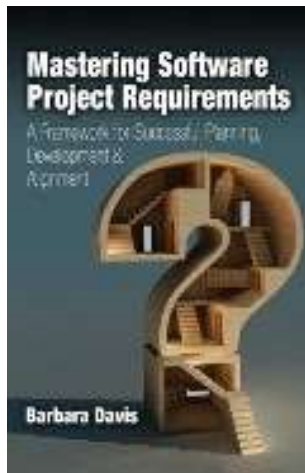

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Mastering Software Project Requirements***

Author: **Barbara Davis**

Publisher: **J. Ross Publishing**

List Price: US\$54.95 at www.jrosspub.com

Format: hard cover; 272 pages

Publication Date: July 2013 ISBN: 978-1-60427-091-4

Reviewer: **Mary Jane Quandt**

Review Date: February 2014

Introduction to the Book

Barbara Davis' framework for eliciting and managing project requirements begins with understanding how to define a software solution (whether or not the business analyst actually is involved in that activity). The high-level definition of the solution early in the project is the starting point from which the business analyst(s) conducts the initial business research and develops the most effective plan to elicit requirements and manage the entire requirements process.

The requirements framework defined in this book predictably involves the appropriate engagement of all the stakeholders (important soft skills required), elicitation of requirements, reviews, and ultimately validation and sign-off before design and development begins. However, creation of clear and quantifiable requirements also involves careful consideration of business rules and standards, scenarios and use cases, gap analysis, requirement risks, and traceability of requirements based on business criticality and priority.

Overview of Book's Structure

As a step-by-step approach to the complete process of management and development of requirements, the book begins in Section I with an introduction to understanding solution identification and stakeholder management. Section II details the importance of careful planning and management of the requirements process. Section III, titled "All Things Requirements," is the heart of the defined framework once planning is complete – the detailed steps in elicitation, analysis, specification, and validation of requirements.

Section IV is a valuable ‘extra’ at the end. In this section the author presents the implications of different project and architecture methodologies on the requirements process. Methodologies addressed are Agile, Waterfall, WAgile, TOGAF (The Open Group Architecture Framework), and DO-178C Aviation Engineering Specifications.

Highlights: What’s New in this Book

A great feature of this book is the material available for download from the Web Added Value™ resource center on the publisher’s website, www.jrosspub.com. These downloads are the tools and sample templates referred to in the book and illustrated in the Appendices.

Highlights: What I liked!

Barbara Davis defines four golden rules to achieve real success with requirements:

1. Identify and define [project] objectives.
2. Verify the requirements against the objectives.
3. Apply scenarios and use cases against the requirements. [This assures valid usability and enough detail to cover all possible use cases and scenarios.]
4. Perform a consistency review [to ensure against ambiguity].

The author also highlights “Attributes of Great Requirements.” Successful, high-quality requirements are unambiguous, deterministic, concise, explicit, consistently worded, logically consistent, feasible, complete, and accurate.

Who might benefit from the Book

In the Preface the author indicates that persons in the following roles will benefit from this book – business analysts and project managers; business analysis managers and leaders; students, professors, and instructors; Chief Information Officers; consulting firms; and recruiters.

Based on my work experience, this book is valuable to any member of a project team responsible for any parts of the business analysis and/or requirements processes.

Conclusion

This material is a valuable read for anyone who does not have formal training as a Business Analyst and who is responsible for conducting business analysis and/or the management of requirements for any project. The extensive Table of Contents also makes it easy to use the book as a reference guide at any point along the path of quality requirements management.

The book is indeed a great resource for “All Things Requirements.”

Mastering Software Project Requirements: Framework for Successful Planning, Development & Alignment, by Barbara Davis; Published by J. Ross Publishing, July 2013: Hardcover, 6 x 9, 256 pages; ISBN: 978-1-60427-091-4; List Price \$54.95. Information at <http://www.jrosspub.com/mastering-software-project-requirements.html>

Editor's note: This book review was the result of cooperation between the publisher, PM World and the Dallas Chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI Dallas Chapter – www.pmidallas.org). Publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. Reviewers can keep the books and claim PDUs for PMP recertification. PMI Dallas Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact editor@pmworldjournal.net.

About the Reviewer



Mary Jane Quandt

North Texas, USA



Mary Jane Quandt is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) with specialization in IT Infrastructure Service Operations, application implementation, process improvement, and Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Best Practices. Her project management experience includes extensive experience in business analysis and requirements processes, as well as in developing training and documentation. Her experience is in the finance, banking, government, logistics, manufacturing, and electrical engineering industries. Email: mjquandt@att.net