*Series: Foundation Skills Workshops*

# Writing and Managing User Stories - Simply Put!

***Techniques for Expressing, Analyzing, and Managing Stakeholder Needs in User Story Format***

*Instructor-Led, Onsite or Online Duration 2 Days*

## Overview

User Stories Tell Developers What The Business Needs

User Stories tell Developers what the business needs. For many information technology (IT) projects, the subject matter experts (SME) do not know what information technology could and should do for them, yet the IT team needs to know what to deliver. One of the biggest challenges at this phase of the project is overcoming communications gap between the business and the IT developers. How can you deal with these difficulties, gather reasonable "stakeholder requirements" early, and not waste the effort?

This business analysis workshop introduces a technique that originated with Agile methodologies called "User Stories" (not to be confused with Use Cases). It covers the three components of a well-structured User Story, namely the CARD, the CONVERSATION, and the CRITERIA. We investigate each component in detail to provide specific techniques that support the primary purpose of the User Story, namely to enhance communication between developers and the business community.

User Stories focus on stakeholders' requirements, needs, and goals for the solution. They avoid the trap of trying to force users to define the technical specifications. Our approach starts with a facilitated workshop to capture, in business language, the goals, objectives, or wants for the business system in User Story format. You then add details over time as needed to document each story at an appropriate level of detail. Business driven test scenarios foster a common understanding of each requirement. User stories enable constant and efficient communication among all parties interested in getting to the right solution.

A user story complements and supplements many other business analysis techniques that you are using. It will make your requirements elicitations techniques easier and more complete without adding an extra burden of effort. As a bonus, this technique can also help in early cost forecasting when it is too early to "estimate".

## Target Audience

*Anyone involved in writing, gathering, managing, or analyzing requirements expressed in user story format, including (but not limited to):*

- Business Analysts
- Agile Product Owners
- Line Managers
- Software Testers
- Subject Matter Experts
- Project Leaders and Managers
- Systems Analysts
- Solution Architects

AND anyone wearing the business analysis hat

## Learning Objectives

*Upon completion of this training, successful attendees will:*

- Define User Stories and their relationship to other requirement types
- Discuss the Agile approach and the role that User Stories play
- Describe the purpose of Work Items in a Product Backlog
- List pertinent attributes of roles in User Story context
- Contrast User Story elicitation techniques
- Right-size your User Stories based on the principles of the CARD
- Distinguish between Epics and User stories
- Decompose User Stories to expose hidden components
- Use best-of-breed business analysis techniques in the CONVERSATION to enhance communication between developers and Product Owners
- Defend the need for test-driven development approaches
- Define the purpose of test scenarios, test scripts, test cases, and test plans
- Identify components that need to be tested for acceptance of an IT application
- Capture the criteria for testing a well-formed user story
- Capture relevant test scenarios as the CRITERIA for acceptance testing
- Plan to incorporate selected techniques to improve your performance on the job

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## 1 Introduction to User Stories

**What Are User Stories**

Levels of Business Analysis
Current Software Development Approaches
Agile Business Analysis Concepts
Agile Backlogs
Timing of Business Analysis in an Agile Environment
Exercise: Your Stories
User Story Basics
Dimensions of User Stories
Dimensions of Work Items
Common User Story Structures
Exercise: Comparing the Structures
Qualities of a Good User Story

## 2 The CARD: Techniques for Gathering User Stories

**Who Writes User Stories**

Who Writes User Stories
Roles versus Job Titles in a User Story
Adding Role Details
WasteTheWaist "Vision Statement" from CEO
Exercise: Defining Role Parameters

**Getting to User Stories**

Getting to User Stories
Exercise: Characteristics of a "Good" Interviewer
Interviewing Steps
Worksheet: For Your Answers
Story Writing Workshops
Exercise: Advanced Interviewing Techniques
Worksheet: For Your Answers
Listening Techniques
Hurdles to Informational Listening

**Properties of Good User Stories**

Independency
Dependence Demonstrated
Exercise: Dependent Stories
Value and User Goals
Story Value
Exercise: Capturing User Stories
User Story Sizing Parameters
Value Measurement-Right Sized
Exercise: Right-Sizing Your Group's User Stories
Complexity in User Stories

## 3 The CONVERSATION: Decomposing User Stories and More

**User Story Decomposition**

User Stories are NOT Simple for Developers
The Functional Perspective
Exercise: Functional Decomposition
The Data Dimension
Managing Informational Elements
Exercise: Finding Informational User Stories
The Problem Dimension of User Stories
Types of Non-Functional User Stories
Exercise: Non-Functional in Your Environment
Non-Functional User Stories vs Ten Critical Questions
Defining Informational Element Accuracy
Precision and Currency of Data Elements
Non-Functional Performance Criteria Quantified
Evaluating Performance User Stories
Common Subjective Performance Requirements
Exercise: Quantitative vs. Subjective Measures
Exercise: Performance-related Functions and Data
Discovering Business Rules
Business Rule and Constraint Examples
Exercise: Subjective User Stories
Stamping Out Subjectivity
Discussion: Grouping User Stories
Value of Grouping User Stories
Potential Pitfalls in a Group of User Stories
Identifying Duplicated User Stories
Identifying Conflicts between User Stories
Exercise: Identifying Inconsistent User Stories
User Stories Decomposition Revisited

## 4 The CRITERIA: From User Stories to Acceptance Test-Driven Development (ATDD)

**Introduction to Acceptance Testing**

Modern Testing Concepts Defined
A Simple Thought Experiment
Exercise: Components of IT Systems
Worksheet: Components of IT Systems
What Are You Testing?
Exercise: Testable Components
Worksheet: Testable Components
Rules for Effective Requirements
To Test or Not To Test
Testing Reality

**Testing Realities**

To Test or Not To Test
Exercise: Components of IT Solutions
Worksheet: For Your Answers
Testable Components of IT Applications
Discussion: Testable Components
Testing Reality

**From User Stories to Test Scenarios**

Rules for Effective User Stories
Common User Story Structures
Testing Scenarios from a User Story
User Story-based Test Scenario Identification
Components of a User Story
Decomposing a User Story
Exercise: Initiating End-User Acceptance Testing


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Worksheet: For Your Answers

## 5 User Stories Summary

**User Story Summary**

Properties of a Bad User Story
How Do You Manage User Stories?
User Story Wrap-Up

## 6 From Showtime to Go Time!

**Personal Improvement Plan**

Understanding the Learning Curve
Exercise: My Techniques
My Personal Implementation Plan

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