between assumptions, misunderstandings, and a lack of technical knowledge from the customer, the two parties could easily leave a software requirements discussion with two entirely different products in mind. The worst thing you can do is invest your time and money into a product that your customer doesn't even want, just to have to start over again and realize you wasted your resources. That doesn't make for a very profitable transaction. Even if your development team attempts to continue ironing out the details with the client, this proves to be a waste, considering they should be devoting their efforts to working on the actual product. Requirements validation is certainly necessary to ensure your efforts are not wasted, but it's an ongoing process, not a one-time meeting. Can you really afford to dedicate members of your team to validating requirements throughout the project instead of working on it?

Solution:

If your company acquires our services, we will assign a dedicated employee to be an intermediary between the client and the development team, continuously validating any new requirements as they arise to ensure that your team is on the right track and your resources are going to good use. Each of our employees are only delegated 2-3 projects to validate requirements for at a time. This way, they can focus as much as they need to on your company's needs. When you initially start a new project with a client, our employee will meet

with the primary business stakeholder to go through potential requirements, better understand the values of the business, and fit them together. After this, your standard method of requirements elicitation can be performed as you would normally, although our employee will also be present to factor in the knowledge gained from the prior meeting and help your client elaborate on their needs. After the requirements elicitation, your team can be completely hands off, if you prefer, as our employee will begin studying each requirement. Any ambiguities found in a requirement will be quickly cleared up with your client. Our employees are trained to encourage clients to speak their minds and give any requirements that may be lingering in the backs of their minds that could prove to be problematic later on. As our employee updates the requirements for your project, the development team will be notified so they can review their live-updating requirements list. This process will continue throughout the project to ensure that your resources are being used properly and fully on the project.

Conclusion:

Every software company needs to validate requirements for each project to ensure their customer will be pleased with the product they're producing. Many times, however, after the initial requirements elicitation meetings, the development team and client have little communication. Requirements validation is an ongoing process, so any negligence throughout the development of the project can result in an unhappy customer. If the team does participate in the validation process throughout the process, they're no longer working on the development of the project at full capacity. This drags out the length of it, and ultimately wastes unnecessary resources. Clearly, a better solution would be to hire us to handle your

requirements validation needs for you. With a dedicated employee focused on your project, you won't ever have to worry about whether or not you have the same vision for the product as the customer, and your development team can focus on the actual development, as they should.

References:

<http://www.bridging-the-gap.com/validate-requirements-babok-6-6/>