

Analyse Needs

How do I analyse the current processes?

In the previous pages, we talked about finding out stakeholders perspectives on problems and solutions and how we could define them. But this only gives an overview and you will have to investigate the needs of your stakeholders in a lot more detail, if you are to come up with a complete solution.

Business process mapping is the technique you need to master to help analyse and communicate what you find. In its simplest form, this could be creating a flowchart but there are many variations on this that are useful to you.

Why can't I use just one process mapping technique?

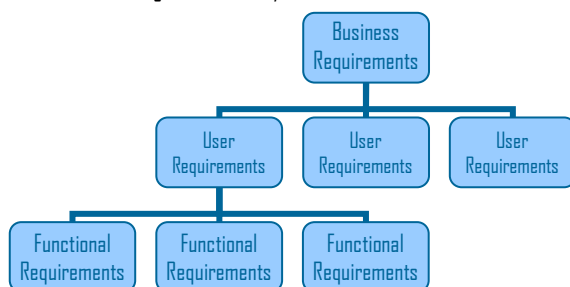
For the simple reason that no one technique adequately covers all eventualities. Just as you would need more than one tool to put up a shelf, so you need a number of techniques to describe a business process.

In fact, the danger is that you can get bogged down in trying to decide which technique to use, so I like to use these techniques in a consistent way so that business requirements are described in one way, user requirements in another and functional requirements in a third.

There are more than one type of requirements?

Yes. Its pretty much standard practice to talk about three level of requirements. **Business requirements** are the reason *why* you are making the change and relate back to the strategic direction of your company. **User requirements** are *how* you are going to use the new system or process you are introducing. And **functional requirements** are *what* features and functions you will need to be able to carry out these processes.

As the diagram implies, there is a relationship between these requirements and by analysing these correctly, a specific functional requirement can be traced back to the user requirement and business re-



quirement that it affects.

Aren't there different standards for modelling requirements?

There are two main standards that span both requirements and also designing the resulting system. The traditional approach is called **Structured System Analysis and Design (SSADM)** and as it

implies, says that there should be specific steps and deliverables for each phase of the business analysis process. The other approach is called **Unified Modelling Language (UML)** and is more modern and flexible. One particularly useful element of UML is called the **Use Case** and is a graphical representation of what the user can and can't do with the system. For



example, if the change involved time and expense recording, the use case might represent the user entering their timesheet and recording their expenses.

What do I do when I've modelled the process?

Once you have a good idea what the process will look like, you need to make a decision about what you will change and why. It may be that part of what you thought was a problem is actually fine or vice versa. Which means you need to apply some logic to what you have discovered and ask:

- can I change this process to eliminate waste?
- can I do this in a way to create a more valuable output?
- do we need to do this at all?

This **value engineering** approach will help you work out (potentially) the best process and so indicate which changes need to be made. But, its still worth checking your findings through **simulation** and **piloting** before you decide to implement any significant change