

Facilitating the Project Lifecycle

Skills & Tools to
Accelerate Progress for
Project Managers, Facilitators, and
Six Sigma Project Teams

Jan Means

Tammy Adams

 **JOSSEY-BASS**
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The Jossey-Bass Business & Management Series

We dedicate this work to:

Those who laid a strong foundation—

Our parents

Harry and Dorothy Means

J. L. and Doris Kennedy

Mentor and friend

Kevin Brennan

Those who inspire us to grow—

Our clients

Our colleagues

Those who have seen us through it all, our greatest gifts—our husbands

Bernie Fredette

Howard Adams

In memory of Kevin Brennan

1948–2002

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J.M.

T.A.

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Introduction

WE KNOW WHAT you're thinking . . . *Oh no, not another book on project management!* Well, you're in luck. This is not another book on project management. You don't need another book on project management. A quick search of Google or Amazon will point you to more references on project management than you can digest in one lifetime.

What This Book Is *Not* About

To clarify what this book is about, let's first define what it's not. This book is not a primer on project management. It does not debate the pros and cons of waterfall approaches or agile methods. It will not teach you how to build out a project plan, resource schedule, or budget. It will not make a novice project manager an expert. It will not provide a magic bullet to pull a poorly conceived, poorly scoped, poorly executed project out of the ditch.

This book is not an introduction to facilitation. It assumes that you're familiar with basic team dynamics and meeting management. If you're not, there are numerous books to provide additional insights into Facilitation 101. Check out the Resources in Part Four.

This book is not an overview of Six Sigma. We use many Six Sigma techniques and employ practices consistent with quality principles, but you'll have to look elsewhere for a primer.

This book does not promote an approach to be blindly followed for all projects. We'll discuss ways to make intelligent decisions on when and when not to apply the concepts we present.

This book does not present itself as the only way to accelerate projects. We're not so foolish as to presume that what we're advocating is the answer for all cases of poor quality and missed deadlines. However, we think you'll find it extremely useful as another tool in your toolbox.

So What Is This Book About?

This book is about supporting and accelerating projects through the use of facilitated group work sessions. It provides project managers, facilitators, and project teams with useful insights and practical work session techniques that can be applied within any project methodology to accelerate and bring quality to its deliverables—and in the process, prevent some of the common problems that contribute to poor quality and cost and time overruns.

Wait! you might be thinking. *You said this book wasn't about project management, so why do you care about projects?* Because project initiatives are the primary way companies effect change. Any company that is going to survive and thrive needs to know how to change effectively. That means knowing when to change, what to change, and how to change. It also means having the ability to take a workforce (a.k.a. people) through the transition and allow them to embrace and internalize the change.

Change is about people and the projects that help them define and implement new and improved ways of doing business. Technology is in there too. It's a fundamental enabler of people and their work (processes), and it too requires careful consideration, definition, and implementation. All of these get rolled into the scope of a project and handed off to a lucky project manager and his or her team to deliver—on time, within budget, and on target with preset objectives and expectations. These are big challenges and big expectations that project managers and project teams live with every day.

That's where facilitated work sessions come in. Facilitation is, by definition, to "make things easy." Facilitation, when done right, is hard work that makes an outcome easier to achieve. It is a discipline that enables the bringing together of people to accomplish a specific outcome in a determined period of time. Don't confuse this with a meeting, or meetings as they are commonly practiced. We are referring to something different: project work sessions where work gets done, not talked about. The facilitator is the leader of such a group work session. Skilled in techniques that enable creative thinking, decision making, focus, and building of specified outputs, the facilitator leads the team through activities that accomplish work and yield a specific output that is required by the project.

As professional facilitators, every day we are working on large-scale projects with our clients. Our experience, combined with what we've heard from those clients, confirms that pairing expert facilitation skills with the skills of an expert project manager to accelerate and improve quality of project deliverables is a powerful partnership. *Facilitating the project lifecycle*

means making smart choices about when and how to pull key talent together during a project to effectively produce outputs critical to the success of the initiative.

This book is a practical guide that will:

1. Help you understand the benefits of using facilitated group work sessions to get real work done during a project—and get it done faster and better than more traditional individual work approaches.
2. Point out the complementary but different skills of project managers and facilitators and the essential need for both sets of skills.
3. Recommend specific points within the project lifecycle where facilitated work sessions can capitalize on group knowledge to accelerate the building of key project deliverables and ensure their quality as they are built.
4. Present a work session structure to guide you through the planning, delivery, and follow-up of facilitated work sessions.
5. Offer work session guides for building out key project deliverables.
6. Suggest sample agendas to use as a starting point.
7. Offer a set of techniques for managing the group dynamics.

The Structure of the Book

Part One, “The Power of the Partnership,” opens the book by describing the concept and benefits of using facilitated work sessions within a project to accelerate and build quality into the project lifecycle and its deliverables. Section One speaks to the benefits gained in the use of collaborative group techniques within the project lifecycle and offers guidelines for recognizing when facilitated work sessions will provide the greatest benefit. Section Two describes the partnership of the project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator and the essential roles of each. A framework is presented for assessing effective facilitation and facilitator competencies. In Part Two, “The Partnership in Practice,” we roll up our sleeves. Section Three introduces the work session structure, from planning through delivery and follow-up. We include recommendations on how to walk the “work session tightrope,” which presents common work session challenges and myths and tips for overcoming them. Section Four provides a blueprint for five types of work sessions commonly used in support of projects, with sample agendas, deliverable templates, and useful techniques for accomplishing work session deliverables.

Part Three, “The Techniques,” is divided into two sections. Section Five presents practical communication guidelines and techniques to apply when managing group dynamics (such as brainstorming and nominal group technique). Section Six offers useful specialized techniques for building out project deliverables (such as scope framing and process mapping). Throughout Part Three you will find a helpful list of do’s and don’ts at the end of each chapter.

Part Four contains our recommended resources—useful publications, organizations, and online resources—that offer information at a glance to help you use the techniques in project situations.

The CD included with the book contains electronic versions of the templates that we refer to throughout the book (look for the CD icon). For additional resources and template updates, refer to our Web site: www.facilitatingprojects.com.

Is This Book for You?

If you are a project manager, facilitator, project team member, or project sponsor, this book is for you. You’ll either want to know about or know how to use these practices to speed up your next project.

Table I.1 will help you focus on the sections of this book that are most relevant to you. It reflects our recommendation on how to use this book based on role. “Primary” means that these sections are applicable to your daily work; you should look at them first. “Secondary” indicates the segments of the book that will provide useful knowledge but are not likely to be practiced on a day-to-day basis.

However you choose to use this book and accompanying CD, we trust that you will *use* it. Our intent is that it become a well-used, dog-eared reference tool for those involved in managing and delivering business projects. We welcome your questions and feedback as you practice the approaches and techniques presented in this book. Contact us at feedback@facilitatingprojects.com.

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TABLE I.1**A Guide to Using This Book by Role**

Role	Part One: The Power of the Partnership	Part Two: The Partnership in Practice	Part Three: The Techniques	Part Four: Resources
Project Managers: Those who manage projects and guide the project team end-to-end through a project effort	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Facilitators: Those who lead facilitated group work sessions to accomplish the building of specific project deliverables at appropriate points within the project lifecycle	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Project Team Members: Those who work on or with project teams, including:				
Subject Matter Experts	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Project Analysts	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Business Analysts	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Quality Professionals	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Technology Professionals	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Project Sponsors: Those who sponsor change initiatives and will be held accountable for business results	Primary	Section Three is primary; others secondary	Secondary	Secondary

Facilitating the Project Lifecycle

Part One

The Power of the Partnership

Projects and Facilitation

Section One

The Commitment to Perform

THIS OPENING SECTION of the book describes the concept and benefits of using facilitated work sessions within a project to accelerate and build quality into the project lifecycle and its deliverables. It presents the *why*, *when*, and *where* of using facilitated work sessions.

As you read Chapters One and Two, keep in mind the projects that you've experienced. Where did they go right? Where did they go wrong? What did you learn? In most "challenged projects," it's rarely the technology challenge that presents an insurmountable obstacle. Very few of us are on the cutting edge where technology makes or breaks the project effort. More often than not, project challenges boil down to people—the way they do (or don't do) their work and the way they share (or don't share) information.

Big wins can occur when we get creative with engaging people effectively in the definition and the implementation of change. Take a look at the context of change and some documented experiences and benefits outlined in Chapter One, and consider the guidelines offered in Chapter Two for recognizing when facilitated work sessions will provide the greatest benefit.

Chapter 1

Old Dogs and New Tricks

An expert is a fellow who is afraid to learn anything new because then he wouldn't be an expert anymore.

—HARRY S TRUMAN

WHEN WAS THE last time you tried something new? Applied a new concept or technique in your daily work? Brushed your teeth in the morning with the opposite hand?

Not comfortable with too much change? Join the crowd. Too much change or change poorly conceived and administered is just as damaging as clinging to the status quo. But you already know that because in one way or another, you're involved with projects, and projects are all about change. So how do we know what to change, when to change, how to change? And how do we embrace change and internalize it effectively?

The Context for Change

Peter Senge in his book *The Fifth Discipline* (1990) suggests that to thrive, companies must be willing to become learning organizations; people must cultivate a mind-set that embraces learning, acquiring knowledge, and applying it intelligently to the challenges of their workplace. Senge describes learning organizations as “organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (p. 3).

Any company that intends to remain healthy and competitive in an increasingly global and electronic marketplace must be willing to change, and it must do so based on solid learning and careful application, delivered in a timely and resource-effective manner. Senge continues to emphasize that in business climates of rapid change, the only organizations that will excel are those that are flexible, adaptive, and productive. This requires that

organizations “discover how to tap people’s commitment and capacity to learn at *all* levels” (p. 4).

So what does this mean for you? What if you’re not the CEO or a member of senior management who sets policy that directly contributes to corporate culture? The concept still applies. Wherever you are in the organization, you have a circle of influence, and you are responsible for influencing change. Corporate culture is as affected by work attitudes and behaviors from the middle out as much as it is from the top down, and maybe more so. You can transform the way you and those you influence think about and do your work. You can incorporate an attitude of learning into your corner of the world. The ability to learn and apply that knowledge to accomplish effective change is the cornerstone of corporate life and growth, and it’s everyone’s responsibility.

Old Dogs

Let’s focus on how change is accomplished within organizations. For all but the smallest alterations in direction, change requires resources: time, people, funding, and supporting methods and tools. Substantive improvements and changes within a business are implemented with project initiatives, and that’s where we begin: with projects.

The Old Way

Projects, project management, and project methodologies are common terms in today’s business environment. Over the past few decades, project management has become one of the fastest-growing professions in the world. Up to 4.5 million people in the United States and approximately 12 million additional people worldwide view project management as their profession of choice. The Project Management Institute (2000) estimates that the U.S. public and private sectors spend some \$2.3 trillion on projects every year.

We have become comfortable with projects. Attach an idea or opportunity to a strategic business objective with a convincing business case or link it to a regulatory compliance requirement, and a project is born. Assign a project manager, and charter this person with delivering the product or service that meets the business objective. Form a team, and let them work to the formula of their project methodology. The project manager is experienced. The project methodology is logical. We have people and funding and tools. What could possibly go wrong?

The Old Results

Statistics regarding project results are interesting—especially statistics on project failure, since many of them are published by consulting firms that

pair these statistics with their particular diagnosis and accompanying remedy for the problem. Depending on the source, you can find estimates of project failure that range from 15 percent to over 70 percent. Of course we're never really clear on what "project failure" is. Sometimes it includes cancelled projects, late projects, and projects that never reached completion. Does that imply that a project that reaches completion equates to "project success"? Not necessarily.

Jim Johnson of the Standish Group notes that even within efforts that are "completed," cancelled, unused, or underused functionality makes up as much as 29 percent of all projects. "A lot of times the company just gives up, or the business has changed so much, there's no point in going forward," he says. Of the remainder of projects counted as less than successful, 46 percent belong to the category he calls *challenged*, meaning late to market or experiencing a cost overrun. These projects may come to completion, but not in a way that was anticipated. The Standish Group (1995) found that for challenged projects, more than a quarter were completed with only 25 to 49 percent of originally specified features and functions.

Despite statistics old and new warning us of the potential for project failure, we continue to be surprised when things go wrong. And we keep on walking the same project path over and over again despite results that should lead us to question what we have learned.

In his book *Radical Project Management* (2002), Rob Thomsett suggests that in traditional approaches to managing projects, "critical management issues such as quality, benefits realization, and risk are either completely ignored, or plugged in as afterthought" (p. xxiii). His observations continue to suggest that we are far from being learning organizations, as the foundational assumptions on which we have built project management approaches are rooted in understanding a business environment that no longer exists. "Concepts such as fixed requirements, long development timeframes, stable teams and technology, and passive involvement of project stakeholders who trust their expert project managers have become historical myths" (p. xxiv).

We walk the path, not realizing that our foundational assumptions for embracing that path no longer hold true. All too often the path rather than the results becomes our focus. We embrace a methodology, a way of doing things, and rigidly hold people to walking it. We create our own automations who are programmed to follow a path without thinking and get rewarded for doing so.

Learning #1
Striving for better project results using the same path over and over again is a comfortable form of insanity.

Insanity has been defined as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome. Just like the old comfortable dog, we walk the same project path over and over again because it is comfortable. It's the standard. We know it. We're doing what the company has asked us to do. It's familiar. It's also insane.

We fail to realize that we have established a culture that rewards mechanical adherence to a set of tasks. People aren't incented to think critically about their project work; they are incented to follow the standard accepted path. They aren't incented to build out quality deliverables with broad ownership that are well understood; they are incented to fill in the blanks and check off the list. Chris Higgins from Bank of America refers to this blind adherence to the project methodology as the "template production line." We don't incent people to think; we reward them for following the project methodology. If things go awry, the methodology becomes an easy scapegoat.

Learning #2

Behavior that's rewarded gets repeated.

As long as we continue to reward people for executing tasks rather than the results they produce, we will continue to perpetuate the insanity.

New Tricks

So do we completely abandon the familiar and start over? Not exactly. No more than we should keep doing the same thing because it's familiar. The point is to learn from project experiences and apply this learning intelligently. Learn where things went right and where things went wrong, and search out new techniques and approaches to enable improvement.

We certainly have more than a few excellent methodologies available to support business change and project approaches. Six Sigma, Lean, and other customer-focused quality methods provide blueprints for recognizing when change is needed and guiding us through the steps to accomplish it. The Project Management Institute's guidelines for project management (2004) also provide sound advice. So it's not for lack of methodology or process that projects are failing.

The People Side of Projects

In a recent book on the subject of productivity, George Eckes (2003) comments on a study that finds that "the majority of time project teams fail, the primary root cause is poor team dynamics. . . . A more common stumbling block is how a team conducts its work, and the dynamics of the team. Thus, it is our hope that we can review the keys to improving what, for many, is an elusive target—having groups of individuals work together to achieve what they could not achieve alone" (p. 2).

Yet this awareness is far from new. In 1987 Tom DeMarco and Timothy Lister pointed out that the major problems in accomplishing project work are not technology based or task based, but rather people based. Our ability to manage projects to successful completion is much more about tapping into the collective knowledge of people than managing to a predefined project methodology and set of tasks.

Best Practices conducted a benchmarking survey (2000) to be a directional indicator of project management trends. The study was designed to understand the project performance of companies that are renowned for their project management operations. Most of the companies surveyed tend to conduct more than 100 information technology–related projects a year, with 21 percent conducting more than 150 business projects per year requiring information technology components. Among the findings regarding what were the most significant causes in project delays were communication and planning factors, including lack of proper communication and cross-organization input; scope creep; and incomplete business requirements. Inadequate input from technology resources during early phases was noted 26 percent of the time.

Learning #3

Project success is not guaranteed simply because you have a methodology in place.

All of these have their basis in people and their ability to communicate, make decisions, and share information throughout the project cycle. Choice of project methodology or use of a nonstandard project methodology was rarely cited as the cause for project delays (5 percent) (Best Practices, 2000).

The Methodology Myth

So if we've learned anything, perhaps it is that project success is not predictable and certainly not repeatable simply because we have a popular project methodology in place, embrace a standard set of deliverable templates, or follow a logical work breakdown structure. Finding the right people and ensuring their productive participation in the project effort—that is, knowing when and how to engage the right resources in the right way to gather the right information—remains a significant challenge.

Learning #4

Projects are about people and enabling their ability to communicate and change effectively.

In support of project efforts, we must first and foremost focus on *people*. We need to apply creative ways to engage the right people effectively because that is where competitive advantage has its basis: in the knowledge and ideas of people. What does a project have to implement if not the ideas of people translated into work products that serve the needs of customers? Yet we often get caught up in executing the project and miss opportunities to get people involved in a manner that enables them to contribute their best ideas and knowledge at the right time.

What Facilitation Has to Do with It

This focus on the contribution of people challenges the traditional model of the project manager as the driver of tasks and of the project manager or team member being a single builder of project deliverables, with occasional input from an available business resource. It introduces the need for an additional skill set to be applied within a project lifecycle: the skill set of facilitation.

Facilitation is a discipline that enables bringing people together to accomplish a specific outcome in a determined period of time. Its application to projects, especially information technology projects, is not new.

In the mid-1970s, Chuck Morris of IBM embraced an innovative way to get groups of people together to design and implement distributed systems. This application of facilitation techniques gave birth to the JAD era—that is, joint application design (JAD) work sessions where business and technology professionals came together to jointly define requirements for the design of computer systems. Use of facilitated group techniques (JADs) reduced time by 40 percent while improving the quality of design results. Fewer coding errors were made and testing cycles improved accordingly (Wood and Silver, 1989).

The creative application of facilitated group work sessions in support of project initiatives has not been widely practiced within traditional project approaches, however. Facilitation within the project lifecycle is a new application of a proven concept that supports project delivery by providing specialized skills and techniques that focus on people and their collective knowledge. Facilitation enables us to engage the right people throughout the project effort to obtain the joint input of business and technology experts at the right time to build the right work products.

Learning #5

Engaging experts in productive group work settings to produce quality outputs will accelerate the project effort.

Several of our clients found that introducing facilitated work sessions into the project has a two-stage effect on acceleration. The first point of acceleration is realized when building the targeted deliverable that is the focus of the work session. The second point of acceleration is noted downstream, where this deliverable is used in later project phases. The quality of this deliverable can eliminate rework in later phases, thus accelerating the project further.

You can do a project without facilitation. But, you can also cut your own hair, do your own dentistry . . . it just takes longer, is more painful, and you probably won't get the best results. Project managers can get results without facilitation, but they are taking a risk that it will take longer and will involve a learning curve they may not have time for.

Mary Wayne Bush,
organization change
specialist, Lockheed
Martin Corporation's
Space Systems Company

Is this the only way of accelerating projects and introducing quality and ownership? Absolutely not. But does it work? Absolutely. Capers Jones, in his 2000 book *Patterns of Software Systems Failure and Success*, found that facilitated working sessions provided a number of tangible and intangible project benefits. The tangible benefits included:

- Reduction of the risk of scope creep from 80 percent down to 10 percent
- Acceleration in the early project lifecycle phases (including scope initiation, planning, definition) by 30 to 40 percent
- Reduction of the overall project elapsed time and workforce effort by 5 to 15 percent

From Real Life

Chris Higgins, senior vice president at Bank of America, gave us a benchmark. His project group embraced facilitated work sessions in the late 1990s. They found a reduction of 50 percent in the overall idea-to-implementation time frame. The front end of the project lifecycle was reduced by approximately 25 percent (identification of the opportunity through definition of requirements) and the back

end of the lifecycle (design of the product through implementation) by another 25 percent, primarily achieved in the activities of building combined with jump-starting and integrating user acceptance testing, training, and communication. Gathering the right people together into intensive, facilitated work sessions proved significant in their efforts to accelerate projects and improve the quality of outputs.

There is value in using facilitated work sessions—even though it may be expensive to pull people together face-to-face, taking them out of their daily “jobs” for two to three days in a work session, but the payback is high: a high-quality deliverable, with fewer change controls, allowing time and money to be made up on the back end.

Brenda Yost, senior vice president, Wells Fargo Bank

The intangible benefits are similarly impressive—for example:

- Ownership of results
- Improved quality
- Improved working relationships
- Shared decision making yielding informed decisions and support of these decisions

Summing It Up

- Whatever your project process or methodology, strive to foster a learning environment in every project you touch.
- Encourage listening, questioning, and learning. Eliminate indifference, complacency, and hanging on to the status quo. Be willing to consider something new that incorporates a significant learning, and reward those who do so.
- Recognize that the key element to successful change is people. Look for new ways to involve them creatively in the project process. Involve those who can influence others.
- Search out opportunities within your project to use facilitated work sessions that can tap into the joint knowledge of your resources. Bring this knowledge to bear at specific points throughout the project to improve the timing and quality of project deliverables.

There is no cookbook for achieving the benefits noted here, but we’ve got a good set of ingredients. Read on to see how this fits into the project lifecycle.

Chapter 2

Facilitation Within the Project Lifecycle

If anything is certain, it is that change is certain. The world we are planning for today will not exist in this form tomorrow.

—PHILIP CROSBY, *REFLECTIONS ON QUALITY*

TO UNDERSTAND HOW facilitation can effectively support project initiatives, let's first place the project within the larger business context. Projects are used to effect change within a business, whether it's introducing a new product, improving a service, or retooling an unproductive or manual business process.

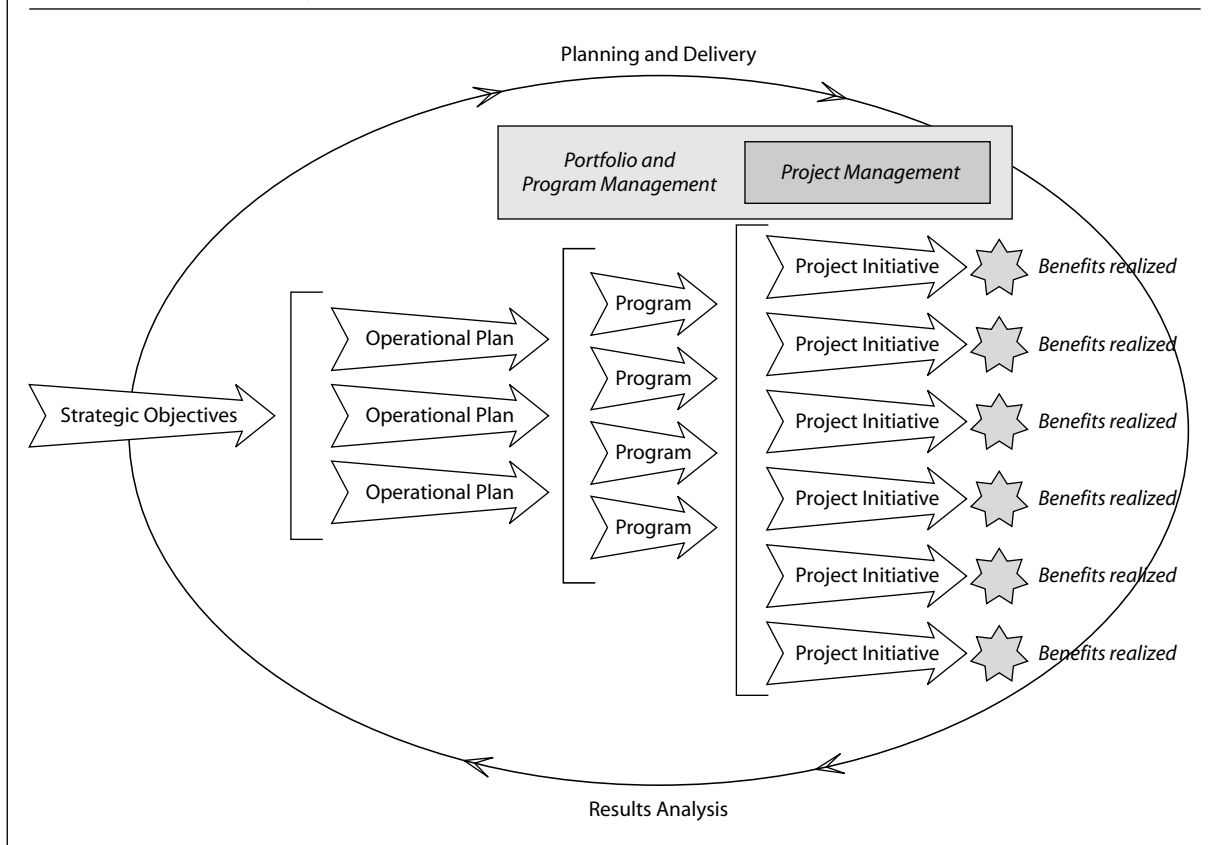
The Context for Projects

Consider an ideal business world—one in which a business has a vision and mission that fits squarely into the marketplace it intends to serve. Business strategies are developed, tested, and adopted. Operational plans are developed to support these strategic objectives (and regulatory requirements) and create program initiatives that carry out these plans. Program initiatives have specific goals and measurable targets. Within programs, projects are established to achieve selected goals and targets. Implemented results provide benefits that link back to programs, operational plans, and business strategies. We measure our effectiveness, identify what we've learned from the experience, and begin the cycle again (Figure 2.1).

Let's look at a single project within this change cycle. Don't be fooled into thinking that the project lives as an island unto itself. It was spawned by a business case and will ultimately implement a solution that will be held accountable to achieve the objectives of that business case.

As shown in steps 1 through 6 of Figure 2.2, the project lifecycle starts with an idea, an opportunity for business change, and continues through subsequent phases to validate the opportunity, perform business analysis, and define and build the solution, until, finally, it is implemented, at which

FIGURE 2.1
The Project Lifecycle



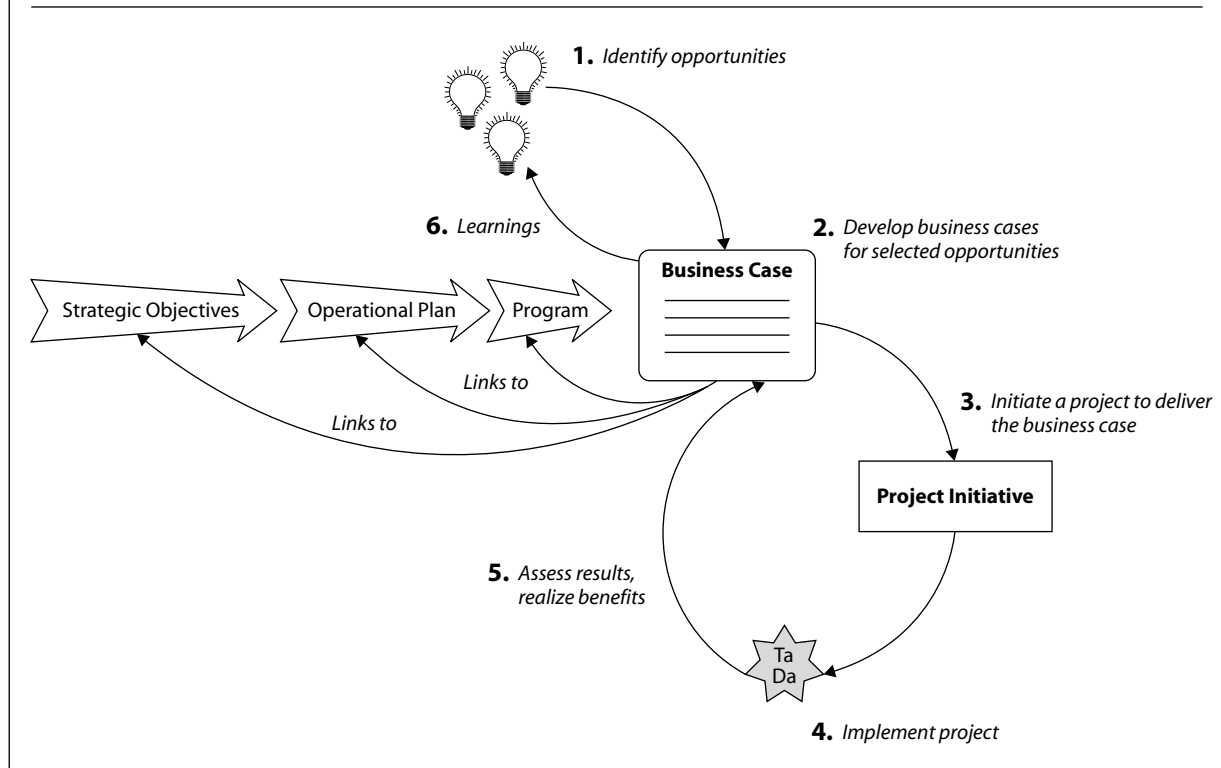
point the project ends. Transition is complete. Ultimately the business owns the solution, and continues to monitor performance, assess learnings, and recognize when the next change is needed.

To achieve this, project management methodologies organize project work into distinct phases of activity that accomplish a specific set of outputs. These chunks of activity, typically referred to as phases (Figure 2.3), have meaning within the project methodology. They accomplish cohesive sets of work or provide convenient end points for business approval and funding decisions.

Whether your project lifecycle has four phases of work or nine phases is of less significance than what you are required to produce along the way. Every project must have certain fundamental deliverables, such as:

- A clearly defined scope
- A clearly defined set of solution requirements
- A clearly defined plan for implementation
- A clearly defined set of measurable objectives to which the business will track success

FIGURE 2.2
Single Project Within the Project Lifecycle



These outputs transcend the somewhat artificial partitioning of project work into phases.

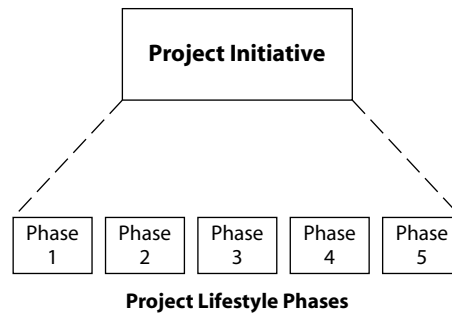
As you can see, the project world, even in the ideal setting, is complex. Multiple projects are active at any point in time and vie for limited resources. Projects can be interdependent or multiphased, adding difficulty to execution. Timelines are critical. Getting anything done can be as difficult as changing tires on a moving car.

And since none of us works in an ideal setting, our project experiences are filled with challenges beyond what we can list here. In the real world, projects don't always fit neatly into this model. Some projects should never have been started at all, and others should have been started much sooner. Some project sponsors are engaged and prepare the path for success, while others detach, to the detriment of the project team. Direction can be fuzzy, targets less than well defined, resources unavailable or inadequate. But there's always a deadline. These are the cards that the project manager is dealt. And we do our best to work with them.

Facilitation in Support of Projects

It is into this setting that we introduce facilitation in support of projects. Facilitation can be applied in lots of situations, both personal and professional. It

FIGURE 2.3
Phases in the Project Lifecycle



may be used for conflict resolution, personal growth, or team building, to name a few. Interventions, mediations, arbitrations, and meeting management are all examples of facilitated group efforts. But the type of facilitation we're describing is different from all of those. It is a specialized type of facilitation that structures group interaction to deliver specific project outputs in a limited amount of time. We call it *deliverable-based facilitation*, and it occurs within the context of a facilitated work session.

A facilitated work session is an event (usually ranging over one to three days) that brings a cross-functional project team together to build a specific project deliverable or achieve specific project goals. These work sessions have the following core characteristics:

- *They have a purpose that is aligned to project objectives.* The facilitated work session must have a set of clear objectives that fit within the work and outputs required by the project.
- *They are systematic.* The work session has a well-defined approach and structure. Preparation, work session delivery, and follow-up activities are all part of the work session process, with clear roles and responsibilities.
- *They are collaborative.* This is not a visit to a doctor's office or an appointment with an attorney. The participants do not show up so that an expert can tell them what to do. The participants *are* the experts, and they are led by a neutral facilitator who seeks the full involvement of all participants to achieve the objectives of the work session.
- *They encourage discovery.* The work session does not introduce "the answer" and then drive for its acceptance. It is a place of discovery where the ideas and opinions of the participants contribute to exploring and embracing the best outcome for the business situation.
- *They create substantive outputs.* Work sessions must create high-quality outputs that are specific to the needs of the project. This is not an encounter group or a discussion group. This is a *work* group. Group

dialogue and interaction lead to creative decision making, which is captured in appropriate deliverables as required by the project.

- *They promote accountability.* Decisions within project work sessions are made by consensus. This does not mean unanimity; rather, it means that all participants are willing to support the decision 100 percent within and outside the work session setting. They are accountable for the decisions they make and their resulting impacts on the business.

Recognizing the Need

Are we proposing that every project, no matter its complexity or purpose, use facilitated work sessions? No. Then how do you know when a facilitated work session would be beneficial?

We've analyzed the projects we have worked on with our clients to determine which ones gained the most value from facilitated work sessions and found some common characteristics. If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, a facilitated work session will be a valuable contributor to the success of your project:

- Does the project effort cross multiple lines of business or multiple departments within the business?
- Is the project tied to a critical timeline that allows little or no slippage?
- Is the project one of the top ten strategic initiatives of the company or division?
- Is the project attempting to accomplish something that is new to your company?
- Is the project resurrecting something that was tried before and was unsuccessful?
- Does the project require the input of experts who are unavailable to participate full time (or on a regular basis) with the project team?
- Will the project result in changes that require broad socialization or group consensus?
- Are you experiencing scope creep or having difficulty getting a clear definition of requirements from the team?
- Are you operating in a geographically dispersed project environment?

Conversely, if your project scope is small and requirements are relatively uncomplicated, or the project is not following a critical timeline, is less visible from a strategic viewpoint, or is something you've done over and over again, and you have a relatively small team with co-located members, then

facilitated work sessions may not be of great benefit to your project. But even for these types of projects, we encourage you to find a way to incorporate expert knowledge into them and communicate information and decisions throughout the project team.

Types of Work Sessions

Although facilitated work sessions can be used for many purposes, we will focus on five core work session types that support the building of several key deliverables that you would find in any project methodology, the ability to assess risks, and the ability to take critical progress checkpoints along the way.

Project Charter Work Session

This work session starts you off on the right foot. It develops a shared understanding of the need or problem being addressed by the project effort and how it's being handled in the current environment. It brings the team up-to-date on any work already performed. It defines the scope of the project, establishes the purpose and objectives, and uncovers impacts and dependencies so that informed decisions can be made about potential benefits, costs, and resourcing.

Process Analysis and Design Work Session

Business processes depict how work gets done. Once scope has been established, the process analysis and design work session enables an understanding of how work is currently accomplished, compares this to customer expectations and business targets, explores points of breakdown, identifies opportunities for change, and redefines how work should be accomplished in the future. The roles and responsibilities involved in the process are defined, and initial expectations regarding supporting technology may be captured for further refinement. Process design also ensures that critical measurement points are factored in so that performance can be monitored and maintained.

Business Requirements Work Session

This work session gives substance to the solution. Thus far in the project, we have a clearly defined scope and redesigned work processes—the basic skeleton of the solution. The business requirements work session puts meat on the bones by defining *what* the business needs, though not yet *how* the solution will be accomplished. The result is a clear, unambiguous definition of the business requirements for the project scope.

Risk Assessment Work Session

The risk assessment work session promotes the careful analysis of project, business, process, and customer risks. Potential risks are rated with respect to severity, probability of occurrence, and ability to detect the effects of the risk. Causes are explored, and mitigating actions are identified. For the highest risks, contingency plans may be created.

Work-in-Progress Review Session

Work-in-progress review sessions provide key checkpoints on project progress. They can be inserted into the project lifecycle prior to specific milestones or completion of project phases to ensure that the project is on track, deliverables are synchronized, project dependencies and risks are being monitored, and all team members and pertinent stakeholders understand what is being delivered.

Where Facilitated Work Sessions Fit Within the Project Lifecycle

Facilitated work sessions can be applied at many points within the project lifecycle. The key in recognizing where to apply them is to recognize what needs to be delivered.

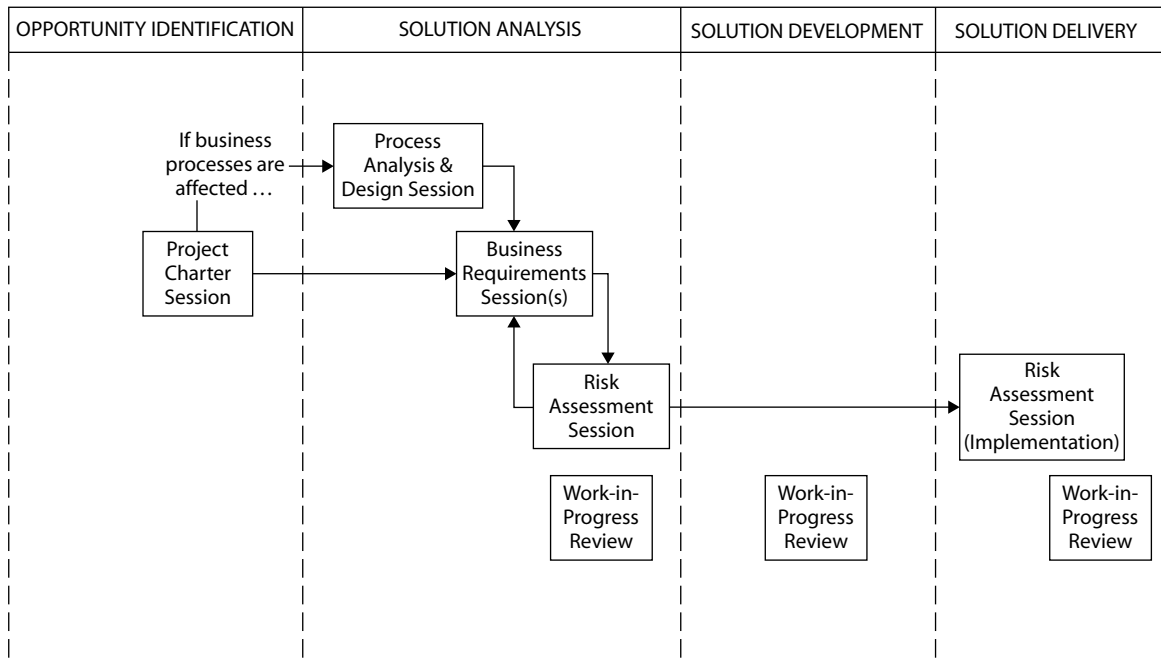
Let's look at where these five work session types typically fit into the project. For illustration purposes, we'll show two project lifecycle examples. The first depicts a project lifecycle with four generically named phases (Figure 2.4). The second (Figure 2.5) is specific to the Six Sigma methodology for business improvement, and breaks the project into phases that parallel the Six Sigma DMAIC (Design, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) lifecycle.

In both of these examples, work sessions are inserted into the project phases at the point where the corresponding deliverable makes sense:

- The project charter work session yields a clear definition of project scope and so should be performed early in the project lifecycle.
- A process analysis and design work session is used when business processes will be changing as a result of the project effort. Hold these work sessions first, since they lay the necessary foundation for successful definition of business requirements.
- Conduct a business requirements work session after the project charter has been finalized if no process assessment is being performed. Otherwise, wait until analysis of the process has been completed.

FIGURE 2.4

Facilitated Work Sessions Within a Generic Project Lifecycle

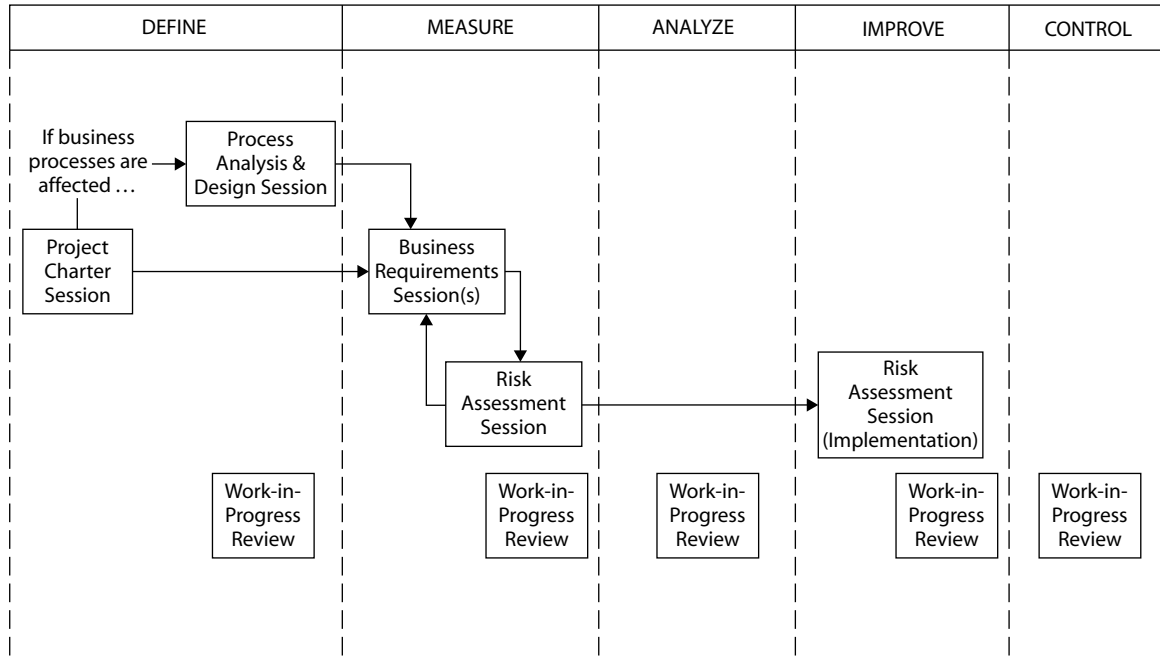


Project Phase	Purpose of Phase
<i>Opportunity identification</i>	Define the opportunity, objectives, and targets; explore feasibility; establish the initial business case; set the scope of the project effort; and establish the project team and stakeholders.
<i>Solution analysis</i>	Define the change. Design business processes and supporting roles. Establish requirements for people, process, and technology. Determine what will be measured.
<i>Solution development</i>	Finalize the solution design, provide a prototype if appropriate, build out the solution, test, validate, and prepare for implementation.
<i>Solution delivery</i>	Ready the organization, roll out the solution, internalize the change, and monitor performance.

- Discover risks while analysis is still in progress by convening a risk assessment work session. As risks are explored, it is quite common to identify risks and corresponding mitigating factors that lead to additional requirements. As you approach implementation, again convene a risk assessment work session, to identify new risks that may have emerged specifically related to testing and implementation.
- Throughout the project, convene work-in-progress review sessions prior to phase checkpoints to socialize and validate key deliverables, confirm integration of outputs, communicate resolution of issues, and verify project progress.

FIGURE 2.5

Facilitated Work Sessions Within the DMAIC Project Lifecycle



Project Phase	Purpose of Phase
<i>Define</i>	Establish the project goals and targets based on internal and external customer needs and expectations.
<i>Measure</i>	Understand current business ability to meet objectives and targets, and establish relevant, reliable measures. Define the requirements for the desired state.
<i>Analyze</i>	Determine the gaps that exist between current performance and desired state, and formulate the solution.
<i>Improve</i>	Build, validate, and implement the solution.
<i>Control</i>	Internalize the change. Monitor and manage performance to achieve objectives and meet targets.

Summing It Up

- Realize that your project is likely one of many within the organization and will be competing for limited resources.
- The facilitated work session, within the context of the project world, is a specialized form of group work session with these characteristics:
 - Has a purpose that is aligned to project objectives
 - Is systematic
 - Is collaborative
 - Encourages discovery
 - Creates substantive outputs
 - Promotes accountability
- Facilitated work sessions can enable the effective use of resources by pulling together the right people at the right time to create the right output. Joint development and joint ownership of the results pave the way for successful implementation and internalization of the change.
- Recognize when facilitated work sessions add the greatest value to a project, and use them. Look for conditions in your project such as these:
 - Crossing multiple lines of business or multiple departments within the business
 - Operating with a critical timeline that allows little or no slippage
 - Executing top strategic initiatives of the company or your division
 - Trying to accomplish something that is new to the company
 - Resurrecting something that was tried before and was unsuccessful
 - Requiring input of experts who are unavailable to participate full time
 - Building critical outputs that require broad socialization or group consensus
 - Seeking to minimize scope creep and establish clear definition of requirements so that change controls are minimized, preserving the project timeline and costs on the back end
 - Working in a geographically dispersed project environment
- Place facilitated work sessions into your project lifecycle intelligently. Insert them into the project phases at the point where the corresponding deliverable they generate or the activity they support is needed. Use Table 2.1 for a quick reference as to where work sessions might be best placed within the project lifecycle.

TABLE 2.1**A Quick Guide to Where Work Sessions Work**

Deliverable Generated or Activity Supported	Work Session Type	Typical Phase Within Generic Project Lifecycle	Typical Phase Within Six Sigma Project Lifecycle
Project scope	Project Charter	Opportunity Identification	Define
Business process design or redesign	Process Analysis and Design	Solution Analysis	Define
Business requirements for people, business processes, and technology support	Business Requirements	Solution Analysis	Measure
Project, business, or customer risks identified and mitigating actions defined	Risk Assessment	Solution Analysis	Measure or Analyze
Potential process or product failure points identified and mitigating actions defined	Risk Assessment	Solution Analysis	Measure or Analyze
Risk checkpoint prior to implementation	Risk Assessment	Solution Development or Solution Delivery	Improve
Checkpoint on project progress	Work-in-Progress Review	All phases	All phases
Integration of deliverables	Work-in-Progress Review	All phases	All phases
Preparing for approval or funding tollgates	Work-in-Progress Review	All phases	All phases
Postimplementation review	Work-in-Progress Review	Solution Delivery	Control

Section Two

The Ability to Perform

A COMMITMENT TO USING facilitated work sessions to accelerate and bring quality to project deliverables is a great start. However, commitment to perform is only part of the equation. The other part is developing the *ability* to perform. The two chapters in this section describe the partnership of the project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator and the essential roles of each. They provide a description of the roles and responsibilities necessary to make facilitated work sessions work.

We offer a definition for effective facilitation, including a model for facilitator competencies and the critical skills needed to achieve facilitator excellence. We also share some common misconceptions we frequently encounter regarding what it takes to facilitate effectively.

Chapter 3

Who's on First?

Costello: Look, you gotta pitcher on this team?

Abbott: Now wouldn't this be a fine team without a pitcher.

Costello: The pitcher's name.

Abbott: Tomorrow.

Costello: You don't wanna tell me today?

—ABBOTT & COSTELLO, "WHO'S ON FIRST?"

WE'VE PRESENTED the *why*, *when*, and *where* of using facilitated work sessions. Choosing to incorporate facilitated work sessions within a project demonstrates a commitment to engaging the right people productively to produce the right outputs. This is a great first step. Now let's look at the *who*. Who is involved? What roles do they play? How do they avoid duplication of effort while ensuring that nothing drops on the floor?

Roles Are Not Job Titles

Making facilitated work sessions work for any project requires an understanding of the roles that are played and the responsibilities inherent in those roles. Appropriately using the roles of the players is a key factor in delivering a successful work session experience. Conversely, if the work session is planned and executed without appropriate clarity around roles and interactions, results will suffer.

An important point is that in this book, we use role names, not job titles. It is quite possible in a project structure that someone will play more than one role. For example, someone may act in the role of both project manager and project budget analyst, or perhaps someone plays the role of a team leader and is also a subject matter expert. The role of facilitator is often played by someone who has facilitation expertise but may not have a formal job title of "facilitator." As we move into the discussion of roles, keep this perspective in mind.

We address six key work session roles:

- Project sponsor
- Project manager

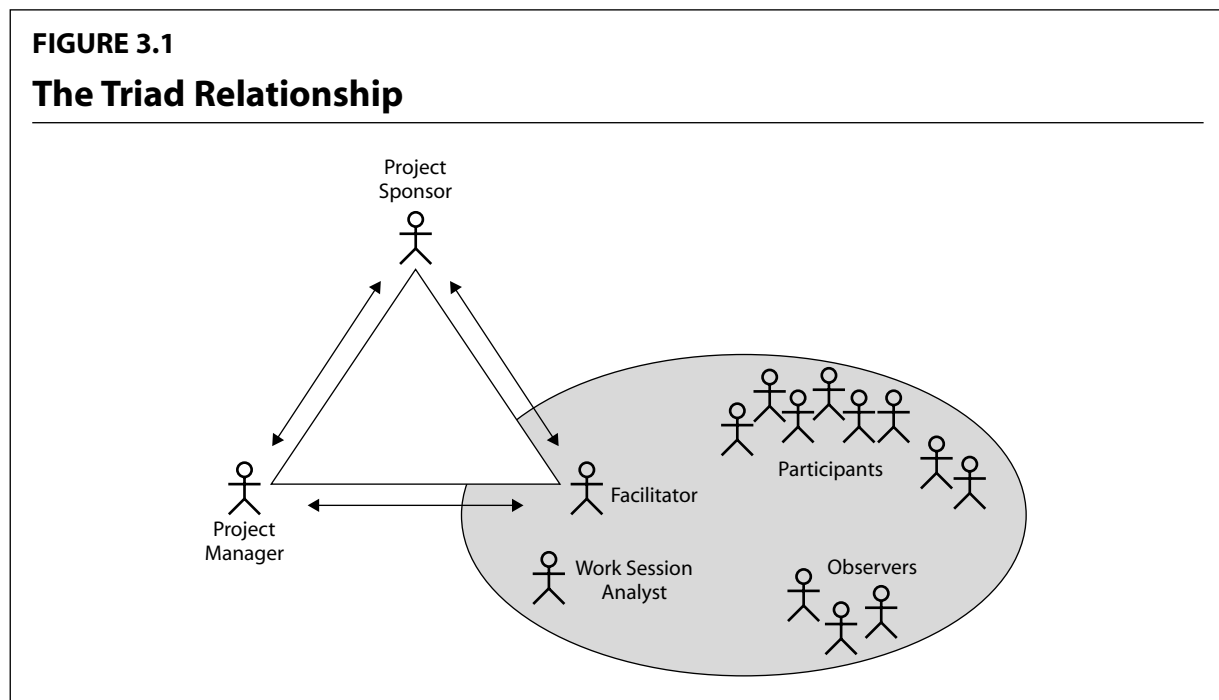
- Facilitator
- Participant
- Observer
- Work session analyst

Two of these roles, project sponsor and project manager, have meaning beyond the context of a facilitated work session. They have responsibilities throughout the project lifecycle and additional responsibilities when a facilitated work session is introduced into their project.

The remaining four roles—facilitator, participant, observer, and work session analyst—only apply within the context of a facilitated work session. These roles do not hold responsibilities elsewhere in the project.

The Roles in Action: Project Sponsor, Project Manager, and Facilitator

A foundational element contributing to the success of work sessions is the relationship between the project sponsor, project manager, and the facilitator. This triad relationship forms the core of the planning, delivery, and follow-up activities that are required to make the work session a success (Figure 3.1).



The project sponsor is the champion in the management ranks, ideally at the highest decision-making level required for the project scope. The sponsor sets direction, owns the business case for change, and ensures that resources are in place as needed throughout the project effort.

The project manager is directly responsible for managing the project resources to deliver results successfully. The project manager builds and directs the team in their daily efforts to deliver the objectives established by the project sponsor.

The facilitator is an enabler. The facilitator does not drive the team or set business direction. Rather, he or she works closely with both the project manager and project sponsor to understand objectives and required deliverables, then craft and lead a set of work session activities that will pull together the right experts to dialogue, decision, and create outputs critical to project success. The facilitator is the bridge for the project sponsor and project manager into the work session world.

Table 3.1 summarizes the basic responsibilities of the project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator as they pertain to the work of the project and the planning and delivery of facilitated work sessions. Note that the role of facilitator does not have day-to-day project responsibilities. This role, as we're describing it, is engaged solely for the planning and delivery of work sessions within the project lifecycle.

The project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator work closely together, laying the foundation for a successful work session; the project sponsor takes an active role in setting the stage for success; and the project manager and facilitator partner effectively throughout work session planning, delivery, and follow-up. (For more details on the steps in work session planning, delivery, and follow-up, see Section Three.)

The Roles in Action: Participants and Observers

Among the other roles to explore are work session participants and the related role of work session observer.

Work Session Participants

Without participants, there is no work session. The participants are those who contribute their knowledge and expertise to create the outputs and achieve the objectives of the work session. This makes engaging the right participants in the work session a fundamental key to success. (We'll talk more about that in Chapter Seven.)

It is the job of each participant to be actively involved in the work session dialogue, decision making, and building of the specified outputs. This may

TABLE 3.1

Key Project and Work Session Responsibilities of the Project Sponsor, Project Manager, and Facilitator

	Project Sponsor	Project Manager	Facilitator
Key project responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owns the business case • Sets project direction • Sets the tone for change • Establishes objectives and targets • Obtains commitment and funding of resources • Is visible and engaged throughout the project lifecycle • Works with the Project Manager to determine when work sessions are to be used • The buck stops here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owns the project process • Leads and manages the project team • Schedules and uses project resources effectively • Engages the right people in the right way at the right time to deliver project results • Recognizes when intelligent course correction is needed during the project and steers resources appropriately • Works with the Project Sponsor to determine when work sessions are to be used 	
Key work session responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirms work session objectives with the Project Manager and Facilitator • Assists the Project Manager in engaging the right work session Facilitator and Participants • Kicks off the work session and sets the context for the work to be accomplished • Encourages team decision making and holds the team accountable for results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirms work session objectives with the Project Sponsor and Facilitator • Works with the Project Sponsor to identify appropriate Participants for the work session • Works with the Facilitator to engage and prepare work session Participants • Assists in preparation of the right materials for input to work session activities • Manages work session logistics • Participates in the work session as appropriate • Receives work session outputs and incorporates effectively into next project steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owns the work session process • Engages with the Project Sponsor and Project Manager to understand objectives and deliverables • Crafts work session activities to meet objectives • Provides the Project Sponsor and Project Manager with criteria regarding what constitutes an effective Participant—helps them understand who can bring value to the work session • Works with the Project Manager to prepare Participants for the work session • Works with the Project Manager to identify and ready work session materials • Leads the work session activities to achieve objectives • Remains neutral to content while leading the Participants to generate work session results • Documents and publishes work session outputs • Hands off outputs effectively to the Project Manager • Follows up with the Project Manager and Project Sponsor to identify and apply lessons learned

include presession activities to prepare inputs that will be brought into the work session. It may also include postsession research and analysis to complete action items assigned during the work session. So, for a participant, the work does not necessarily start and end when the work session is convened.

A beneficial by-product of work session interaction is the learning that comes out of work session dialogue and exploration of ideas. Understanding the rationale behind the work session decisions can be as important as the decision itself. From this awareness, we introduce the concept of the work session observer.

Work Session Observers

Not every work session has observers. Consider introducing the role of observer when someone will benefit from listening to and understanding the work session dialogue and resulting decisions firsthand but is not one of the contributing experts to the topic of the session. Observers are often those who will use the outputs of the session in the next steps or phases of the project or someone new to a business role who wants to accelerate his or her learning curve. Observers may also be project team representatives from related or interdependent projects who need to gain knowledge on decisions being made that could affect their own project.

An example of an observer could be a technology expert observing a business requirements work session. This technologist may not be an active participant in determining the business requirements but will use those requirements as input to his or her own design activities. The knowledge gained by observing the building of the business requirements enables a deeper understanding of the business rationale behind the requirements. This awareness can be critical in making solid judgments regarding how to apply technology to best satisfy the requirements of the business.

We are often surprised by those who make the assumption that observers are second-class citizens in the work session. Nothing is further from the truth. In fact, observers may have the most difficult work session role. They are present in the room yet are not actively contributing to the dialogue and decision making. They may interact with participants during breaks, lending their thoughts and ideas, but during the work session itself, their role is to listen and learn. It is tough duty. Staying alert and engaged when not actively participating is a challenge. Yet the benefit is enormous for those charged with the responsibility of taking the work session results and using them productively in upcoming work activities.

Table 3.2 summarizes the basic responsibilities of the participant and observer within the work session.

TABLE 3.2**Key Work Session Responsibilities of the Participant and Observer**

Participant	Observer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes knowledge and expertise to attain work session objectives • Fully engages in dialogue, generating of ideas, analysis of information, and decision making for the building of the specified output • Is accountable for work session outcomes • Owns the decisions of the group and will support these decisions outside the work session setting • Socializes work session decisions within his or her area of influence outside the work session • Resolves action items assigned to him or her from the work session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens and learns • Observes the work session in order to understand the work session results and determine how to carry them forward • Interacts with Participants and Facilitator on breaks to raise questions or clarify thoughts • May be called on to respond to specific points of dialogue at the request of the Facilitator during the work session

The Roles in Action: Work Session Analyst

One more role requires definition: the work session analyst. This role supports the facilitator throughout the work session process. The analyst is skilled in the specialized techniques that will be applied during the work session. This person understands the work session process, the deliverable that will be built, and the techniques for leading a team through work session activities to achieve objectives.

The duties of the work session analyst begin prior to the actual work session (Table 3.3). The analyst may assist the facilitator in gathering or preparing materials that will be used in the work session. He or she supports the facilitator throughout the work session by clarifying discussion points, helping to keep the group on track with objectives, logging action items and issues to keep the conversation focused, and assisting with the capture of decisions and documenting of outputs. The analyst stays engaged with the facilitator after the work session to publish and provide a quality check for the work session deliverable.

This role is often filled by a facilitator in training. It's a great way to obtain on-the-job education and to apprentice with a skilled facilitator.

TABLE 3.3**Key Work Session Responsibilities of the Work Session Analyst**

- Supports the Facilitator throughout the work session process
- Assists in gathering and preparing materials to be used within the work session
- Clarifies work session dialogue and decisions
- Captures action items, issues, and items to be addressed outside the work session to help keep the team focused and on track
- Assists in documenting work session decisions and outputs
- Aids in the publication of the work session deliverable and ensures consistency of outputs

Summing It Up

- Once you've decided to incorporate facilitated work sessions within your project, make certain you understand the roles involved to make the work session a success.
- Ensure open lines of communication between the project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator throughout the work session process.
- Engage the right participants. Get creative with the planning and execution of the work session to ensure that the right experts can be productively involved. Don't settle for less than the right participants.
- Use the observer role when one or more people will benefit by listening and learning from the dialogue of the work session firsthand.
- A work session analyst supports the facilitator throughout the work session—during planning, delivery, and follow-up.
- These six roles must work in concert to deliver a facilitated work session. All have specific responsibilities, and all are critical to the success of the work session.

Chapter 4

What Effective Facilitation Is and Is Not

You can accomplish anything in life, provided you do not mind who gets the credit.

—HARRY S TRUMAN

WE'RE GOING TO take a closer look at facilitation—what it is and what it is not—and some common misconceptions. What is effective facilitation as we look at facilitation within the context of supporting projects?

Many resources speak to facilitation and facilitator competencies. (See the Resources in Part Four.) Using facilitated work sessions within the context of business projects is a specialized application within a broad field of expertise. Facilitation has been defined in a number of ways—for example:

“The design and management of structures and processes that help a group do its work and minimize the common problems people have working together” (Justice and Jamieson, 1999, p. 5)

“To make things easy or more convenient” (*Webster's Dictionary*)

“A process in which a person who is acceptable to all members of the group, substantively neutral, and has no decision-making authority intervenes to help a group improve the way it identifies and solves problems and makes decisions, in order to increase the group's effectiveness” (Schwarz, 1994, p. 4)

Get Your Mind Right

How do you know if you have what it takes to be a facilitator? Let's check some of the key capabilities required of an effective facilitator.

In the words of the character Captain in Road Prison 36 in the movie *Cool Hand Luke* (1967), “You've gotta get your mind right.” Of course, it is actor

Strother Martin's inflection and delivery that really gets the point across. But however you say it, you need first and foremost to develop the correct frame of mind.

You have to be thinking four hours ahead of everybody else.

Mary Wayne Bush,
organization change
specialist, Lockheed
Martin Corporation's
Space Systems Company,
on remembering a key
lesson from her mentor

The facilitator frame of mind includes embracing some attitudes and behaviors that at first glance may seem contradictory. As a facilitator, you must step up to the challenge of being a leader while at the same time being a servant to the needs of the group. You must demonstrate expertise in leading a group effectively through a set of tasks to meet objectives, yet be flexible enough to change direction at the drop of a hat. You must probe for clarity and insight, yet remain neutral to the content provided. You must be comfortable with letting others find the answer. You must be focused on the task yet focused on the people. You must understand yourself and your preferences and biases, while being keenly aware of the preferences and biases of those in the group. You must be able to manage group dialogue while pulling out significant points to synthesize, feed back, and interpret into the correct deliverable content. You must be in the moment with the group yet thinking ahead to what is coming next.

How do you balance these conflicting priorities? Competent facilitators learn to view the world from three different points of reference at any given moment:

- *Process orientation:* Focus on the work session deliverables, ensuring that the activities achieve the desired objectives and result in value-added products. Also focus on the work session process: getting the team from start to finish effectively and efficiently; being present, yet ready to lead the team into what's coming next.
- *People orientation:* Focus on engaging people with active listening and questioning, synthesizing and integrating responses, feeding back and clarifying results. Also focus on managing how people work together effectively throughout the work session process in planning, delivering the work session, and executing follow-up activities.
- *Self-awareness:* Not self-focused but rather self-knowing; that is, being conscious of your own strengths, weaknesses, preferences, and biases and being able to use or control these as appropriate to lead the work session participants in meeting their objectives.

An interesting effect of juggling these orientations in work session settings is that the facilitator develops the ability to move easily from right-brained to left-brained activity. Studies have shown that the two different hemispheres of the brain are responsible for different manners of processing. Table 4.1 illustrates the functioning typically associated with the left brain and the right brain.

TABLE 4.1**Left and Right Brain Functions**

Left Brain Functions	Right Brain Functions
Analytical processing	Spatial skills
Language processing	Musical skills
Objective reasoning	Subjective reasoning
Sequential processing	Random processing
Analysis	Synthesis
Logic	Simultaneous processing
Habitual tasks	Novel tasks
Motor skills	Intuitive skills
Dissection—look at the parts	Integration—look at the whole

Most individuals have a distinct preference for one of these styles of processing. The good news is that we can strengthen the ability to use both sides of our brain even though we have a native preference for one or the other.

Practice self-awareness. Recognize that extended use of the nonpreferred side of the brain is likely to be tiring. If possible, team with another facilitator or a work session analyst who processes in the opposite manner from you. This will provide balance to the work session, as well as relief when the juggling act becomes taxing.

Facilitator Competencies

In addition to this foundational mind-set, the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) suggests six core areas of competency (Table 4.2). Although early work on facilitator competencies began in 1991 at IAF, they were published as “Facilitator Competencies” in *Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal* in the winter of 2000. (For detail and clarification on IAF facilitator competencies, see the IAF Web site noted in Resource C.)

Facilitator Skills

What else is needed after we have our mind right and are learning and growing in the six core facilitator competencies? We asked our clients—those who receive and use facilitation services—and what they said is set out in Table 4.3.

TABLE 4.2**International Association of Facilitators Competencies**

Facilitator Competency	Evidence of the Competency
1. Ability to create collaborative client relationships	Develop working partnerships Design and customize work sessions to meet client needs Manage multisession events effectively
2. Ability to plan appropriate group processes	Select clear methods and processes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster open participation with respect for client culture, norms, and participant diversity • Engage the participation of those with varied learning and thinking styles • Achieve a high-quality product or other outcome that meets the client needs Prepare time and place to support group process
3. Ability to create and sustain a participatory environment	Demonstrate effective participatory and interpersonal communication skills Honor and recognize diversity, ensuring inclusiveness Manage group conflict Evoke group creativity
4. Ability to guide a group to appropriate and useful outcomes	Guide the group with clear methods and processes Facilitate group self-awareness about its task Guide the group to consensus and desired outcomes
5. Ability to build and maintain professional knowledge	Maintain a base of knowledge Know a range of facilitation methods Maintain professional standing
6. Ability to model a positive professional attitude	Practice self-assessment and self-awareness Act with integrity Trust group potential and model neutrality

In 1999, *Workshops* by Thiagi published results of ten years of field research that had attempted to identify the secrets of successful facilitation. They observed facilitators who had been recommended by their colleagues and participants as “effective” based on their effective process and productive results. It is particularly interesting that the researchers did not discover the common set of behaviors and consistent application of skills that they had initially hoped they would find. There were not only differences across facilitators; the researchers observed that the *same* facilitator would behave differently in different work sessions, even when conducting the same activity. As they studied the data they collected, perhaps the real secret

TABLE 4.3**Top Things Our Customers Look for in a Facilitator**

Skill	Demonstrated as:
"Gets it"	Those two words say it all. According to Patrick Traichal, Master Black Belt at Bank of America, this is the intangible ability of a Facilitator to quickly grasp and retain the purpose and goals as set forth by the Project Sponsor and Project Manager. The entire work session process, from planning through delivery and follow-up, is grounded in the Facilitator's ability to "get it" and drive the team to accomplish it.
Intelligent adaptability	This is appropriate flexibility—the ability to intelligently adapt the work session process, fitting it to the situation at hand—able to turn on a dime when needed, yet stay the course when appropriate. The greatest ability is being able to know how to choose between the two.
Leadership	Motivating people to engage effectively. Knowing where you're going and how to get there. Inspiring confidence and trust.
Balance	This has two parts. (1) The Facilitator's ability to "keep your head when all about you are losing theirs," as Kipling wrote. (2) The ability to balance participation. Brenda Yost, senior vice president, Wells Fargo Bank, believes that one of the most common derailers of facilitated work sessions is permitting one person, or a small contingent, to dominate the session. Balanced participation is critical to success.
Active listening	One of our project sponsors referred to this as the ability to "listen for understanding," which is distinctly different from listening to mechanically transcribe. The job of a facilitator is to listen for understanding, continuing to question the group and dig for clarity, synthesizing responses, feeding back to the group, integrating with what has gone before, and then capturing the group decision or output.
Communication skills	This has two dimensions: (1) the ability to <i>solicit</i> information, inviting people to engage in dialogue and creating an environment where people are willing to participate, and (2) the ability to <i>share</i> information effectively, refraining from "information overload" as well as "information deficit."
Organization skills	The ability to structure and arrange the details of the work session from start to finish.
Management skills	Knowing what needs to be done, engaging appropriate resources, assigning tasks, and following up to ensure completion. Administering resources effectively and communicating progress with the Project Sponsor and Project Manager.
Discipline	This has two dimensions: (1) the ability to get it done—to do what needs to be done to make the work session successful (preparing thoroughly, delivering an output that meets quality standards and customer objectives) and (2) the ability to let it go—to not say everything that comes into your head, refraining from venting your irritation or other negative emotions during a work session.

Skill	Demonstrated as:
Analytical skills	The ability to question, probe, consider, and reason in a systematic manner. Making sense of things. Helping the group to see meaning and draw effective conclusions.
Integration skills	The ability to see the similarities between things, even if seemingly unrelated. To be aware of patterns seen before and apply what's known to what is still unknown. Traichal also reminded us of a book written by a mathematician for mathematicians: G. Polya's <i>How to Solve It</i> . ^a It encourages problem solving by looking for the known in the unknown. Integrating previous knowledge and experience to creatively solve new problems is what work sessions are all about.
Technical skills	"Technical" in the sense that the Facilitator demonstrates skills in the specialized techniques needed to produce the deliverables for the work session. Applying appropriate guidelines and conventions and ensuring consistency and completeness of the outputs.
Political awareness	Knowing the lay of the land and how to work successfully within it. Being aware of people, personalities, topics, and terminology that could help or harm the objectives. The ability to know the informal as well as the formal organization. The ability to influence effectively.
Presentation	The ability to remain poised in front of a group, maintain composure in difficult situations, diffuse conflict, and encourage participation. Also the ability to speak clearly, write legibly, maintain an alert body language, and present results in a manner that is clear, meaningful, and visually appealing to the participants.

^aPolya (1957).

emerged, buried, as they say, "within the apparent inconsistency." The secret to successful facilitation is *the ability to be flexible, adaptive, and responsive to the needs of the group*. There is no cookie-cutter approach to successful facilitation. Success lies in the facilitator's ability to creatively apply skills as appropriate in each group setting to accomplish the objectives at hand.

If It Walks Like a Duck . . .

Remember that the root of the word *facilitate* means "to make easy." As a facilitator, if you make the work of facilitation look easy, then you're doing it right. It's hard work, but it shouldn't look that way to session participants. You must operate at a level of skill that permits the viewer to think that the job is easy.

One of our favorite analogies is that of a duck swimming on a lake. No matter how still or how rough the water is, the duck just keeps floating. Calm, cool, and collected. Looks easy. No one needs to know that the duck is paddling furiously just beneath the water's surface.

The feathers provide another valuable lesson for facilitators: “water off a duck’s back.” A facilitator needs to possess the ability to let things roll off. This is part of maintaining the balance. Don’t let disruptions disrupt you. When they occur, quickly digest the value to be learned, and stay composed as you consider appropriate courses of action. Don’t take things personally. Just keep swimming.

A Few Misconceptions

Facilitation is such a commonly used word that it’s no wonder we’ve accumulated some baggage over the years. Here are a few myths we’ve encountered that we’d like to dispel:

- *Myth 1: Facilitation is a cookbook. Given the recipe, anyone can do it.* Even within a structured project environment, facilitation remains part art, part science. Some people expect a cookbook. It would be nice to be able to describe a repeatable, manageable, sustainable facilitation process with a well-defined set of ingredients that would guarantee achievement of results every time.

The science part of facilitation says there *is* a pattern, a blueprint, that will enable work session success. (See Section Four for our recommended blueprints of work session guidelines and activities that will lead you through some of the more common facilitated work sessions to support creating of project deliverables.)

However, the art part of facilitation comes in applying these recommended blueprints. Every work session is different—different objectives, different combinations of people creating unique group dynamics. Work sessions are about the effective engagement of people to meet project objectives. And there’s the art: leading people through a set of activities to achieve the agreed-on objectives. If the science is in the process, the art is in the application of the process.

- *Myth 2: Anyone can document what happens in a work session. Any scribe will do.* A scribe implies someone who will show up at your work session and take notes. Beware! Rarely do scribes have the necessary experience to know the difference between an assumption and a constraint or pick up on the fact that Joe just stated a requirement. And you don’t have time to educate a scribe as you go. We’ve learned the hard way that you’ll get better results if you use someone already familiar with capturing work session information, whether it’s the project manager or an administrative assistant.

- *Myth 3: Facilitators are trainers and vice versa.* Perhaps our favorite misconception is equating facilitation and training. A facilitator is not a

trainer. Neither is a facilitated work session a training session (although a very useful by-product of a facilitated work session is that the participants do learn from one another). Here are two key differences:

- A trainer tells. A facilitator questions, listens, then synthesizes, and integrates the responses of the group.
- A trainer follows a set of training materials. A facilitator leads the group to discover their own answers to challenging business problems.

Both facilitation and training have their specific uses in support of projects, but they are very different and must be applied appropriately.

• *Myth 4: Holding a work session means the project manager isn't doing his or her job.* Another misconception, although not as common as the others, is based in the perception that if a facilitated work session is needed, then the project manager is not doing his or her job. On occasion, we've experienced resistance from a few managers regarding the use of facilitated work sessions. They seem to feel that the project manager who uses facilitated work sessions is somehow cheating on his or her duties. This idea is grounded in the traditional view of the project manager as the single point of information gathering and deliverable generation for a project.

As we pointed out in Chapter One, this old dog is in need of some new tricks. Complex project environments require more creative ways of engaging the right people at the right time to produce high-quality deliverables. Rather than pushing back on the use of work sessions within a project, we would expect managers to welcome them as they engage the right people for short bursts of time to create and take ownership of outputs that otherwise would remain the individual work of the project manager or a limited number of team members.

• *Myth 5: We don't need a project manager or facilitator. We have a Six Sigma Black Belt on the team.* We have seen this misconception arise with the widespread use of corporatewide quality methodologies like Six Sigma. As senior quality professionals who are responsible for leading and implementing improvement projects within the business, Black Belts are expected to be change agents within the organization. They are expected to engage with teams to effect change that will bring tangible financial results for the business. A Black Belt is expected to have a variety of competencies, including business acumen, a customer focus, measurement and analysis aptitude, process management skills, communication skills, a passion for making things better, and the ability to influence and lead others. They are also expected to understand project management fundamentals and be able to facilitate the project team to build out specific deliverables such as defining customer targets or designing business processes.

As we mentioned in Chapter Three, roles should not be equated with job titles. It may be perfectly reasonable for a project manager to act in the role of facilitator in a specific work session situation. And a Black Belt may be called on to manage a project or facilitate a work session. It is not uncommon in small projects to find the same person playing several roles. However, in large and complex project initiatives, it is unreasonable to expect that any one person will possess the depth of expertise required to excel at project management, group facilitation, and the application of quality methods and techniques.

Summing It Up

- Get your mind right. Recognize that a good facilitator is capable of moving easily between activities and behaviors that at first glance may appear contradictory. A people orientation and a process orientation must be present at all times and must be balanced.
- As a facilitator, practice and develop expertise in the six core competencies of facilitation as recommended by the International Association of Facilitators and in the recommended skill sets. As a project sponsor and project manager, you have a right to expect proficiency in these competencies and skills. Don't settle for less.
- Beware of misconceptions regarding facilitation. Facilitation is not a silver bullet, solving all project ills. It is not a cookbook. It's part art and part science. And it takes some serious skills.

As we leave Part One, let's look at where we've been. So far we've looked at why work sessions are needed and documented some key benefits. We've established a checklist for recognizing when facilitated work sessions provide the most value. And we've established where and when in the project lifecycle facilitated work sessions are best positioned to build out some of the key project deliverables and enable tracking of project progress. We reviewed work session roles and responsibilities and set a framework for effective facilitation: what it is, what it isn't, what we should expect regarding facilitator competencies and skills, and some cautions regarding common trouble spots.

With this foundation set, we're ready to roll up our sleeves and get into the actual work of facilitation within the project lifecycle.

Part Two

The Partnership in Practice

Making Facilitated Work
Sessions Work

Section Three

Work Session Basics

HERE'S WHERE WE ROLL UP our sleeves and get to work. This segment of the book introduces the work session structure, from planning through delivery and follow-up. One of the common misconceptions regarding facilitated work sessions is that the face-to-face work session is where all the work happens. Preparation for the work session and follow-up after the work session are often discounted or ignored. We think you'll agree after reading this section that there's more to the work session than you see on the surface.

Chapters Five through Nine provide clear descriptions of the roles and activities necessary to plan, effectively deliver, and follow up on a work session. They present key concepts that you'll need to understand to ensure your work session runs smoothly—for example, how to assess whether you're ready for a work session, how to select the right facilitator, how to balance work session participation, and how to walk the delicate tightrope between too much and too little detail.

Chapter 5

Making Work Sessions Work

The only place where success comes before work is a dictionary.

—VIDAL SASSOON

YOU'VE DETERMINED THAT your project needs a facilitated session. You've looked at the criteria presented in Chapter Two and realize that your project is a prime candidate. But before you barrel forward into planning the details, there are a few preliminary activities you must attend to that will lay the foundation for a successful work session. First, you must get management's support of the collaborative work session process. Second, you'll need to assess the project's readiness for a facilitated work session. Third, you must determine who will facilitate the event, and fourth, you must decide which approach to the work session best fits your situation. Finally, you must understand what a successful work session entails.

Educate Upward

Not all organizations are well versed in or receptive to the concept of facilitated work sessions. Facilitated work sessions are collaborative by nature. They require participation from resources across the organization, from finance to customer support, development to marketing. For some organizations, this is no problem. But for others, territorial boundaries and stove-pipe hierarchies have conspired to make collaboration a struggle.

To ensure that your work session works, educate those up the food chain on the benefits of collaboration and the process involved in holding facilitated work sessions. Having the support of champions in the management ranks can pave the way for making sure you have the right participation in work sessions. Get their assistance in overcoming organizational hurdles and constraints by making them aware of the tangible and intangible benefits (noted in Chapter One) that shared participation can produce. Also make them aware of the positive impact that early

collaboration and cross-organizational involvement can have on the bottom line by avoiding the costly rework often required when requirements, design, and development occur in isolation, as illustrated in Figure 5.1 (Alexander and others, 1975, p. 44).

Assess Project Readiness

Just because your project is a prime candidate for a facilitated work session doesn't mean you're actually ready for one. Life is full of lessons, and we've found out (often the hard way) that every work session has prerequisites that must be completed in order for it to be most beneficial to the participants and provide the desired output. In one situation, a client brought us in to build the detailed requirements for a product and its supporting processes while the project charter was still being developed. The project purpose was still to be defined, the scope was ambiguous, and the affected business processes had not been analyzed. Obviously the project was not ready to move into requirements development. These types of situations, if not caught in planning, can negate the value of the work session.

Before you start the work session preparation process, review the "What Do I Need to Get Started?" section of Chapters Ten through Fourteen to ensure you're ready for a work session. Make sure that you have the information in hand or know where to get it. If not, work with the project sponsor and project manager to make sure you've got what you need to move forward.

Determine the Facilitator

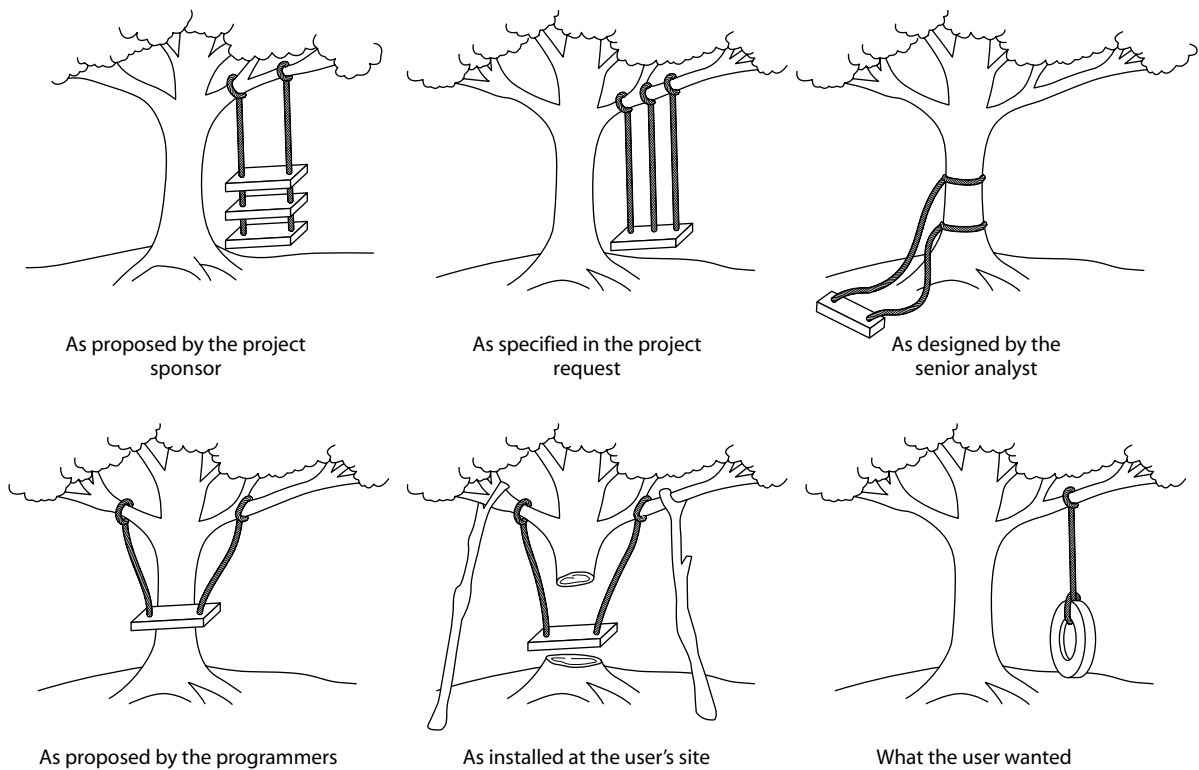
Before you do any substantive planning, you need to determine who will be facilitating the work session. You may be wondering why you need to make this decision now rather than waiting until a few days before the work session. After all, you might think, won't they just come in and execute what we've planned?

That's like asking a wedding planner to prepare for a medium to large wedding in two days. You'd have a wedding, but it wouldn't be the one of your dreams. The same is true for facilitation. The facilitator needs to be involved in all aspects of work session planning in order to help you meet your desired objectives. Let's look at some critical considerations for choosing the right facilitator.

Do You Have the Right Facilitator for the Job?

Whether the facilitator is internal or external, you must make sure this person's skills and abilities match what you need for the work session. Look at objectives, potential participants, required deliverables, timing, and

FIGURE 5.1
Typical Development Process



Source: Alexander and others, 1975, p. 44. Used by permission of Oxford University Press, Inc.

visibility. Will the audience be tough? Then don't use someone junior when you require senior expertise in communication and group dynamics. Are the deliverables specialized? Then don't settle for someone who saw a process map or a data model once when what you need is an experienced modeler. Is there a tight time frame with aggressive objectives? Then don't make do with someone who is only used to running project status meetings.

Should You Hire an External Facilitator?

There are times when bringing in a facilitator from outside your company or business area is beneficial. Someone from outside the immediate business areas involved in the work session can be beneficial in easing difficult group dynamics. Also, skill set needs to be considered.

Ask yourself the following questions to determine if an external facilitator would be helpful with your team:

- Are you concerned that your internal facilitator may not be right for this work session need?
- Is the timing of a work session critical, but internal facilitation resources are unavailable?

- Is distrust or bias apparent or suspected within the team?
- Are there individuals who might feel intimidated by team members or others who might dominate the group?
- Are there known rivalries between groups?
- Does the work session require skills that aren't available internally (for example, modeling, diagramming, advanced skills in managing group dynamics)?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then consider bringing in a facilitator who is external to the business areas represented by the project.

Should the Facilitator Be the Project Manager or Someone Else?

If you've decided to keep facilitation in-house, the next question is whether you need someone other than the project manager to facilitate. As discussed in Section Two, facilitation requires some specialized skills that the project manager may or may not possess. But ultimately the decision about whether the project manager should facilitate comes down to an assessment of objectivity, skill set, and freedom.

During the work session, can the project manager be objective enough to:

- Set aside his or her managerial hat and serve as a neutral process guide?
- Allow the team to discuss, discover, and decide without deciding for them?
- Let the outcomes be owned by the team rather than themselves?

Does the project manager have the skills to be able to:

- Manage the group dynamics?
- Build the appropriate deliverables required by the work session?

If so, then the hurdles of objectivity and skill set have been cleared, and we're ready to tackle the issue of freedom. Some project managers have appreciated the ability to step out of the spotlight, observe the team, inject their own insights and opinions, and allow the team to gel during work sessions. If this is your desire, then get someone else to be the facilitator.

Do You Need a Second Facilitator, or Is a Work Session Analyst Enough?

Use of a work session analyst is considered standard operating procedure (see Chapter Three for more information on work session roles). However, there are situations that make a second facilitator a bonus. Facilitation in a work session setting requires attention to the team dynamics, monitoring

progress and making adjustments as needed, clarifying of content being shared to ensure common understanding, and capturing all relevant information. We'd recommend a second facilitator if:

- Your work session is longer than two days. Facilitating a work session requires you to be in the moment at all times, which takes an enormous amount of energy. After two intense days, even the best facilitators start fraying at the edges.
- Your project is complex, with large volumes of data to be discussed, reviewed, and captured. Rarely is a discussion single-threaded. While clarifying one item, you may also discover a requirement, note an assumption, and identify multiple follow-up action items. One facilitator, two hands: it just may not be enough.
- You will have more than fifteen people in the work session. The difficulty in managing the interactions and group dynamics of more than fifteen people increases exponentially. A lone facilitator in this situation will have to make choices between tending to the team and tending to the results. One or the other may suffer.
- There's a possibility of needing to break into subteams. You'll need multiple bodies to ensure that each subteam is staying on track and capturing the necessary output.

By having a second facilitator, you'll also gain some otherwise impossible benefits: better output because two sets of skilled ears are listening and faster turnaround on documentation during the work session. Many times the cofacilitator can be capturing information that the primary facilitator is posting on the walls. These can be printed that night and brought into the next day's session. In addition, the second facilitator can play the role of the work session analyst and assist with facilitation at the same time.

Determine Your Work Session Approach

Just like facilitation, the design of a work session has an element of art involved. One size does not fit all. So you'll need to assess which approach best fits the project situation.

Some work session types, like the project charter work session, require only one face-to-face session to accomplish their objectives. Other work session types, such as a process analysis and design work session or a business requirements work session, may be convened multiple times during a project in order to achieve the desired objective. For example, if there are a large number of processes to be redesigned, it is common to hold several process analysis and design work sessions, each dealing with a specific subset of

the business processes. This encourages focus on specific topics and allows a more targeted approach to participant selection.

Regardless of the approach you choose, the steps involved in work session preparation, delivery, and follow-up documentation will be the same. The tasks in each of these steps will be addressed in later chapters (see Chapters Seven through Nine), so for now, all you need to determine is whether you need one or more face-to-face work sessions to achieve your objective.

Single Work Session Approach

This approach assumes that the bulk of your deliverable can be created in the one and a half to three days the team spends in the face-to-face work session. You can expect there to be action items and issues to follow up on to finalize the deliverable, but the fundamental information that requires validation by the full team has been discussed and agreed to during the work session. As shown in Figure 5.2, the work session results in one primary deliverable, which will differ depending on the type of work session you're conducting.

This work session approach works best in situations where the team has previously met and discussed the project; this is not the first time they have met. In other words, the project must have moved beyond concept stage and have some tangible definition if a single work session approach is going to be effective.

The single work session approach is best used for any of the work session types when:

- The project is small to medium size.
- The project has a well-defined and narrow scope.
- The extended project team has already met, discussed, and created seed materials to be used as a starting point for the work session.
- There are a limited number of systems, interfaces, or processes involved.
- The anticipated changes resulting from the project would not be described as complex.

Multiple Work Session Approach

Depending on the size or complexity of the effort, you may need more than one process analysis or business requirements work session to accomplish your goal. You may need to convene multiple work sessions over the course of several weeks to build and complete the deliverables. If multiple work sessions seem to suit your project needs, then consider the following approaches for structuring multiple work sessions:

- *Top-down approach:* As shown in Figure 5.3, this approach brings the entire team together in a face-to-face work session to define the high-level

FIGURE 5.2

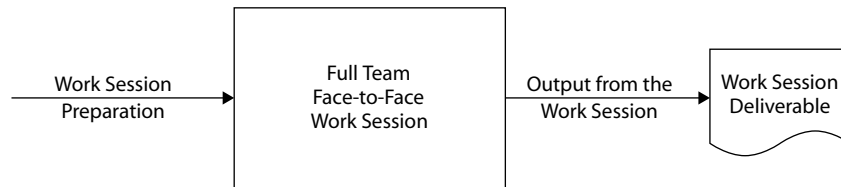
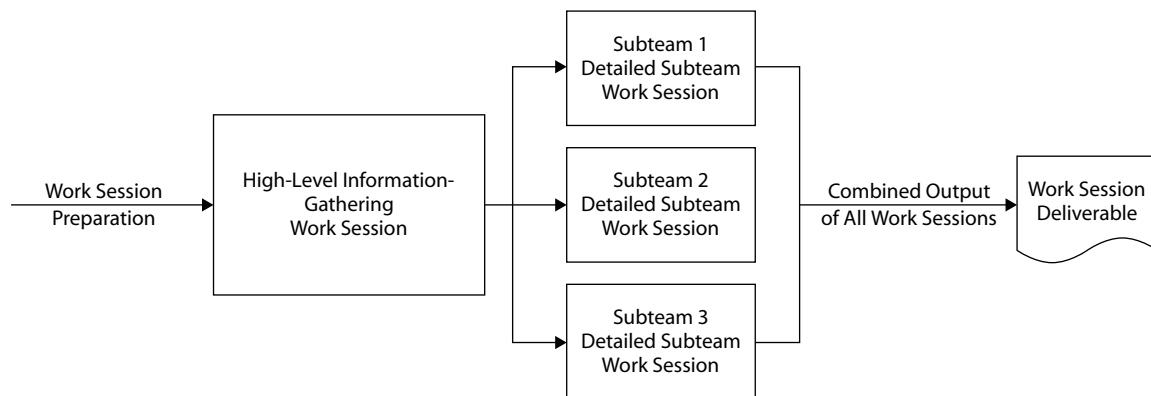
Single Work Session Approach

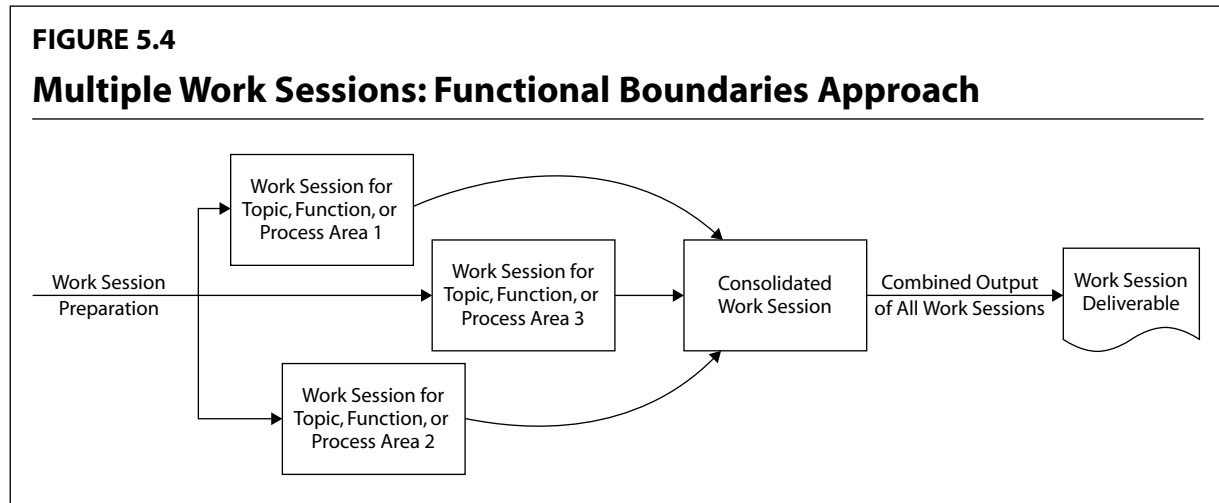
FIGURE 5.3

Multiple Work Sessions: Top-Down Approach

information needed. From this initial work session, subteams are formed to detail the requirements in one or more follow-up work sessions with either the entire team or appropriate subteams. Action items and issues created from the initial high-level work session will be followed up on and answered in the subteam work sessions. The output from all of these work sessions will be consolidated into one primary deliverable, which will differ depending on the type of work session you're conducting.

- *Functional boundaries approach:* This approach, shown in Figure 5.4, requires some additional planning to determine which business functions, topics, or process areas can be addressed independently and which participants would be required. Output from all of the independent work sessions would be used as the input to a consolidation work session with the full team at the end to bring all pieces together and confirm that they are comprehensive and nonoverlapping. The output from the consolidated work session would be considered the primary deliverable.

- *Multigenerational approach:* If you are doing a multigenerational plan for rollout and implementation of the project scope, then consider holding work sessions that correspond to the segments of the multigenerational



plan. Project scope should be partitioned to correspond to the segments of the multigenerational plan and the changes that are to be implemented in each generation of the plan.

As with all the other approaches, there will be action items and issues to follow up on from each work session. However, this approach typically results in three separate versions of the deliverable (as shown in Figure 5.5) rather than just one. For example, you would end up with three business requirements documents or three risk assessments, each one addressing only the topics in scope for that generation of the project effort.

Whichever approach strategy you decide to use, be careful to analyze your project needs and determine whether one or more work sessions of a particular work session type are required. Knowing this in advance will help you plan each individual work session appropriately.

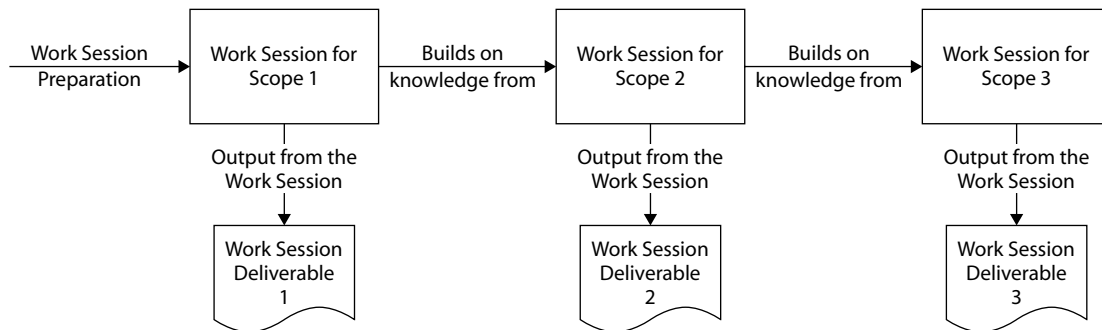
Define Success

What makes work sessions work? What is it that qualifies the event as a success? Having conducted hundreds of work sessions, we offer the following criteria to describe what a successful work session looks like:

- It accomplished the defined work session objectives. This is more than just your opinion of whether the objectives were or were not met. It's a confirmation by the project sponsor, project manager, and team that *they* believe them to be fulfilled.
- There is consensus among all team members to support the session results. What you've documented must represent the view of the team, and they must all be willing to own it after the work session is over.
- You produce high-quality deliverables that can be effectively explained and used by the team to move forward. A bunch of random notes on

FIGURE 5.5

Multiple Work Sessions: Multigenerational Approach



flip charts will not do. The deliverables produced must reflect the approved methodology of the organization and be both easy to understand and easy to maintain.

- It helped to accelerate the project effort and ultimately reduces rework in later project phases.
- The team grows in knowledge, understanding, or appreciation of diversity. Everyone should walk away with new insights about the project, the team, the organization, or themselves.

Summing It Up

- Getting management's support of the collaborative work session process will pave the way for making sure you have the right participation in work sessions.
- To make your work session "work," verify that the prerequisite information identified in the "What Do I Need to Get Started?" section of Chapters Ten through Fourteen is available before scheduling a facilitated work session. If not, work with the project sponsor or project manager to develop it before engaging in a work session.
- Make the following determinations to ensure that the level of facilitation expertise provided is sufficient to support your project needs:
 - Determine if the facilitator has the right skill set to match the work session.
 - Evaluate whether the project manager can be the facilitator.
 - Determine if your project merits having a second facilitator in the work session.
- Consider hiring an external facilitator if:
 - You don't have a facilitator internally who is right for this work session need.
 - There is no internal facilitator available to fill a critical work session need.

There is distrust or bias apparent or suspected within the team.

There are individuals who might feel intimidated by team members or others who might dominate the group.

There are known rivalries between groups.

The work session requires skills that aren't available internally (for example, modeling, diagramming, advanced skills in managing group dynamics).

- Determine whether you need one or more face-to-face work sessions to achieve your objective. If multiple work sessions are desired, determine which approach best suits your objectives:

Top-down approach

Functional boundaries approach

Multigenerational approach

- A successful work session entails more than just holding and completing the event. In order to be termed successful, the work session must have:

Accomplished the defined work session objectives

Produced support of the session results from all team members

Resulted in high-quality deliverables that can be effectively explained and used by the team to move forward

Enabled acceleration of the project and reduced rework later in the project

Enabled the team to grow

Chapter 6

The Work Session Tightrope

Whether you believe you can do a thing or not, you are right.

—HENRY FORD

HENRY FORD ALSO SAID, “Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.” The secret to walking a tightrope is keeping your eye on the goal—along with plenty of practice in developing balance and confidence. Facilitating is very much like walking a tightrope. The better you prepare for the challenges you will face, the more successful you and your team will be.

Let’s first look at some basic concepts regarding conducting work sessions, and then we’ll explore the tightropes that challenge our balance.

Work Session Delivery Concepts

Conducting or delivering the work session is more than just following the steps of a methodology. You are guiding the process of discovery and seeking to capture the results. To assist you in this process, there are some concepts you must understand before you begin to guide a team through the steps of building a deliverable.

Work Sessions Are Not Linear

You can’t expect to start at page 1 of the deliverable document and continue through page by page until you reach the end. It doesn’t work that way. One work session activity may generate information that goes into multiple sections of the final deliverable. You may be leading the group through a discussion regarding project scope and, as a by-product, receive information about requirements, impacts, or assumptions. Understanding this tendency is essential to facilitating effectively. One of the things that makes group dynamics so effective is the inherent nonlinear nature of the interaction: someone will build off an idea that he or she hears and generate a new

thought or related idea. That's what we want. So expect it, and work with it. Being prepared to capture multiple pieces of information will prevent you from missing valuable insights just because "we haven't gotten to that section yet." It also allows the group greater freedom to think creatively.

But with freedom comes risk. Allowing the team to think beyond the task at hand may lead to tangents that are outside the scope of what you're there to do. If that occurs, help the team refocus by using the *parking lot* (moving an item to the side for later discussion) or *action item* (documenting an item for out-of-session follow-up) tools to capture the thought or task without spending valuable time to discuss it. (For more information on these tools, see Chapter Twenty-Two.)

Work Session Objectives Are Not Always Attainable

This is not an excuse for failing to meet work session objectives. Yet despite the best preparation, numerous revelations may occur during the work session that will affect the ability of the team to accomplish its intended goals. You may have gone into the work session expecting to emerge with a completed project charter, only to find out that the critical business decisions have not been made regarding project direction; as a result, your participants cannot make some of the essential scoping decisions. So instead, the team walks out with a plan to get the information needed to make the scope decisions rather than the completed project charter you had originally intended.

As another example, perhaps you intended to define the business requirements, only to find out that there is immense confusion around the purpose of the project and more time had to be spent in activities that bring all participants to the same level of understanding. It happens. You do your

From Real Life

In the midst of a recent day-and-a-half work session, the facilitator discovered that objectives set for the work session were not realistic. Several factors led to this realization:

- Unexpected attendees had shown up.
- The team continued to struggle with understanding the project's scope and relationship to other projects under way.
- The project manager had not been involved in the planning efforts and, from various comments, obviously had a different agenda.

What did they do? The facilitator called an after-session meeting with the project sponsor, project

manager, and key business representatives at the end of the first half of the day. They spent an hour refining the work session objectives and restructuring the next day's activities to meet their needs.

What were the lessons learned for the facilitator?

- Always include the project manager in the planning process.
- Try to get confirmation of the names and roles of attendees whenever possible.
- If the facilitator thinks the project definition is unclear there are probably others who think so too. Build enough time into the agenda to get everyone onto the same page and obtain clarity.

best to prevent these situations through planning and information gathering in preparation for the work session, but it still happens.

So the issue is not what you do *if* it happens but what you do *when* it happens. Stay in constant communication with the project manager and project sponsor. Make them aware of the shifting needs and resulting impacts on the work session objectives. Work with them to cut or alter activities so their primary goals can be met while accommodating the needs of the team.

Work Session Facilitators Never Sweat

Facilitation may look like magic, but it isn't. If you make it look easy and participants never know you are sweating, then you are doing it right. But facilitation is hard work. You will have a large group of people expecting you to know how to get them from where they are to where they need to be at the end of the work session. And you will be working every moment (sometimes including late into the night) to turn their expectations into reality. The focus of the participants must be on the work they are doing, not on a struggling facilitator. So when things don't go as planned (which is normal), take it in stride. Take a deep breath, perhaps take a break, or switch positions with your cofacilitator, but don't make yourself or your momentary loss of focus the center of attention. Remember, you're a duck on the water.

To Facilitate a Work Session, You Must Know the Deliverable

The purpose of work sessions is to create specific deliverables: a project charter, a process analysis and design (PAD) document, a business requirements document (BRD), a risk assessment, a work-in-progress review. In order to facilitate the work session effectively, you must understand the purpose of the deliverable and why it's important to the project. Why does a project need a project charter? Why must we have a BRD? Who will use the deliverable once it is created? Why do we need a risk assessment on this project? As the facilitator, you must be able to answer questions regarding deliverables and their purpose. If there are project-related questions for which you do not have answers, work with the project sponsor or project manager (or both) to get an answer before walking into the work session.



Understanding the Deliverable

Reading the information and actually understanding it well enough to explain it to others are two different things. To better understand the information you're expecting participants to provide in each section of the deliverable, practice fill-

ing it in yourself. This will give you a better grasp of the type of information you're trying to elicit from the group and how to explain it. It may also provide you a few samples to throw out to the group as discussion starters.

Beyond that, you must also understand each section within the deliverable and how it relates to the overall document. For example, why is there a scope section in the BRD when it has already been discussed in the project charter and PAD deliverables? What information are you looking for in the process impacts table? What does each column mean? We provide this information in Section Six, so review these chapters carefully prior to facilitating work sessions. The better you know the deliverable you are building, the more you can focus your attention on the dynamics of the team.

Walking the Tightrope

Every work session requires a delicate balance on the part of the facilitator. How much do you insert yourself into the process? How much discussion do you allow around a topic before pushing the group to move on? How do you get balanced participation from all attendees? Let's take a look at these and other common tightropes you must walk when leading a work session.

Tightrope 1: The Right Work Session Scope

This is the cornerstone for the work session: How much do we take on? This question must be answered as part of your early preparation with the project sponsor and project manager. Most facilitators we've encountered tend to be affected by work session optimism; that is, in their desire to serve their client, they often overcommit to what can be accomplished within a given time frame. Be careful to understand the scope of the objectives prior to committing to what it will take to accomplish them.

There are at least three variables at work here: how much work we can accomplish, how much time we have, and who the right participants are. They are interconnected. The right participants can accomplish much in a short period of time. The wrong participants won't accomplish the objectives no matter how much time they have. As part of the planning activities, carefully consider the objectives of the work session, the right participants to attain those objectives, and the amount of time they can commit. Then determine the appropriate scope for the work session. It must balance what will be accomplished with the time allotted and the people available.

Tightrope 2: The Right Level of Detail

This is another tightrope closely related to scope. Level of detail is a variable in most work sessions that can divide the group. If given more time and the same scope, we can obviously drive to more detail. The question is not so much, "What do we have time for?" as it is, "What is the right level of detail to meet the objectives?"

This comes down to understanding who will be using the work session outputs and for what purpose. Those who will use the outputs are the

**Facilitator's
Law of Appropriate
Level of Detail**

The appropriate level of detail is the level at which you must control variability.

facilitator's customers every bit as much as the project sponsor and project manager are. Find out what will happen to the deliverables after the session and how they will be used. Choose a level of detail that is appropriate for the audience and the purpose of the deliverable.

Many deliverables are built in an iterative fashion and may start at a rather high, general level and proceed through iterations to more distinct levels of detail. But when is enough detail enough? When can you stop the iterations and say, "This is the final deliverable"? Keep in mind that you will have a mix of preferences among work session participants. Some respond to the big picture, and others thrive on detail. If you leave the level of detail choice to participants based on their preferences, some will stop sooner than others and consider the deliverable to be complete. Your challenge is to find a way to connect with the participants (those big picture folks as well as the detail folks) while building out the right level of detail required in this situation. Your job is to know what level of detail is appropriate for the task at hand in order to produce a deliverable that is of high quality, comprehensive, and sufficient for use in the next stages of project activity. This brings us to our Facilitator's Law of Appropriate Level of Detail: the appropriate level of detail is the level at which you must control variability.

Think of it this way. Most parents would agree that their children should go to school on school days, and these same parents would most likely agree that part of their kids' morning routine for getting ready for school should include good oral hygiene. So we put the activity "Brush Your Teeth" on our children's morning schedule. But do we really care whether they hold their toothbrush in their right hand or their left hand? Do we care whether they start brushing the upper left teeth or the bottom right teeth first (so long as all the teeth are carefully cleaned)?

At what level of detail do we need to control variability? Control it at the level of detail that is appropriate for the situation at hand: too little detail and we miss the mark; too much detail, and we're wasting time and frustrating everyone in the process.

Tightrope 3: Connecting with Your Audience

This is another application of communication skills. Recognize up front that you won't be able to engage all of the people all of the time. The challenge is to engage people effectively throughout the work session. Let participants know at the beginning of the work session that you are aware that they have different modes of taking in information and making decisions. Ask them to be willing to stick with you through the work session process, knowing that there will be certain activities and certain points of discussion that will be more interesting to them than others. Table 6.1 contains some suggestions for connecting with various types of participant preferences and various personalities who may process information differently.

TABLE 6.1**Participant Information Processing Preferences**

Preference	How to Manage Them
Big picture	Set the context before exploring details.
Detail orientation	Allow documentation of appropriate details to give substance to ideas. Use lots of examples rather than long definitions. However, keep at an appropriate level of detail. Don't dive too low too early, or you will waste the time of the group on details that may not be pertinent to the solution.
Planning the future by looking at the past	Explore what we know from past problems and solutions and apply learnings appropriately to the current situation.
Random idea generation	These folks are natural brainstormers. Capture ideas; then link them to objectives and the topic at hand. Keep an idea list to refer to throughout the work session when related topics arise.
Thinking out loud	Make certain that the group knows the difference between discussion and decision. Always clarify when a decision has been made. Just because someone says it doesn't mean the group decided it.
Pondering internally	Allow folks to have sufficient time to think. However, be certain to pull out thoughts from all participants prior to key decisions.
Objective thinkers	Encourage objective analysis. Look at the facts.
Subjective processors	Allow the group to vent emotions. Get to the substance of values and how they should be applied to the problem at hand. Encourage exploration of how the solution will affect people.
Time orientation	Start on time. Stay on track. Take regular breaks. Summarize regularly what has been accomplished and what is yet to be done.
Spontaneity	Allow changes to the schedule where appropriate. Inject activities that add variety to the work session process (such as small group breakouts).
Highly visual in processing and recalling information	Capture information where it is visible to all participants. Use diagrams, tables, and appropriate business models to capture the essence of the dialogue and decisions. Use "visual words" when questioning and providing feedback, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Can you picture that?" • "How does this look to you?" • "Can you see it?" • "Let's focus on this for a minute."

Preference	How to Manage Them
Highly auditory in processing and recalling information	<p>Allow appropriate discussion and dialogue. Let participants “talk it out.” Hearing the result is more important to these folks than seeing it. Use “auditory words” when questioning and providing feedback, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How does that sound to you?” • “Does that ring a bell?” • “Let’s hear what Connie has to say.” • “Let’s listen for any other viewpoints on the topic.”
Highly kinesthetic in processing and recalling information	<p>These folks respond to “what feels right.” Consider using “feeling-oriented words” when questioning and providing feedback, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s do a gut check for a moment.” • “Does that feel right to you?” • “Tim, help us get our arms around the problem. How would you describe it?” • “Let’s get a handle on the issue.” • “Are you all comfortable with this choice?”
Nonsensory processors	<p>These folks don’t give you clues as to whether they prefer visual, auditory, or kinesthetic processing. The following questions or feedback phrases tend to connect with broader audiences, regardless of their preference for sight, sound, or feeling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Does that make sense?” • “Let’s explore the problem. Carol, can you describe it for us as you understand it?” • “What do you believe the right choice to be?”

In all situations, practice the basic foundations for connecting with your audience:

Speaking

- Speak clearly while facing the participants, and don’t speak into a flip chart or while facing the wall.
- Your manner of speaking should inspire confidence in the participants. Don’t speak too loudly, but keep your voice strong.
- Maintain a reasonable voice tempo, taking special care not to speak too fast.

Listening

- Maintain an alert posture.
- Wait for participants to complete their response before attempting to clarify or integrate with other responses.

- Listen to understand. Don't listen to mechanically write down the response.

Writing and Displaying Materials

- Write legibly if using whiteboards or flip charts.
- Type cleanly and quickly if using an electronic medium. Don't let the use of a computer slow the group.
- Consider appropriate lighting so that everyone can read the visual materials easily.
- Post all visual materials where participants can see them.
- See Chapter Sixteen for more details about displaying information clearly.

Appearance

- Dress appropriately. Business casual or business attire is typically the norm.
- Be well groomed. Sloppy dress or appearance can be distracting to the group.
- Be aware of your own distracting habits (such as playing with jewelry, jingling change in your pocket, twisting your hair), and stop them.

Physical Presence

- Some schools of thought say that the facilitator must be front and center at all times. Don't take this too literally. Changing posture (for example, from standing to sitting) from time to time can keep the group engaged and connected.
- Move around the room when appropriate. For example, standing on the side of the room while a participant is presenting materials to the team takes the focus off you and puts it on the participant, while still allowing you to be in control of the session.

Tightrope 4: Balancing Participation

One of the most certain roads to work session failure is unbalanced participation. There are a number of things that can disrupt work session balance. Here are some of the common disrupters:

- One person or a select few participants who dominate the discussion
- One or more participants who are unresponsive

- People talking over one another and interrupting
- Side conversations
- Tangential conversations or discussion that is off the topic
- Wandering attention
- Silent disagreement or frustration
- Inability to make decisions
- Conversation that goes on too long
- Inability to focus
- Tensions that are running high
- Aggressive or disruptive behavior
- Rehashing previous material or decisions

All of these (and more) are indications of unproductive work session behaviors. Balancing participation can be difficult. As a facilitator, you must be extremely careful not to be dismissive or appear to reject the contribution of any participant. Consider some of the verbal and nonverbal balancing techniques set out in Table 6.2 when managing the participation of the group.

Remember that as the facilitator, you too may reach a point where you are unable to focus. That's okay. Take a break, regroup, and get back into it. Facilitation is hard work; you can't take mental naps. If you sense that your mind is drifting, take a break, and allow yourself to refocus for the sake of all concerned.

Tightrope 5: Staying Neutral

One of the biggest challenges as a facilitator is staying neutral to content while remaining in charge of the work session process. In facilitated work sessions, it is critical that the facilitator be neutral and unbiased. In this sense, facilitators are process consultants to the team, not content consultants. The facilitator is an expert in making the work session process flow smoothly to achieve objectives. He or she is not providing opinions or answers regarding the content of the outputs and is not participating in the decisions of the team. If your content expertise is absolutely necessary in building out the deliverables of the work session, you should be a participant, not a facilitator.

Remaining neutral means that the facilitator must be comfortable allowing others to find the answers. This enables the team to own the decisions they make and the outputs they produce. Does this mean that the facilitator cannot use his or her content expertise within a work session? Not

TABLE 6.2**Verbal and Nonverbal Balancing Techniques**

Balancing Technique	Situations It May Help Address
Direct a question to a specific participant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresponsive Participants • One person dominating the discussion • Side conversations • Wandering attention • Silent disagreement or frustration
"Let's hear a few more ideas or thoughts on this."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unresponsive Participants • One person dominating the discussion • Silent disagreement or frustration
Stand near a Participant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side conversations • Wandering attention
Use direct eye contact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side conversations • Wandering attention
Interrupt, and refocus the discussion on the agenda or work session objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tangential conversations or discussion off the topic • Aggressive or disruptive behavior • Inability to focus • Side conversations • Rehashing previous material or decisions • Silent disagreement or frustration
"One conversation at a time, please."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People talking over one another, interrupting • Side conversations
Summarize the current discussion, and ask for feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to focus • Inability to make decisions • Tensions running high • One person dominating the discussion • Silent disagreement or frustration
Log an action item, parking lot item, or issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation going on too long • Inability to make decisions (decision makers might not be in the room) • Tangential conversations or discussion off the topic • Rehashing previous material or decisions
Ask the original speaker to confirm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misinterpretation of comments • Interrupting

Balancing Technique	Situations It May Help Address
Take a break.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive or disruptive behavior • Inability to focus (on the part of the Participants or the Facilitator) • Tensions running high • Tired or sluggish group
Elevate a participation problem to the Project Manager or Project Sponsor for action to be taken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued aggressive or disruptive behavior by a Participant • Ongoing inability to make decisions; decision makers not in the room, indicating that we don't have the "right Participants"

exactly; it just means that he or she needs to apply it carefully. Here are some tips on how to use business knowledge effectively:

- Use your knowledge base to ask relevant questions, probe for clarity, and challenge the group to be innovative in their thinking.
- Cite examples as ways to promote creative exploration of new ideas.
- Use your expertise to ensure completeness and consistency in the deliverables that are generated.

Here are a few pointers regarding maintaining neutrality:

- Stick to the facilitation process. Your role is to question, listen, observe, give feedback, clarify, integrate, summarize, and document.
- Refrain from allowing your personal preferences or biases to take over.
- When the topic at hand is in your area of expertise, ask questions but do not give answers.
- Remember that we are all smarter than any one of us is.

So is it ever appropriate to switch hats? Can the facilitator step out of the neutral role and contribute expertise directly to the content of the discussion or the deliverable? There are a few instances where it is appropriate for a facilitator to break away from neutrality briefly and contribute to the content. If the facilitator has special relevant expertise, and a high level of trust and respect exists between the group and the facilitator, and the group requests that the facilitator advise on a particular topic, then it is appropriate for the facilitator to step out of the neutral role and lend expertise. Here is how the switch works effectively:

- When the switch is requested, as a facilitator you must:
 - Make it clear to the group that you are stepping away from neutrality into stating your opinion on the topic.

- Stay in this “content contribution” mode for as short a time as possible.
- When ready to regain neutrality, you must:
 - Summarize the ideas that were presented.
 - Ask a question that opens the topic back up to the group. Use words like, “That is what I’ve experienced. Is any of that relevant to our current situation?” and hand the conversation back over to the group.
 - Solicit input and feedback.
 - Gain consensus on the topic, enabling you to step away from ownership and back to neutrality.

Tightrope 6: What to Do When You Don’t Know What to Do

Let’s say that you’re in the middle of a work session and your mind goes blank. *What do I do with that comment? Where are we on the agenda? How do I handle that question? I don’t understand what that participant just said.* You don’t know what to do. Don’t panic. It happens to every facilitator now and then. The key is not to let it throw you.

The worst way to react when your mind takes an unplanned vacation is to fake comprehension or pretend that you know where to go next. The best way to react? Here are a few suggestions:

- Stay calm.
- Be honest with the team; don’t try to hide what’s going on.
- Get the team to help you get back on track. Ask them to help you understand how the topic relates to the objective you were trying to accomplish or if there is anything that needs to be captured out of the conversation. They’ll help you if you ask.
- Take a checkpoint with the team. Find out if they feel that they’re heading in the right direction to accomplish their objective.
- Summarize progress to date, and then move forward.

If those pointers do not help the situation, then take a break. Spend a few minutes gathering your thoughts, perhaps talk with the project manager or project sponsor if they are available, and determine next steps. When you resume with the group, take a checkpoint on progress, present the next steps, and move forward.

A Final Caution

Something to be aware of: people will require some settling-in time if this is the first time they’ve participated in a facilitated work session, so expect

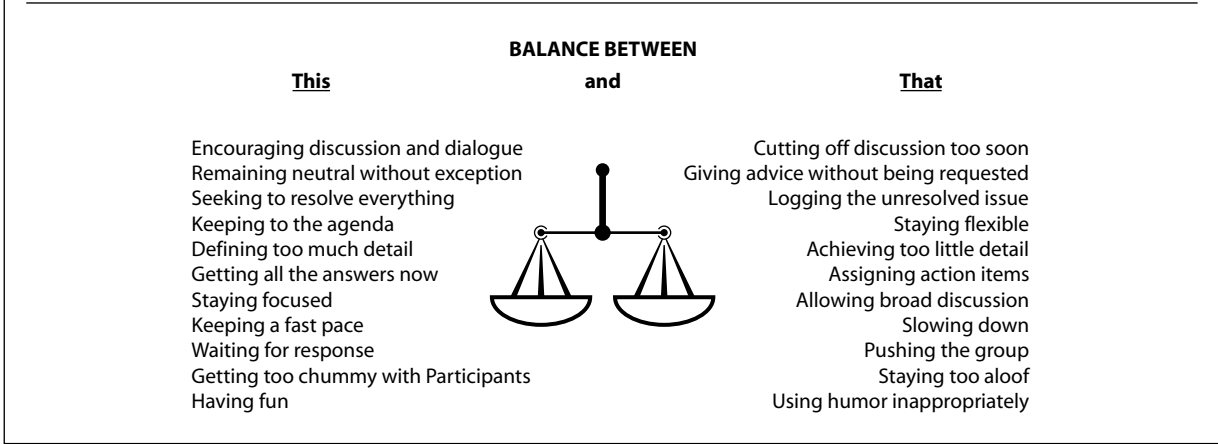
some fluctuations in team behavior, an air of uncertainty, and perhaps unrealistic expectations on the part of the participants regarding the work session process. It takes some time to develop trust in the process and respect for the facilitator. Do not be disturbed by variations in group behavior early in the work session. Don't overreact and alter the work session process. Stay the course. Summarize progress often. As the team sees their success in achieving objectives, they will trust the process and trust you as the facilitator to lead them in achieving their work session objectives.

Summing It Up

- There are four key concepts you need to understand before you begin to guide a team through the steps of building a deliverable:
 - Work sessions are not linear, so be prepared to capture whatever information the group generates regardless of where it may be placed in the final deliverable.
 - Despite the best planning, we may not always be able to achieve the objectives.
 - Expect the unexpected. Whatever the work session situation, when you are facilitating, you must remain like the duck on the surface of the water: calm and poised even though you may be paddling furiously beneath the surface.
 - Don't go into a work session unless you are completely comfortable with the deliverable you are being asked to facilitate.
- Develop the skills necessary to meet the work session challenges you will face as a facilitator:
 - Set the right scope for the work session.
 - Achieve the right level of detail.
 - Connect with your audience.
 - Balance participation.
 - Stay neutral.
 - Manage the situation when you don't know what to do next.
- In all circumstances, remain professional. Do not engage in arguments or defensive or combative behaviors. Do not show favoritism or partiality. You are a stabilizing force within the work session.
- Facilitating is like walking a tightrope: it requires balance, confidence, and lots of practice. Success lies somewhere between the extremes (Figure 6.1).

FIGURE 6.1

The Facilitator’s Balancing Act



Chapter 7

Preparing for the Work Session

Good plans shape good decisions. That's why good planning helps to make elusive dreams come true.

—LESTER R. BITTEL, *THE NINE MASTER KEYS OF MANAGEMENT*

A SUCCESSFUL WORK SESSION is all about planning. You don't just show up assuming that you and the team will be able to figure it out. You need to prepare—prepare the sponsor, the project manager, the participants, the materials, and yourself. You'll need to help the team assess what needs to be done to prepare for a work session, what can reasonably be accomplished in the work session time frame, and who needs to participate. All of this takes planning.

So you've been requested to facilitate a work session. What do you do now? Before you break out in a heart-pounding sweat, there's good news: you're not alone. The work of preparing for a facilitated session will not all fall on your shoulders. It is shared by the project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator.

Work Session Preparation Roles and Responsibilities

In Table 7.1 we've assigned each planning task to the role typically responsible for making it happen. Nothing happens by itself, so we've listed the standard work session planning responsibilities here. However, this does not imply that these things should be done in isolation. Each should be discussed as part of planning between the project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator.

Regardless of the type of work session, there is a repeatable pattern to the planning process. We've put together this guide based on our experiences with hundreds of work sessions to help you plan effectively.

TABLE 7.1

Work Session Planning Responsibilities by Role

Project Sponsor	Project Manager	Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the desired work session objectives. • Define the decision-making approach. • Assist in identifying who's needed (the right Participants). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm work session objectives with Project Sponsor and Facilitator. • Determine who's needed. • Determine session location, dates, and duration. • Schedule rooms and phone lines. • Arrange catering. • Arrange security access. • Get the appropriate equipment and supplies. • Notify Participants and obtain confirmation of participation. • Make copies of existing documentation for the session, and help prepare any new materials that may be needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand work session objectives and expected deliverables. • Develop the agenda, and confirm with the Project Sponsor and Project Manager. • Work with the Project Manager to get the appropriate equipment and supplies. • Contact key Participants, and prepare them for productive participation. • Hold a prep conference call. • Create working documents for the session. • Create flip charts for the session. • Familiarize yourself with background materials. • Understand the potential group dynamics.

Note: The items in boldface type are detailed in the chapter.

Plan the Work Session

The first step in planning is to schedule at least two meetings or conference calls between the facilitator, project manager, and project sponsor. The first meeting should be used to bring the facilitator up to speed on the project history and goals and the objectives of the work session. The planning team needs to define the desired work session outcomes, establish the desired dates and duration of the session, and ensure that each person knows what he or she is responsible to do in preparation for the second planning meeting.

The second planning meeting should be used to finalize the work session agenda, confirm the number of attendees, validate all necessary logistical arrangements, and discuss materials that need to be created or gathered to distribute to the team as preparatory reading, or copied for the work session.

For a list of questions that can be used to guide these planning discussions, see the Planning Questions Guide included on the CD.



Define the Desired Work Session Objectives and Outcomes

Through discussion with the planning team, determine what they want to achieve—both tangible and intangible outcomes—by having a work session. To help discover the objectives, have the planning team complete the following sentences:

“When I walk out of the session, I’ll be happy if we’ve . . .”

“When I walk out of the session, I’ll be disappointed if we haven’t . . .”

Use their comments to craft the work session objectives. Make sure the objectives relate to their expectations of the work session only, not to the project as a whole.

If one of the outcomes is to complete a project deliverable, such as a project charter, a risk assessment, or a business requirements document, get a copy of the standard template that’s used, if there is one. Otherwise use the templates provided on the CD as a starting point for discussing the ultimate content and format of the deliverables to be produced from the work session. As part of this discussion, confirm whether the final output should be sent to the project manager or project sponsor, or both.



Define the Decision-Making Approach

An often overlooked but very important part of planning is determining the decision-making scope of the team. Teams are frequently asked to solve problems, only to find out later that their solutions were really regarded as suggestions or recommendations. Clarify this from the start so you’ll know whether to drive the team to decision or to analysis of alternatives.

Discuss the process the team will use to make decisions during the work session: ranking, voting, multivoting, consensus, or something else. If any form of ranking or voting is used, develop the criteria to guide those decisions. For example, if you use a ranking system of high, medium, and low, clearly define what each of those rankings means. If you’re voting, discuss the guidelines the team should keep in mind (such as low cost or no impact to customers) when casting their vote.

And finally, discuss what to do if the team cannot reach a decision. Usually this will occur only if you don’t have the necessary information or someone in the room doesn’t have the necessary authority to approve the decision for their organization. In these cases, either get the information or necessary approval by contacting people during the work session or assign a follow-up action item to get it. If the decision is critical to other work being

done in the work session and you cannot get a decision, make a working assumption and continue forward based on that assumption.

Determine Who Is Needed

Based on the type of project you're implementing and the intended purpose of the work session, identify the key participants who need to be involved. We recommend that you limit the number of participants to twelve to fifteen if at all possible. Larger groups can often slow the overall progress of the work session, putting completion of all the session objectives in jeopardy. Limit the group to participants who not only represent their areas well but can also serve as decision makers. Remember that you must have the right participants to have a successful work session. Ask yourself, "Does this person add value to the work session? Is this person necessary to accomplish the work session objectives?" Don't proceed without the right set of participants. You won't be successful.

Keep in mind that the use of observers in the work session can be very effective. (Refer to Chapter Three to understand the roles of participants and observers.) Careful selection of participants and observers can help to keep the work session group dynamics manageable, while still having an appropriate broad audience in attendance to understand work session decisions and outcomes.

For each person you invite, document his or her contact information (including role and area of expertise) on the Participant Contact List (see the CD for a sample). This list should be shared with the facilitator early in the planning cycle, so that he or she can work with the project manager to prepare the participants effectively.



In order to have a successful project, all stakeholders need to be in the loop both early and often. Otherwise you may be doing things right all the while you are doing the wrong things.

**William M. Ulrich, president,
Tactical Strategy Group**

Determine Session Location, Dates, and Duration

First, remember that work sessions are highly visual and use modeling techniques, flip charts, and diagramming activities, so it is strongly recommended that all participants meet face to face. Some specific preparatory and follow-up work session activities can be done by conference call, but in general face-to-face participation is recommended for all key participants. To ease travel costs, identify the city where the largest contingent of participants are located, and determine if it makes sense to hold the facilitated session there.

Now you're ready to think about the dates of the work session. Bottom line, you want to hold the session on the dates that the majority of those asked to participate can be in attendance at the selected location. People are busy, and you're asking them to take time away from the office, so a good rule of thumb is to target the work session for at least three weeks after



Do We Have to Be Face-to-Face?

In this technologically advanced age, we have collaborative tools that make virtual meetings easier and more productive than ever before. And for some types of work sessions, such as risk assessment or work in progress, a remote approach to a work session is possible. But for work sessions that require model building and other visual techniques

(such as establishing project scope or building requirements), face-to-face meetings work best. In addition, meeting in person can bring other benefits, for example, improved responsiveness since it's no longer an anonymous voice on the other end of the phone, and focused attention, since it's hard to multitask while someone's looking you in the eye.

initial planning begins. This allows time to get on everyone's calendar, find out who has constraints, and determine if the work session dates need to be changed. If at all possible, avoid scheduling work sessions on Mondays or Fridays so those traveling from elsewhere don't have to be away from home on the weekends.

If you're having a team prep conference call, schedule it for at least one week prior to the work session. We highly recommend having one. It allows the team to reach a common understanding of the project goals, issues, background, and progress prior to the work session. It also ensures that all information, decisions, and reference materials necessary for a productive work session are identified in advance.

Develop the Agenda

We've included suggested agendas for each of the work session types discussed in this book. However, even the best agendas require alterations to meet the specific needs of the project. So confirm the details of the agenda with the project manager and sponsor prior to the session to ensure you're all in sync.

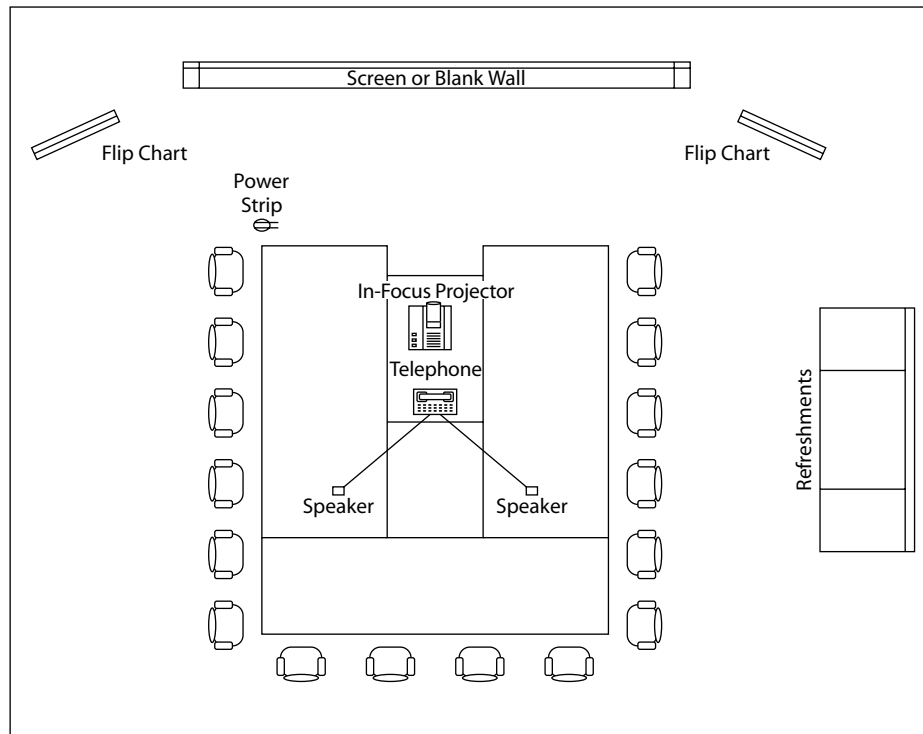
Arrange the Logistics

Now you're ready to get down to the nitty details necessary to make sure the work session runs smoothly.

Schedule Rooms and Phone Lines

For a comfortable working environment, schedule a room that:

- Easily accommodates at least five more people than you've invited. You want everyone to have plenty of table space.
- Has plenty of wall space for flip chart pages to be posted.
- Has a projector screen or a solid blank wall to be used for projection.
- Allows for the desired U-shape room setup (shown in Figure 7.1).

FIGURE 7.1**Recommended Room Setup**

If no satisfactory room is available in your company, you may want to consider an off-site location like a hotel. In fact, you may want to use a hotel even if an internal site is available. There are pros and cons to each (see Table 7.2). Whichever you choose, make sure the necessary room requirements are met.

Schedule the phone number for the prep conference call and work session. If any key participants are joining the work session by phone, you may want to consider using a virtual meeting tool (like NetMeeting, PictureTalk, or PlaceWare) to allow them to view the information being captured in the room. Like everything else, this will require scheduling, so make the necessary arrangements now.

Arrange Catering

For each full session day, we recommend a continental breakfast, morning snack, buffet or box lunch, and an afternoon snack for all participants. If room space allows, have the food set up at the back or side of the room as shown in Figure 7.1. If space is tight, either schedule a second room to hold the food or have the food set up in the hallway outside the room.

TABLE 7.2**Off-Site or On-Site for a Work Session? Pros and Cons**

	Pros	Cons
On-site in company meeting room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost • Easy access to resources (printers, copiers, people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are easily sucked back into regular work • Hard to find rooms that meet the desired room requirements
Off-site at a hotel or away from the office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooms are usually available to meet the necessary requirements • No access to the day-to-day workplace so attendees can focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be expensive • Access to resources (printers, copiers, people) can be limited

Arrange Security Access

Some buildings require special security access. Make sure that all participants have access to the building and rooms.

Get the Appropriate Equipment and Supplies

Table 7.3 lists the equipment and supplies necessary for a work session. Some of the equipment may need to be reserved in advance to ensure availability. A checklist version of this table is available on the CD.

**Prepare the Team**

Timely and relevant communication with attendees ensures that they come prepared. Let them know what to expect as soon as possible, contact key attendees individually to elicit insight into the objectives, and plan a prep conference call to lay the foundation for the work session.

Notify Participants

As soon as the work session dates and city are known, send out a “save the date” notice (see the CD for a sample) to everyone invited to the work session. We understand that the list of planned attendees may change, but it’s important to get the dates on each person’s calendar as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for making hotel and travel arrangements if needed. If observers will be in the work session, notify them as well, and include a description of the role that they will play in the work session.

After sending initial notification of the work session, follow up with an e-mail or telephone call to confirm attendance. This will ensure that all the necessary players will be there and let you get the necessary head count for room setup and catering.



TABLE 7.3

Equipment and Supplies Checklist

#	Item	Specifics/Use	Responsible Party	Item Reserved	Item Obtained
REQUIRED: These items are required for every work session.					
1	Multicolored sticky notes	4 x 6 inch and 3 x 5 inch. Used to capture individual Participant ideas, process mapping steps, and other info.	Facilitator		
2	Masking tape	Used to attach flip chart paper to walls, if necessary.	Facilitator		
3	Multicolored round dots (stickers)	Used to vote or in prioritization exercises.	Facilitator		
4	Multicolored flip chart markers	Used to write on flip charts, name tents, and sticky notes.	Facilitator		
5	Laptop computer	Used for electronic capture and projection of information during the work session.	Facilitator		
6	In-focus machine or PC projector	Used to display documentation to work session Participants.	Project Manager		
7	Projector screen	Room needs to have a screen or a blank wall on which to project.	Project Manager		
8	Power strip	Four three-pronged electric outlets at a minimum.	Project Manager		
9	Extension cord	Heavy duty; 25 feet long, three prong.	Project Manager		
10	Flip chart pads and stands	Two flip chart stands, four pads of flip chart paper.	Project Manager		
11	Name tents	For Participants, Observers, and Facilitator.	Project Manager		
12	Speaker phone with two satellite speakers	Even if no one is dialing into the work session, you need the ability to dial out to subject matter experts.	Project Manager		
13	Work session room	Schedule a work session room large enough to comfortably accommodate the work session Participants. Seating layout is best as a U-shape table with screen and two flip charts in front of the room. A small table at the front of the U-shape will be used by the Facilitator for computer and projector. The room must have plenty of wall space to use for posting flip charts.	Project Manager		

#	Item	Specifics/Use	Responsible Party	Item Reserved	Item Obtained
OPTIONAL: These items may be helpful but are not required in all situations.					
14	Portable printer and paper	Useful if you need to print during the work session. If a portable printer is not available, see if there is a printer that you can use during breaks.	Facilitator		
15	Stapler and staples	Useful if several versions of multiple-page documents will be printed throughout the work session. Prevents Participants from mixing pages of different versions together.	Project Manager		
16	Three-hole punch	Useful if Participants are compiling documentation in a notebook.	Project Manager		
17	High-speed Internet connections	If access to the client's system or the Internet is needed to support the work session. The number of lines depends on the type of work session.	Project Manager		
18	Microphones	Hand-held and lapel microphones recommended if more than thirty Participants are expected.	Project Manager		
19	Breakout rooms	Have two to three small breakout rooms available if work session planning has indicated that the use of breakout groups is likely in this session.	Project Manager		

Once the agenda has been agreed to and the site for the work session determined, send out a formal invitation to the participants outlining the purpose, location, dates, times, conference call number, and other important information. Attach the agenda and any required prep materials (such as relevant project documentation and process maps) with the invitation. If you're having a prep conference call, you'll need to perform this step twice: once for the call and again for the work session.

Contact Key Participants

The facilitator may want to contact each key player individually to review the work session objectives and his or her role as a participant, and field any preliminary questions about the work session. This is especially effective with dysfunctional groups or ones that have strong leader personalities. This call breaks the ice and gets buy-in from these people prior to the work session. Forward any issues or concerns from these introductory conversations back to the project manager or project sponsor as appropriate.

Hold a Full Team Prep Conference Call

To prepare participants for the work session, hold a preparatory conference call with all planned attendees no less than one week prior to the session. This call is designed to bring the participants up-to-date on project progress and decisions and to identify any preliminary work necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session.

As the facilitator, it's your role to capture relevant information from the conference call and consolidate it, as appropriate, into the work session deliverables. Each work session has its own specialized agenda for these calls, so refer to the specific work session type to see what's involved. Immediately following the call, distribute the list of follow-up action items to the team so they can start working on their assigned tasks.



Conference Call Tips

- As people join the call, tell them you're giving everyone a few minutes to dial in and you'll do introductions at that time. Otherwise, they will introduce themselves as they join and you'll have to do it again or latecomers won't know who's on the line.
- Ask people to say their name ("Hi, this is Terry") prior to speaking since most people won't be familiar with the voice.
- Ask everyone to mute their phone if they're typing or in a noisy location.
- Ask that attendees announce their departure from the call if they have to leave early.

Prepare the Materials

Preparing for the work session includes preparation of the flip charts, reference materials, and documents used to guide the team and capture the work session output. These are central ingredients in work session success and deserve a brief explanation.

Create Working Documents for the Session

We're assuming that you'll be doing electronic capture of input from the work session, so review the Work Session Deliverable Template to determine which tables to pull out of the document into separate files. For example, you may want to copy the requirements table from the business requirements document into a separate file to make scrolling easier. Make it as easy and quick as possible to capture group input and navigate the document during the work session.

Determine if you need any nonstandard materials or templates for the work session. If so, work with the project manager to obtain or create a draft of the proposed materials and templates, and review them with the project sponsor prior to the work session. If these materials would be helpful in preparing the team for the session, send them out one week prior to the session to allow them time to read and internalize the materials.

Make Copies of Documentation for the Session

Identify which documents and templates need to be provided in hard copy to session participants. Limit these to documents that will be used during the session or that provide useful input to discussion. If there are telephone participants, send the session materials to them so they can follow along easily.

Create Flip Charts for the Session

If possible, create flip charts the night before the work session. You'll want to have the work session objectives, agenda, and ground rules written up for display. For most work sessions, we also suggest that you post blank flip chart pages on the wall with the following headings:

- Action Items
- Assumptions
- Constraints
- Risks
- Dependencies/Touch Points

For more information about the art of using flip charts, see Chapter Sixteen.

Prepare Yourself

The work session is planned, the logistics arranged, the materials in place, and the team is on board. The only thing left is you. In the role of facilitator, you will guide the team through the process in order to reach the work session objectives. So take some time to get comfortable with the background materials, and think about the potential group dynamics you may face.

Familiarize Yourself with Background Materials

Facilitators must familiarize themselves with the background documentation. Review it thoroughly, and highlight portions that you have questions about for use in the session. It's not important that you understand everything, but you must have a knowledgeable grasp of the project and what it entails.

Understand the Potential Group Dynamics

Find out if there are any topics that may be likely to cause dissension or threaten to derail the group. Work with the project manager and sponsor to determine how best to handle these topics should they arise. Also discuss whether there are any other interpersonal dynamics among the participants that might influence work session effectiveness, and determine the approach for handling.

Understand which attendees will be participants and which will be observers. Observers will participate less, if at all, and are primarily present to listen and absorb the discussion points and understand the direction and outcomes.

Keys to Success

- DON'T overpromise. Be realistic in setting expectations with the project sponsor and project manager regarding how much can be accomplished in a specific time frame. You want input from the team—that's why you're having a facilitated work session—and input takes time. So plan accordingly, and don't overpromise.
- DON'T allow the project manager or any other project team member to be the facilitator if he or she cannot move into a neutral role as a facilitator. If the project manager or project team member needs to contribute to the content of the deliverable, then that person needs to be a participant. Bring in a neutral third-party to be the facilitator.

- DO work closely with the project sponsor and project manager to understand work session objectives, required outputs, background materials, participants, and the potential group dynamics.
- DO make sure the people you need at the work session are available and committed. No work session can be successful without the right participants.
- DO plan work session logistics carefully. The environment in which the work session will be held has significant impact on work session success. Make sure you have an appropriate setting to accomplish the work session objectives.
- DO take time to get your mind right. As the facilitator, prepare carefully and well, yet expect the unexpected. Have one or more options in mind for group activities in case a course correction is required during the work session.

Chapter 8

Conducting the Work Session

Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain.

—FRANK L. BAUM, *THE WIZARD OF OZ*

IT'S THE DAY BEFORE the work session. You've worked with the project manager and sponsor to plan for this moment. You've held a conference call to get the team prepared. The logistics are arranged. The supplies are gathered. And the people are on their way. But before you walk into the room, let's talk about who's responsible for doing what.

As we said when preparing for the work session, you're not alone. But at times it may *feel* that way. As the facilitator, you are the one who is front and center. You must set the pace and keep the team moving to accomplish its objectives. You are the lead dog while conducting the work session. But just as you found in the preparation work, success in the actual work session itself depends not just on the facilitator, but also on the project sponsor, project manager, and the participating team.

Work Session Delivery Roles and Responsibilities

During work session delivery, the facilitator is the primary leader, vested with the responsibility of guiding the group through a series of activities to achieve the objectives of the work session. But the facilitator will rely on the project sponsor and project manager to remain engaged throughout the work session to ensure that the team is participating effectively. Table 8.1 provides an overview of the tasks each role is typically responsible for during work session delivery.

In addition to the roles of project sponsor, project manager, and facilitator, there are other roles critical to work session success: participants, the

TABLE 8.1
Work Session Delivery Responsibilities, by Role

Project Sponsor	Project Manager	Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick off the work session, and set the context for the work to be accomplished. • Assist the Project Manager in bringing the team up-to-date on the status of the project. • Participate in the work session. • Encourage team decision making, and hold the team accountable for results. • Assist the Project Manager in managing the boundaries of the project. • Assist the Facilitator in dealing with derailing behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the Facilitator in getting prepared. • Bring the team up-to-date on the status of the project. • Participate in the work session. • Manage the project boundaries. • Be prepared to discuss the next steps in the project now that the work session is complete. • Assist the Facilitator in dealing with derailing behavior. 	<p>Get prepared by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirming the work session materials are ready. • Confirming room setup. • Checking the equipment. • Creating flip charts. • Confirming the agenda. • Meeting the participants. • Taking a moment to breathe. <p>Manage the process by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the work session activities to achieve the defined objectives. • Holding people accountable to the ground rules. • Managing the time. • Highlighting the progress at regular intervals. • Managing phone participation. • Assisting the Project Manager in managing the boundaries of the project. • Taking breaks regularly. <p>Manage the people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observing. • Staying on the task. • Reinforcing positive contributions. • Dealing with derailing behavior. <p>Manage yourself.</p>

Note: The items in boldface type are detailed in this chapter.

work session analyst, and any observers who may be attending. (See Chapter Three for details regarding these roles.)

Regardless of the type of work session, there are repeatable elements in conducting it. We’ve isolated these elements to help you successfully navigate through the work session maze to ultimately achieve the desired objective.

Get Prepared

As you approach the first day of the work session, final preparation becomes the first step in good delivery:

- *Confirm that the work session materials are ready.* Twenty-four to forty-eight hours prior to the session, confirm that any documents needed (for example, action item list, foundational presentations, draft documentation to be reviewed) have been copied and are either at the site or will be there at least a half-hour before the start of the work session. If there's any hitch in the process, it's better to find out early so you can run to the printer if necessary.

- *Get to the work session room early.* You should be in the room at least an hour before the session is scheduled to begin. Why? Remember the old adage, "What can go wrong, will go wrong"? Well, it does. And when it does, it's nice to have the time to deal with it. So arrive early so you can get adequately set up and mentally prepared.

- *Confirm room setup.* Prior to the work session, make sure that the room is set up in your desired configuration (see Figure 7.1 for our typical setup). If possible, check out the room the day (or night) before the work session. This will help you sleep more soundly. But if that's not possible, allow extra time to address anything that might be out of order.

- *Check the equipment.* Make sure that all the equipment is in place and functional. Set up your laptop and test it with the projector. Make sure you know how to work the lights. If you are using microphones, find out how to work them and who to call if they suddenly stop working. If you're having phone attendees, test the phone system to make sure it works adequately. If you're using an Internet connection for virtual screen sharing (using NetMeeting, PictureTalk, or PlaceWare, for example), make sure the connectivity in the room is working properly.

- *Create flip charts.* If you weren't able to do this before the work session, you'll need to write the work session objectives, agenda, and ground rules onto flip charts to display in the room. For most work sessions, we also suggest that you have blank flip chart pages posted on the wall with the following headings:

Action Items

Assumptions

Constraints

Risks

Dependencies/Touch Points

For more information about the art of preparing flip charts, see Chapter Sixteen.



Remembering Names

A handy way to get oriented quickly to the names of people in a work session is to sketch a representation of the work session seating on a piece of paper in front of you. As you introduce yourself and get people's names, write their name

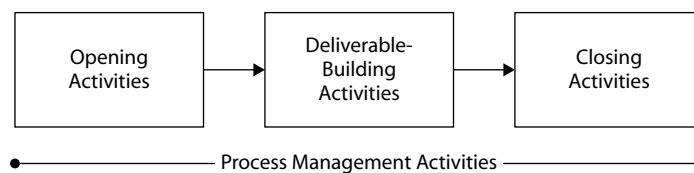
on your seating chart. You'll find yourself referring to the chart frequently throughout the first few hours. After that, you'll be comfortable with most of the names in the room.

- *Confirm the agenda.* You've already discussed the details of the agenda with the project manager and project sponsor as part of your planning activities, but do a final validation prior to the start of the session to ensure there have been no last-minute changes and that you're all still in sync.
- *Greet the participants.* People will start to arrive for the work session anywhere from ten to thirty minutes before the session start time. As they get settled in, take the opportunity to introduce yourself and get their name and role. This will help you start putting names with faces.
- *Take a moment to breathe.* Allow yourself a few minutes to step out of the room and get mentally prepared. Get a cup of coffee or tea. Step outside for some fresh air. Sit down and take a deep breath. Give yourself a moment to relax before you begin the work session.

Manage the Process

Every work session, regardless of type, has the same general structure: opening activities, deliverable-building activities, and closing activities supported throughout by process management activities (see Figure 8.1). Section Four contains suggested agendas for each of the work sessions discussed in this book. However, even the best agenda will require alterations to meet the specific needs of the project. Understanding what you need to focus on in each of these segments will help you be a more effective facilitator.

FIGURE 8.1
Work Session Structure



Opening Activities

Opening activities are the functions that need to occur at the beginning of the work session to form the team and synchronize their knowledge and expectations. Typically the opening segment of the work session includes the following activities:

- *Kick off the work session.* The sponsor or project manager should open the meeting by welcoming the team and thanking them for their participation. This sets the context for the work to be accomplished. Encourage the team to make necessary decisions to allow them to achieve the stated objectives.

- *Facilitate team member introductions.* Go around the room (including anyone joining by conference call) and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and what stake he or she has in the project (for example, ask, “Why are you coming to the table? What impact will this project have on your area?”).

- *Determine if there are meeting conflicts.* Even with the best planning, there will be meeting conflicts that require participants to step out of the work session for a period of time or flight schedules that require them to leave earlier than planned. Find out if any of the team members have these types of conflicts, and make note of each and when they must leave. Understanding who must be absent from the session at what times will allow you to plan breaks and schedule topics as appropriately as possible.

- *Describe the work session roles.* As facilitator, your role will be to guide the process. The role of participant is to provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. If you have observers, describe how the team should interact with them. (For more information about work session roles, see Chapter Three.)

- *Confirm the work session objectives.* Get the team’s agreement to the objectives before starting to work on the deliverable-building activities. Allow discussion as needed to ensure that hidden agendas get a chance to surface. It’s important that everyone concurs with what the work session is intended to achieve and that expectations of the resulting deliverable are clear.

- *Review the agenda.* The agenda is your road map to achieving the objectives. Walk through the activities planned during the work session, briefly explaining what’s involved and how each contributes to the final objective. Ask if any adjustments need to be made, and if so, alter the agenda after validating that the change will aid in achieving the objective. This discussion will help the team buy in to the process and realize that their areas of concern will be addressed at some point during the process. Post the agenda on the wall in clear view of the team, and leave it there throughout the session.



- *Review the ground rules.* Ground rules are the guidelines to help a group work well together. Once the team agrees to the guidelines for group behavior, the facilitator can use them to manage discussion and restore order when chaos ensues. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules.

- *Discuss logistics.* Let everyone know where the restrooms, vending machines, and smoking areas are. Share any parking, security, or other venue-related information that is relevant to their building access or ongoing participation.

- *Bring the team up-to-date on the status of the project.* The project sponsor, project manager, or designated subject matter experts will need to present appropriate background materials that will bring the team current on the project vision, objectives, progress, and decisions. This allows the team to start from a shared understanding of where the project is at this point in time.

Deliverable-Building Activities

Deliverable-building activities are those you lead the team through to create sections of the deliverable. These activities differ for each type of work session and are discussed in detail in Section Four of this book. These activities include:

- *Explain the activity.* Describe in detail what the team will be doing and how it relates to the work session objectives. Review any documents or tables being used during the activity to clarify the content desired in each section. Discuss any predefined rating or ranking definitions to ensure that they are clear and reflect the views of the team.

- *Elicit and clarify responses.* Use questioning, open-ended or fill-in-the-blank statements, rephrasing, and other forms of facilitated dialogue to gather the information you need to build that section of the deliverable. Overcome the “just because they said it, it must be so” mind-set. If something doesn’t make sense to you, odds are it doesn’t make sense to others in the room. Ask for clarification.

- *Keep the dialogue moving.* Use questioning and active listening, integrating what you are hearing with what has been previously discussed and decided, feeding it back to the team, and listening again. This cycle continues throughout the work session. A facilitator must listen to understand, not listen to take notes.

- *Document the results.* Throughout the dialogue of the work session, you’ll be gleaning information that applies to multiple sections of the deliverable. Although there are times when you may be taking some basic notes

regarding what is being discussed, as a facilitator, you will not be writing down every word that comes out of the participants' mouths. Instead, you will be seeking to capture decisions, statements, and other relevant information that the team agrees to. Remember, work sessions are not linear, so be prepared to capture the information provided by the team regardless of where it will ultimately be used in the deliverable. If acronyms or specific business terms are mentioned, find out what they mean and capture them on a glossary list. If further information is needed to understand or validate a concept, create an action item. If a risk or requirement pops out of the discussion, capture it either electronically or on a flip chart. The key here is to capture all relevant information in a visible manner (so the team can see it, agree to it, and reference it as needed) and a logical manner (so it can be found and incorporated into the deliverable where appropriate).

Closing Activities

Closing activities are the tasks that must be performed at the end of the day or at the end of the work session to wrap up the results and prepare the team for what happens next. Don't make the mistake of thinking these are irrelevant clean-up chores. These tasks are critical to maintaining the momentum of the team.

At the End of the Day

- *Summarize the day's activities.* Review where you are in the agenda, and highlight the accomplishments and learnings from the day.
- *Remind the team of any overnight assignments.* Determine when the results of those assignments will be presented back to the group.
- *Discuss what will happen the next day.* Take a quick walk through the agenda for the next day to remind the team of what remains to be accomplished.

At the End of the Work Session

- *Summarize the work session accomplishments.* Review where you are in light of the objectives, and highlight accomplishments. Discover the learnings gained from the work session. One way to do this is by asking each member of the team to tell you one thing he or she learned about the project, the process, other team members, or himself or herself over the past few days.
- *Review issues and action items.* Review each action item or outstanding issue captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. Discuss the process for getting completed action items

and issue resolution to the project manager. (See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on issues and action items.)

- *Discuss the next steps in the project now that the work session is complete.* This is where the work session is officially turned back over to the project manager, who will then direct the continuing project process. Take this opportunity to identify the follow-up subteams and leaders needed. Set a date and time for follow-up project team meetings, and handle any other project questions the team might have at this point.

Process Management Activities

Process management activities are the elements that the facilitator must manage throughout the work session. They keep the team functioning smoothly:

- *Hold people accountable to the ground rules.* You presented them for a reason, so when appropriate, remind the team of a specific rule by referring to the posted list of ground rules they agreed to. Ask the team to help you manage the process by encouraging their teammates to abide by the rules.

- *Manage the time.* Use the agenda to drive the time spent on activities. To manage the time spent in discussion around topics, use techniques such as time-boxing or breakout groups. Always keep one eye on the clock and the other on the objectives. If it appears that more time is required on an item than was originally allocated, discuss altering the agenda with the project manager or sponsor (or both), and then present the proposed changes to the team for approval.

- *Highlight progress at regular intervals* and always at the end of the day. Check off completed agenda items as you progress. This helps the group see that they are moving forward toward their goal. Always review the agenda at the start of each day's session and after a major break (such as lunch) to reset the team's frame of mind and remind them where they were in the work session process.



Time-Boxing

Time-boxing is a technique for allowing a certain amount of time to accomplish an activity. This can be a planned part of the work session activities, or it can be used when a discussion has gone on for an extended period of time. For example, if the group has been discussing a topic at length and can't seem to reach closure, ask them

if this is a decision that the people in this room have the authority to make. If the answer is yes, give them a specified number of minutes for discussion. When the allotted time is up, ask for the decision, document it, and continue forward. If no decision was reached, assign an action item for follow-up, and move on.

- *Manage phone participation.* It's hard to be at the end of a phone line for hours. And as much as these work sessions are intended to be face-to-face, there will be some participants who cannot attend except by phone. Check in with them frequently to see if they have any questions or concerns. To keep them as connected with the progress as possible, make sure they can view the displayed information virtually (using NetMeeting, PictureTalk, PlaceWare, or other software) or e-mail them the updated files at regular intervals.
- *Manage the project boundaries.* Scope creep is a subtle enemy, so listen for comments, assumptions, and requirements that are going beyond the bounds of the established project scope. Look to the project manager or sponsor for assistance in handling any discussion of project scope suggestions and resulting impacts.
- *Take breaks regularly.* We recommend a fifteen-minute break in the morning and two ten-minute breaks in the afternoon. As a rule of thumb, try not to go longer than an hour-and-a-half without a break.

Manage the People

In writing this book, we've made the assumption that you're already familiar with basic team dynamics and meeting management. So we won't talk about the ABCs of facilitating groups, but do want to highlight a few items that are essential to the success of a work session. (For further details on communicating effectively while facilitating and balancing the participation of the group, see Chapter Six.)

- *Observe, observe, observe.* A client once commented, "You're like my mother. She had eyes in the back of her head too." Observation is a powerful tool that allows you to gauge the communication, participation, and true understanding taking place. In the midst of every other task you perform, stay alert to what's happening in the interactions among people. This includes monitoring body language to determine if you need to stop for a break or for the day. If participants are deadlocked, sluggish, difficult to control, or have reached burnout, attempting to move forward will provide no additional value.
- *Stay on task.* There are a few phrases that bring fear to the heart of a facilitator, and one of those is, "I'm not sure this is the right time to discuss this but . . ." For some people, work sessions provide a rare opportunity to get their thoughts heard. Most of the time, those thoughts are valuable and on topic, but occasionally they miss the mark and threaten to take the team in an entirely different direction. In these situations, remind that team of the

task they were working to complete. Ask if you can hold that item aside in the parking lot until the task at hand is completed, and move forward. This minimizes the team's ability to stray from topic or task, yet allows flexibility to change direction to address the new item afterward as needed.

- *Reinforce positive contributions.* This sounds so simple and yet requires a delicate balance. You want to encourage value-added input from the team without seeming to repeatedly praise the same participants and without focusing only on higher-ranking decision makers.

- *Involve everyone.* Some people process information internally, and some think out loud. This can easily lead to an out-of-balance situation where you hear only from the more vocal, outspoken members of the team. Balance the participation of the group by calling on the less vocal participants from time to time to request that they share what they are thinking.

- *Deal with derailing behavior.* If participants are not contributing in an effective manner or are preventing others from participating fully, speak with them individually. If the difficulty continues, speak with the project manager or sponsor, and ask them to deal with it outside the work session.

Manage Yourself

You can get so focused on managing the process and the people that it's easy to forget the final element necessary for success: yourself. As an experienced facilitator, you're already familiar with the skills necessary to lead a team comfortably, but we wanted to remind you of a few that we find important to facilitating work sessions:

- *Maintain focused body language.* Demonstrate through your body posture, stance, and facial expression that you're interested and engaged.

- *Be confident in your abilities.* Never let them see you sweat. You're the duck on the pond, gliding smoothly through the water, even though you might be paddling like crazy just beneath the water's surface.

- *Do not fake comprehension.* Instead, question the speaker to gain clarity on the point he or she is trying to make. Never pretend to understand when you do not. It will impede your ability to lead the team.

- *Be aware of your filters and biases, and don't let them interfere with your role.* We all have individual preferences: some people visualize graphics better than text, some like the big picture, and others understand better if they can get into the details. Facilitators must understand their own preferences and be able to set those personal filters and biases aside and approach their work in ways that appeal to multiple preferences in order to work effectively with the team.

- *Remain neutral to content.* Feel free to share insights from your experience if asked, but you are not there to give the answers. As a facilitator, you must be comfortable in assisting the team to find their own answers rather than giving the answer yourself.
- *Guide, don't order.*
- *Question, don't dictate.*
- *Listen actively, speak clearly, and document legibly.*

Common Work Session Derailers

From our own experience and that of our clients and colleagues, we offer a few common derailers of facilitated work sessions. Look for the potential presence of these derailers, and do your best to address them before they nail you.

Derailer 1: Lack of Preparation

The old saying holds true here: if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Do not ignore work session preparation. Lack of preparation is the most common reason for failure in work session delivery. (See Chapter Seven for suggestions regarding effective planning for facilitated work sessions.)

Derailer 2: Not Having the Right Participants

Do not move forward with the facilitated work session unless you have the right experts committed and prepared to participate. Even the best chef can't produce an award-winning meal without the right ingredients.

Derailer 3: Disruptive Work Session Behaviors

This derailer covers a broad territory. It boils down to the need for healthy and balanced participation within the work session setting. The environment must be one that encourages people to participate, with hierarchy or position being checked at the door. We must provide an equal opportunity work session. All ideas are heard. No one dominates, and no one retreats. People are respected, and ideas are critiqued.

Derailer 4: Poor Follow-Up

Nothing discourages a team quite so much as seeing nothing happen after the work session is over. The facilitator must remain engaged to make the transition of work session deliverables to the project manager, and encourage appropriate distribution and sharing of work session results to stakeholders and those who will use the outputs in next project phases.

Keys to Success

- DON'T allow participants to multitask during the work sessions. Keep everyone focused on the work session objectives. Using pagers, responding to phone calls, and other regular business must wait until breaks.
- DON'T overreact too early in the work session to a team that does not appear to be gelling or does not seem to be accomplishing tasks quickly. Many facilitators become anxious when their first deliverable-building activity takes an hour longer than planned, so they start to shift activities around. Relax. It takes some time for a group to settle in, find their pace, and begin to work well together. If you feel that your preparation was done well, stay the course. Usually the team will pick up the pace once they've worked out the initial kinks. However, if the team is still not working well together after a reasonable amount of time, talk to the project sponsor and project manager on a break, formulate your best judgments regarding the cause of the problem, and be willing to alter the work session approach or activities to achieve the objectives.
- DO remember that although agendas are linear, work sessions are not. Be prepared to capture information that will populate various sections of the final deliverable at any point during the work session.
- DO have the names and telephone numbers of the people who can provide technical assistance for room setup issues. It's better to have them and not need them than to need them and not have them.
- DO keep managing the expectations of the project sponsor, project manager, and team throughout the work session. Check in with them at regular intervals to address any concerns they may have and confirm their expectations are being met. There should be no surprises for anyone at the end of the work session.
- DO pay attention to common work session derailers. Look for signs of these train-wrecks-in-the-making, and divert them before they become a block to work session success.

Chapter 9

Wrapping Up the Work Session

We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. . . . Give us the tools and we will finish the job.

—SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL, BBC RADIO BROADCAST,
FEBRUARY 9, 1941

YOU MADE IT through the work session. All your planning and preparation paid off. The team achieved its objectives and left with distinct action items for completing the deliverables. What a relief. But wait! The job's not yet finished. There are still a few more tasks necessary before you can chalk this work session up to the win column. First, you have some documentation to finish; without that, the session was simply an exercise in team building. Second, you'll want to touch base with the project sponsor and project manager to make sure they understand the deliverable you've produced. Third, get feedback from the team on the perceived work session effectiveness. This completes a handoff from facilitator to project manager; the project manager will take the work session deliverables to completion from here.

Work Session Wrap-Up Roles and Responsibilities

As in the preparation for and conducting of the work session, wrap-up is not an isolated event. In addition, it is a jointly shared activity. Table 9.1 describes standard work session wrap-up responsibilities by role.

Regardless of the type of work session, there is a repeatable pattern to closing out a work session engagement. This chapter will guide the facilitator in finalizing the output of the work session and taking the steps necessary to hand off ownership to the project manager.

TABLE 9.1**Work Session Wrap-Up Responsibilities, by Role**

Project Sponsor	Project Manager	Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk through the deliverable with the Facilitator. • Provide feedback on the work session to the Facilitator and Project Manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk through the deliverable with the Facilitator. • Provide feedback on the work session to the Facilitator and Project Sponsor. • Manage deliverable completion by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributing the deliverables to the team. • Following up on outstanding issues and action items, and update the deliverables accordingly. • Managing deliverable revisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up all work session information. • Finalize the work session deliverables, and send them to the Project Manager or Project Sponsor. • Review the deliverables with the Project Sponsor and Project Manager. Answer any questions, or provide clarification regarding the deliverable. • Obtain feedback on the work session.

Note: The items highlighted in bold type are detailed in this chapter.

Back Up All Work Session Information

The facilitator has been trusted with a precious commodity. It cannot be recreated, and no one else has it. It is as unique as you are. So protect it. If it's in electronic format, save copies on various media throughout the work session and especially now that the work session is completed. Use memory sticks, CDs, or someone else's computer. If it's on flip charts, tape down all sticky notes so they won't move or fall off. Take digital photos before removing the papers from the wall. Be certain that the work session analyst has notes and supporting material available in case something happens to the master version.

If you're traveling, *do not put anything that is irreplaceable in your checked luggage*. Flip chart pages or critical documentation stowed in the cargo has the unfortunate tendency of going astray with your luggage just when you need it the most. So keep it with you in your carry-on luggage.

Finalize the Work Session Deliverables

Once the work session is completed, the facilitator has full responsibility for transforming the information provided in the work session into a final set of deliverables. There are always at least two deliverables from any work session: the official document related to the work session (for example, the project charter, the process analysis and design document, or the risk assessment) and the action item list. There may also be other deliverables that were identified during planning or created during the work session itself. For these deliverables and any others identified during planning or created during the work session, the facilitator, with assistance from the work session analyst or cofacilitator, is the person charged with these activities:

- Transcribe all the flip charts into the appropriate sections of the deliverables.
- Finalize the graphics and insert them appropriately into the deliverables. We recommend saving the graphic as a picture (a .jpg or .gif, for example) before inserting it into the deliverable in order to retain its original formatting.
- Insert appendixes from prior work or action item results as appropriate. If these are larger documents, you can insert a link to their Web site location (as long as the team has access to that location).
- Indicate the open action items numbers in relevant places within the deliverables, in addition to the action item list. This serves as a cross-reference and allows all readers to easily see what portions of the deliverable are still outstanding. As action items are closed, it's the responsibility of the project manager to remove these references from the deliverable and update it with the results as appropriate. (See Table 9.2 for an example of referencing open action items within the scope table.)
 - Correct spelling and punctuation, and standardize the format.
 - Update the revision table (contained in most work session deliverables) to indicate that changes have been made to the document content. If no revision table exists, add a version counter and date to the document title and include it in the footer (for example, "Project ABC Risk Assessment v1 060405.doc") to identify when updates to the documents have occurred.
- Review the final documents to ensure completeness and accuracy. Perform a final read-through to verify that everything makes sense and that all the information gathered in the work session is included.
- Send the completed deliverables to the project manager, copying the project sponsor. These deliverables may be consolidated into one or more ZIP files to make electronic delivery easier. However, if security or firewall issues make that impossible, be prepared to create and ship a CD. The project manager can forward deliverables to participants as appropriate.

TABLE 9.2

Example: How to Reference Open Action Items Within the Scope Table

ORDER FULFILLMENT PROJECT			
Category	In Scope	Out of Scope	Pending Discussion
Product types	Product type A	Product type C	Product type E (Pending Action Item #12)
	Product type B	Product type D	
Business processes	Create order	Manage warranties	Manage inventory (Pending Action Item #14)
	Confirm order	Obtain quote	
	Allocate inventory	Purchase product	
	Ship order	Manufacture product	
	Deliver order	Market product	
	Bill shipment	Forecast sales	
	Process payment		
	Process returns		

Several times throughout this book, we've referred to high-quality deliverables. What raises a deliverable to this level? Here are some of the qualities that make it exceed the norm and achieve a status of a high quality:

- *It's provided in a timely manner.* Your goal is to send the action item list within eighteen hours of the close of the work session and all other deliverables within forty-eight hours (unless otherwise indicated in Section Four). Why the two different time frames? The action item list is what the team will continue working from to complete the deliverables. They need to have these in hand as soon as possible to reference what they've committed to and by when.
- *All sections of the deliverable contribute value to the project.* Although initial crafting of the deliverable content occurs as part of work session preparation, modifications are likely to occur during the work session to make the output more effective. These deliverables belong to the team. So if there are sections that aren't relevant or provide only limited value, don't use them.
- *It meets quality standards or conventions.* If quality standards or guidelines exist for project deliverables, these expectations must be met or exceeded in the deliverable from the work session.
- *It accurately communicates the shared decisions of the team.* Getting content clear and understandable should have happened in the work session, not after the work session has ended. Agreed-on wording should remain unchanged other than resolving misspellings and other obvious mistakes.

- *It can be effectively explained and used by the team to move forward.* These deliverables are not shelfware; they are intended to be used. The content recorded within their pages provides the basis for design and development. Work with the project manager to ensure his or her understanding of the deliverables, and validate that the file types created are usable by the project manager and team members. In other words, don't create a Visio file if no one on the team has the software to update it.

Each deliverable produced from the work session should meet these five criteria.

Review the Deliverables with the Project Sponsor and Project Manager

Once you've sent off the work session documentation, follow up with a telephone call to ensure it was received, and set up a time to walk through it. Your goal is to make sure that both the project sponsor and project manager are satisfied with the deliverables and understand what's left to complete. Stress the importance of making these documents available to the team so they can see the results of their work.

Manage Deliverable Completion

Once the work session deliverables have been provided by the facilitator, it becomes the role of the project manager to track them to completion and carry them into subsequent project activities. He or she is responsible for distributing the deliverables to the team in a timely manner, following up, and tracking progress on all open issues and actions to bring them to resolution, and managing version revisions of the documentation. We delineate these activities for the project manager:

- *Distribute the deliverables.* The team jointly created these deliverables, so share the results with them as quickly as possible. Keep the momentum going by sending out the action item list the same day you receive it. Distribute the remaining deliverables within twenty-four hours of their receipt.
- *Follow up on outstanding issues and action items.* Review the action item list at your regularly scheduled project meetings to get their status and update the list accordingly. Some of the items may require a smaller task force to be formed. In these cases, assist with the meeting setup to make sure it takes place. Monitor progress and push to get responses by the agreed-on due dates established in the work session. When action items are completed, incorporate any relevant decisions or information into the deliverables.

- *Manage deliverable revisions.* To gain the buy-in and support needed for final sign-off, you'll want the deliverables to continue to feel owned by the team. As changes are made to the deliverables or on some predetermined cycle (weekly or biweekly, perhaps), redistribute the updated versions to the team for review. Highlight key changes and get the team's input. And remember to update the revision table (contained in most work session deliverables) to indicate that changes have been made to the document content.

Obtain Feedback on the Work Session



If you're going to grow as a facilitator, it's important to get feedback on your performance and the work session effectiveness. You can do this in variety of ways. You can ask participants to complete the Work Session Evaluation (on the CD) as their last task before they leave the work session. You can e-mail the questionnaire to key select team members after the work session to get their insight. You can create a Web survey and send the link to all team members. Regardless of how you gather their opinions, use the results as beacons to show you what to continue, what to rethink, and what to augment.

Keys to Success

- DON'T put anything that is irreplaceable in your checked luggage when traveling.
- DON'T change the meaning of content within the deliverable after the work session has ended. Agreed-on wording should remain unchanged.
- DO backup the information from the work session. It is a precious commodity that cannot be replaced, so, make sure nothing gets lost.
- DO make certain your deliverables are high quality by:
 - Providing them in a timely manner.
 - Ensuring that all sections of the deliverable contribute value to the project.
 - Ensuring that work session deliverables meet or exceed quality standards or conventions.
 - Verifying that the contents accurately communicate the shared decisions of the team.
 - Confirming that it can be effectively explained and used by the team to move forward.
- DO continue your growth as a facilitator by getting feedback on your performance and the work session effectiveness.
- DO remember that additional work sessions can be scheduled to continue development of the deliverables if necessary.

Section Four

Facilitating the Deliverable

NOW THAT YOU'RE AWARE of what it takes to make a work session work, let's look at several of the work sessions types more commonly used in support of projects. There are many opportunities to use facilitated work sessions within the project lifecycle, but the five types of work sessions that were introduced in Chapter Two provide a good place to start. We will explore work sessions for:

- Establishing the project charter
- Analyzing and designing business processes
- Defining business requirements
- Assessing risks
- Convening work-in-progress reviews

Chapters Ten through Fourteen provide a blueprint for these work sessions, with sample agendas, deliverable templates, and useful techniques referenced for creating work session deliverables.

We encourage you to try these work session types and then branch out in discovery of others not explored here, such as work sessions to accomplish design, implementation planning, and postimplementation reviews.

Chapter 10

Establishing the Project Charter

CONGRATULATIONS! You're the project manager for a challenging new initiative sponsored by the president of your division. You've read the business case, held a project kick-off meeting, and you're ready to get better definition around what's involved. So call in the SMEs (subject matter experts) and create your charter.

A project charter, as defined by standard Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), is a document that formally authorizes the existence of a project. It provides the project manager with the authority to apply organizational resources to project activities. It transforms the business case into the tangible objectives and scope and defines the key impacts for a project.

Components of the Project Charter

Typically a project charter contains the following sections at a minimum.

Project Overview

This section provides the description of the project and includes:

- A basic definition of the problem
- A description of the key drivers of the project from both a business and customer perspective
- The purpose for and objectives of the project
- The planned implementation approach (phased, multigenerational, or big bang)

Scope

This section describes the boundaries of the project and contains detailed information about:

- What's included in the project
- What's not to be addressed as part of the project and why

- Impacts resulting from the project
- Assumptions
- Constraints
- Dependencies



See the enclosed CD for a copy of a standard Project Charter Template.

Do I Need a Project Charter Work Session?

I think the biggest factor contributing to project cost and time overruns is lack of a clear understanding on the part of the project manager, the team, and the sponsor of the true scope and problem or opportunity the project is trying to solve (the why) and lack of clear, solid, and measurable objectives that spell out what is to be produced (the what).

Bob Storeygard, 3M
project manager, Traffic
Safety Systems Division

In pursuit of speed, many organizations have delegated the creation of the project charter to the project manager or project sponsor alone. Although this may seem to be saving time, this method provides a limited view of the project and may overlook key elements of scope and impact. In the interests of efficiency and effectiveness, we recommend bringing an appropriate cross-functional team together to generate shared understanding of the project and create a robust project charter.

A project charter work session will accelerate the team's building and deliverable-building process by helping the team members:

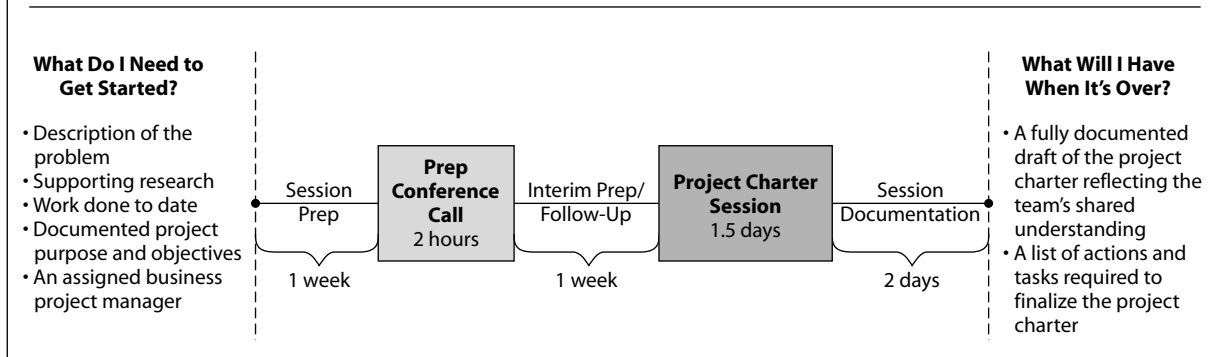
- Jointly understand the need or problem being addressed by this project.
- Clearly define the objectives that will need to be measured to determine project success.
- Develop a shared understanding of the work performed to date and current environment.
- Define the scope of the project effort.
- Uncover the impact and breadth of the project so informed decisions can be made about cost, effort, and resourcing.

What Is the Approach?

We've already discussed the basics of work session preparation, delivery, and wrap-up in Chapters Five through Nine, so we won't rehash that here. Instead, we want to show how the project charter work session fits into that model.

The end-to-end timeline for a project charter work session is approximately two and a half weeks (Figure 10.1).

FIGURE 10.1
Project Charter Work Session Approach



To prepare participants for the work session, hold a two-hour conference call with all planned attendees no less than one week prior to the session. This call is designed to bring the participants up-to-date on the project and identify any prework necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session.

During the conference call, you'll use the agenda in Exhibit 10.1 to structure the meeting. We've provided a description of each section of the agenda and who is typically responsible for presenting or leading that section. Where more detail is required, we point to the chapter in the book that contains the information.



The information gathered in the prep conference call should be populated into the Project Charter Template (see the CD for a copy of this template) to be used as a straw man in the face-to-face work session. Any action items completed prior to the face-to-face work session may also provide additional information for the template.

The project charter work session is a day and a half face-to-face working session. It can be held either on-site in a conference room or off-site at a hotel or other facility. (For guidance on choosing a location, see Chapter Seven.)

This face-to-face work session is where the "meat" of the work happens. The agenda in Exhibit 10.2 describes the steps you'll go through with the team to help them craft their project charter. Remember to build in additional time for breaks (we suggest one fifteen-minute break in the morning and two ten-minute breaks in the afternoon) and lunch (usually thirty minutes if it's catered and an hour if it's not).

EXHIBIT 10.1

Project Charter Prep Conference Call Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To bring Participants up-to-date on the project
- To begin understanding the problem
- To identify any prework necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session.

Project Charter Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Project Charter Prep Call and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Go one by one around the room (and phone) and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, "Why are you coming to the table?"). 	<p>15 min., Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➢ Remind them that this is a preparatory call for the face-to-face meeting. ➢ Review the objectives for today's meeting, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>

II. Project Overview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the business case <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ If a formal document has been created to justify this project, walk through the relevant portions with the team. ➢ List the business decisions that have been made to date (for example, "We won't use any outside vendors," "We must do this for under \$X"). ➢ Discuss how this project links to corporate or division goals. ➢ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	<p>30 min., Project Sponsor</p>
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Project Charter Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the problem (why are we doing this?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review any research data gathered in justification of this project. ➢ Based on the business case and research, identify the problem(s) this project is intended to solve. 	20 min., Project Sponsor & Facilitator
III. Current Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how the problem(s) is handled in the current environment. 	25 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether a process map of the current environment would be helpful to better understand the problem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ If no process map exists, determine whether the team can pull together a draft prior to the work session or whether this is important enough to spend time developing during the work session. ➢ If this is a project for a new product or service that will use existing processes, it still might be helpful to review the current process map. 	5 min., Facilitator
IV. Wrap-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review each action item captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	10 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Discuss whether additional people are needed at the work session to cover all the bases. ➢ Thank the team again for their support. ➢ Remind them of the date, time, and location of the work session. 	5 min., Project Manager or Project Sponsor (or both)

EXHIBIT 10.2
Project Charter Work Session Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To define the scope, objectives, and implementation approach for this project
- To understand the current versus target environment and the surrounding impacts
- To identify and assign actions and tasks necessary to complete the project charter

Project Charter Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
DAY 1	

I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Project Charter Work Session and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Go one-by-one around the room (and phone), and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, ask, "Why are you coming to the table?"). 	<p>15 min., Project Sponsor with the Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➢ Review the objectives for the Project Charter Work Session, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review action item list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Walk through the list of action items that were captured at the end of the conference call to make everyone aware of the answers received, and get statuses on outstanding items. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	<p>30 min., Facilitator</p>

II. Validate the Draft Project Charter

The discussion from the prep conference call was synthesized to create a draft project charter. This is the document you'll be using to work with team in this section.



Project Charter Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine the problem description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the drafted section to ensure that it reflects the views of the team. Make the necessary changes as you go. ➤ Validate that you've captured the key business reasons for the project from both a business and customer perspective. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the current environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the drafted section to ensure that it reflects the views of the team. Make the necessary changes as you go. ➤ Address each of the problems previously defined, and describe how they are handled in the current environment. 	40 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine the purpose statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the drafted section to ensure that it reflects the views of the team. Make the necessary changes as you go. ➤ See Chapter Twenty-Three for more insight on developing a purpose statement. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review links to corporate and division goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As discussed in the prep conference call, this project probably supports one or more of the corporate or division goals. It's important to document which goals it supports and why. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine project objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the drafted section to ensure that it reflects the views of the team. Make the necessary changes as you go. ➤ For more information about how to create objectives, see Chapter Twenty-Four. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If you captured anything in this section from the conference call, review it with the team. Otherwise, work with the team to create the targets or Critical-to-Quality factors (CTQs) for this project. ➤ See Chapter Twenty-Four for instruction on developing measurable targets. 	1 hr., Facilitator

EXHIBIT 10.2 (contd.)	
Project Charter Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
III. Define the Scope	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope framing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The goal of this activity is to clearly understand the boundaries of the project. This sets the foundation for what are we changing versus what are we leaving the way it is. ➤ Walk through the predefined scope categories to determine if the category is relevant for this project. If so, capture items that are definitely in or out of scope for the project. ➤ For more instruction on how to frame the scope, see Chapter Twenty-Five. 	1.5 hrs., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For in-scope or out-of-scope items that required additional conversation, capture the reasoning behind why that item was designated in or out of scope. This will eliminate rehashing of the topic in the future. 	15 min., Facilitator
DAY 2	
IV. Describe High-Level Target Environment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual description <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a high-level textual description of how the problems identified earlier will be addressed in the target environment. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's new or different? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a summary of the key changes that will be evident in the target environment, and explain to Participants and stakeholders what is changing with the new process. It's a convenient way to succinctly answer the "So what?" question regarding the target environment. 	20 min., Facilitator
V. Build the Initial Implementation Approach	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Although early in the project, ask the team to consider whether this will be a phased implementation, big bang (implement all at once), or some other approach. ➤ If there are opposing points of view, use the Force-Field Analysis technique (see Chapter Twenty) to identify pros and cons of each. 	15 min., Facilitator

Project Charter Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define phases, if applicable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ If the team decides to phase the implementation of their project, use the in-scope section of the scope table to help them identify what would be in each phase. ➢ Build the remaining sections of the project charter around phase 1 only, unless multiple phases of implementation are being funded within this project effort. 	30 min., Facilitator
<p>VI. Validate the Guiding Factors During the discussion to this point, you've been capturing assumptions, constraints, dependencies, touch points, and impacts as they've been mentioned. Now is the time to review that information and add to it.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ For more information about assumptions and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ For more information about constraints and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate dependencies and touch points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ For more information about dependencies and touch points, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Understanding impacts is key to making decisions about cost, effort, and resourcing. To learn how to perform this activity, see Chapter Twenty-Seven. 	30 min., Facilitator
<p>VII. Wrap-Up</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review each action item captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	20 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Discuss what happens next in the project. ➢ Set a date and time for follow-up project team meetings. ➢ Thank the team for their effort over the past day and a half. 	15 min., Project Manager

After the work session, allow two days to produce the deliverables and distribute it to the team. Within a week, check in with the project manager and sponsor to review the deliverables and respond to any outstanding questions. At this time, the deliverable is handed off to the project manager to take forward and use appropriately in support of the next steps in the project.

What Do I Need to Get Started?

There are some key pieces of information that will help you prepare for a project charter work session. They'll provide the background you need to understand the project and help the team move forward. But they are not for your eyes alone. You'll need to assess the information you gather and provide relevant items to the team for their understanding and consideration while building the project charter.

If you are the project manager, you may already have these items at hand. If not, help the project sponsor gather or develop this content prior to moving forward with a project charter work session.

Description of the Problem

As part of initial planning you must understand:

- Why this project is needed
- What we are trying to fix or solve
- What has been done to date to understand the problem (for example, a fishbone diagram, Force-Field Analysis, or Pareto chart)

Supporting Research

Has any research been performed around customer needs or desires in this area? For example, is there a list of customer complaints, focus group results, customer survey results, or something else? Is there any data that support the problem statement, such as call volumes or processing times? If so, read through this material, and provide it to the team for consideration.

Work Done to Date

Get a history lesson on where this project has been, who has been involved, and the decisions made to date. This information will be helpful in preparing for political mine fields and understanding any constraints already imposed.

Purpose and Objectives for the Project

Get a documented purpose statement or set of objectives from the project sponsor. This can be used as a starting point for discussion during the session. Try to get an answer to the question, "What do we want to achieve when this project is done?"

An Assigned Business Project Manager

We recommend that a project manager who represents the business be assigned at the point in the project lifecycle where the project charter is being created. This person will be responsible for guiding the team throughout the project effort and is a critical resource in ensuring that the team understands the scope of the project.

Who Should Be Invited?

There is no cookie-cutter approach. Every project requires a unique set of participants depending on the business areas and technologies that will be affected. However, we've listed a common set of contributors as a starting point:

- Project manager—The person responsible for the managing, tracking, and ultimate successful implementation of the project.
- Facilitator—The person responsible for guiding the team through the planning and execution of the work session.
- Project sponsor—The person paying for or sponsoring the project. This person may also function as one of the following:
 - Product manager, if the project is for a new or enhanced product
 - Process owner, if the project is streamlining an existing process
 - Marketing representative, if the project is related to a third-party partnership
 - Line-of-business manager
- Quality professional—The Six Sigma Black Belt or other quality adviser in your organization.
- Subject matter experts—Typically representatives from business or technology areas that are affected by the project.

What Will I Have When It's Over?

In addition to the intangible benefits and knowledge gained through healthy dialogue and debate of ideas, the work session will produce tangible results. For the project charter work session, these include:

- A draft project charter reflecting the team's shared understanding and joint decisions
- A list of action items and tasks required to finalize the project charter



These outputs are a direct result of the work done with the team during the work session. Templates for these deliverables are available on the enclosed CD.

Since no two projects are alike, there may be some additional outputs you need to weave into the agenda, such as:

- A multigenerational plan
- An initial definition of project risks
- A high-level project timeline



Samples of these are also included on the CD.

Techniques to Use

To facilitate this work session, familiarize yourself with the following tools and techniques. This is by no means a complete list, but we've found them to be extremely helpful in eliciting the necessary information for this deliverable. (Refer to Part Three of this book for details on using these techniques.)

General Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Sixteen: Flip-Charting
- Chapter Seventeen: Brainstorming
- Chapter Eighteen: Facilitated Dialogue
- Chapter Twenty: Prioritization Techniques (specifically Force-Field Analysis)
- Chapter Twenty-Two: Staying On Track: Agendas, Action Items, and Other Focusing Techniques

Specialized Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Twenty-Three: Creating a Purpose Statement
- Chapter Twenty-Four: Defining Objectives and Targets
- Chapter Twenty-Five: Scope Framing
- Chapter Twenty-Six: Guiding Factors: Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies, and Touch Points
- Chapter Twenty-Seven: Discovering Impacts
- Chapter Thirty-Four: Developing a Timeline

Keys to Success

Every facilitated session has its lessons learned. Here are ours specifically for this type of work session. May you never have to travel down the same roads we did to learn these things the hard way.

- DON'T assume that everyone knows what the project is intended to accomplish. When you discuss the purpose of the project, you'll be amazed at the differing opinions you hear.
- DON'T allow discussions around solutions or the implementation of technology or people who will support the solution.
- DON'T rehash material from the prep conference call unless significant new information requires it.
- DON'T dive into the detail of requirements gathering. That comes later.
- DON'T postpone critical scope decisions. If there are some decisions the team simply cannot make, find out what additional information they need in order to make the decision, and assign it as a follow-up task.
- If you're acting as both project manager (or project team member) and facilitator, DO make sure the team knows when you move back and forth between roles, and DO remain neutral to the content when you are facilitating. Otherwise the participants may get confused as to whether you're probing them for additional insight and information (as a facilitator does) or providing knowledge and content (as a project manager does).
- DO realize that you as a facilitator have an additional duty: you are the glue between each item on the agenda. It is your job to hold it all together and make it run smoothly.
- DO understand the sections of the deliverable you're working to complete because the team will look to you for guidance.
- It's normal for additional information that doesn't fit within the Project Charter Template (like risks or requirements) to surface during the session. If this happens, DO capture the items on a flip chart, and add them as an appendix to the project charter for future use.

Chapter 11

Analyzing and Designing Business Processes

THE PROCESS ANALYSIS and design work session is convened to assist a team in improving or designing business processes. It requires that the initial business case is built and the project objectives and scope have been established as part of the project charter. Whether you are improving a current business process or designing a new business process, this work session will help the team determine how the work gets done.

The process analysis and design (PAD) document may contain some of the same sections you've previously seen in the project charter (such as a scope table or purpose statement). The information contained in the project charter was your best understanding at the time, but as you design the processes, you'll be deepening your understanding and uncovering additional insights. Clarifications of scope or purpose should be noted as you discover them and appropriate change controls are applied.

Components of the Process Analysis and Design Document

A PAD document typically contains the following sections at a minimum.

Project Overview

This section provides the description of the project and includes:

- The purpose for and objectives of the project.
- The measurable targets necessary to meet those objectives.
- An overview of the current situation and current environment.
- An overview of the target environment.

Scope

This section depicts the boundaries of the project, which were initially set during the project charter work session. It provides a rationale for which business processes will be analyzed for improvement and which new business processes will be designed.

Business Processes Within Scope

This section outlines the business processes (existing or new) that are within the scope of the project initiative. These processes will be categorized as one of the following as a result of the work session:

- Existing processes will be confirmed to stay as is or modified to meet project objectives and targets.
- New processes will be designed to meet project objectives and targets.

Current Process Maps

These process diagrams describe how work is currently being done.

Opportunities for Improvement

This section defines which opportunities will provide the most benefit to achieving project objectives and targets. Baseline data from current processes will help to determine the opportunities. The opportunities chosen for inclusion in the project effort will provide the rationale for process changes and new process designs.

Business Process Scenarios

This section contains the descriptions of key business events or situations that will be used to validate the target process maps.

Target Process Maps

These process diagrams incorporate the selected opportunities for improvement and describe how work will be done in the target environment.

Process Design Impact Table

This section helps us understand the gaps between where we are and where we need to be. It provides a brief description of each modified or new process and includes:

- Which project objective or target this process will have an impact on.
- What the expected impact will be.

- What is new or different within the process.
- What the impacts are of making the change.
- How the team recommends addressing these impacts.

Sign-Off

This is the place where the project sponsors, project managers, and key stakeholders indicate that the process changes or designs are complete and reflect their intentions.

Appendixes

This section contains other information that is relevant to the process analysis and design—for example:

- Definitions of acronyms or uncommon terms used
- Process analysis rationale (detailing why certain process change decisions were made)
- Factual data and baselines of current process performance
- Rationale for opportunity selection (may be impact matrices or house of quality models)
- Assumptions, constraints, and dependencies
- Initial list of business requirements (capturing any business requirements that might be mentioned in the course of designing the processes)

See the enclosed CD for a copy of a standard Process Analysis and Design Template.



Do I Need a Process Analysis and Design Work Session?

Not all projects require changes to or design of business processes. It is important to understand the purpose and objectives of the project to recognize whether changes or alterations are required in the way work is done.

A process analysis and design work session is convened when the project purpose or objectives call for:

- Changes that will have an impact on the existing way that we do work.
- Changes that require doing new work (work that did not previously exist).

Trying to build project deliverables without using facilitated work sessions is like trying to have an orchestra perform with only a few instruments and no conductor.

Chris Higgins, senior vice president, Bank of America

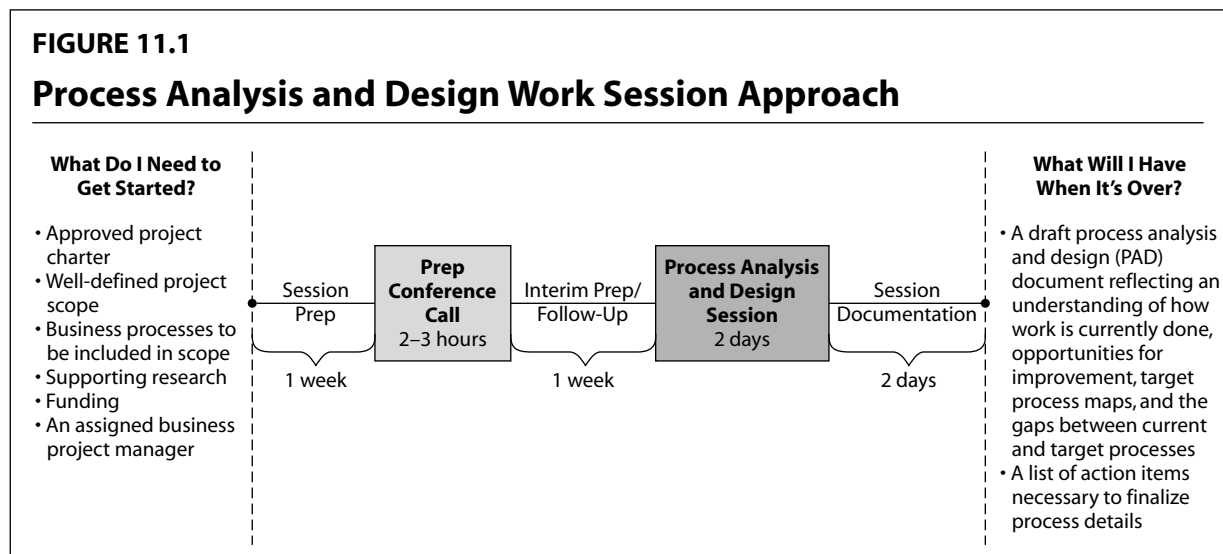
Convening the appropriate group of participants to represent the scope of the business process areas will:

- Enable a shared understanding of the defined project scope and performance targets.
- Develop an understanding of how work is done currently.
- Isolate problem areas or areas of concern regarding how work gets done.
- Design improvements or new processes to meet performance targets.
- Promote joint ownership of new or modified business processes.
- Lay the foundation for training, adoption, and implementation planning by recognizing the magnitude of gaps that exist between where we are and where we want to be.

What Is the Approach?

We’ve already discussed the basics of work session preparation, delivery, and follow-up in Chapters Five through Nine, so we won’t rehash that here. Instead, we want to show how the process analysis and design work session fits into that model.

The end-to-end timeline for a process analysis and design work session is approximately three weeks, as shown in Figure 11.1.



Plan the process analysis and design work sessions carefully. Depending on the size of the effort, you may need more than one work session to accomplish the analysis and redesign of processes for the project. It is not uncommon to convene multiple work sessions over the course of several weeks to accomplish process design. (For more information about approaches for structuring multiple work sessions, see Chapter Five.)

To prepare participants for the work session, hold a two- to three-hour prep conference call with all planned attendees no less than one week prior to the session. This call is designed to bring the participants up-to-date on the project and identify any prework necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session.

During the conference call, you'll use the agenda in Exhibit 11.1 to structure the meeting. We've provided a description of each section of the agenda and who is typically responsible for presenting or leading that section. Where more detail is required, we point to the chapter in the book with that information.



The information gathered in the prep conference call should be populated into the Process Analysis and Design Template (see the CD for a copy of this template) to be used as a straw man in the face-to-face work session. Any action items completed prior to the face-to-face work session may provide additional information for the template.

The project charter work session is a two-day face-to-face working session. It can be held either on-site in a conference room or off-site at a hotel or other facility. (For guidance on choosing a location, see Chapter Seven.)

This face-to-face work session is where the "meat" of the work happens. The agenda in Exhibit 11.2 describes the steps you'll go through with the team to help them craft their project charter. Remember to build in additional time for breaks (we suggest one fifteen-minute break in the morning and two ten-minute breaks in the afternoon) and lunch (usually thirty minutes if it's catered and an hour if it's not).

EXHIBIT 11.1

Process Analysis and Design Prep Conference Call Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To bring Participants up-to-date on the project objectives and scope
- To confirm which business areas have processes that will change or will require new business processes
- To confirm which business processes will be included in the Process Analysis and Design Work Session scope
- To identify any prework necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session

Process Analysis and Design Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Process Analysis and Design Prep Call and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Go one by one around the room (and phone) and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, ask, "Why are you coming to the table?"). 	<p>10 min., Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➢ Remind them that this is a preparatory call for the face-to-face meeting. ➢ Review the objectives for today's meeting, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. ➢ Review the objectives for the face-to-face work session in order to accomplish today's call objectives in the light of what is coming next. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>



EXHIBIT 11.1 (contd.)

Process Analysis and Design Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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II. Project Overview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the project purpose and progress to date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Give a brief overview of the project and its purpose and objectives. ➢ Review project progress to date. ➢ List the business decisions that have been made to date ➢ Discuss how this project links to corporate and division goals. ➢ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	<p>15 min., Project Sponsor</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the project scope <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review the scope table (what is in and out of scope and what may still be pending decision), as provided in the project charter document. ➢ Confirm the scope that will be pertinent to the upcoming face-to-face work session. This may be the entire project scope, or it may be some subset of the overall project scope if multiple Process Analysis and Design Work Sessions are going to be convened. 	<p>20 min., Project Manager & Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review objectives and targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe the difference between project and process objectives. ➢ Review project objectives and detailed targets to understand what we are challenged to accomplish. ➢ Determine if there are additional process objectives and targets that have not been mentioned. ➢ Ensure that targets are measurable and specific. 	<p>20 min., Project Manager & Facilitator</p>

**Process Analysis and Design
Prep Conference Call Agenda**
**Estimated Time &
Responsible Role**
III. Business Process Areas in Scope

- Confirm which business processes are in scope for analysis
 - Determine which business areas are in scope, and which of their business processes are likely to be changed by the project initiative or which processes might be needed that are not being done today.
 - Categorize the business processes by business area, and whether we think they will stay the same, be modified, or be new processes. (It is important to list the processes within the business areas that might stay the same, as well as the processes we expect will be new or modified. A comprehensive list can be helpful when ensuring end-to-end process quality later in the project effort.)
 - Document this information in the “business processes within scope” table (see the Process Analysis and Design Template on the CD).
 - Determine which existing processes have process maps or other process descriptions available. (Make assignments to appropriate Participants to supply the process documentation to the Project Manager and Facilitator prior to the work session.)

45 to 60 min.,
Facilitator

- Determine which existing processes have process maps (or other types of process descriptions) available
 - If no process map exists, you’ll need to determine whether the team can pull together a draft prior to the work session or whether this is important enough to spend time developing during the work session.
 - If process maps (or other descriptions of the process) do exist, then assign the appropriate Participant(s) to supply the process documentation to the Project Manager and Facilitator prior to the work session.
 - Also request and obtain any factual data that exists regarding the performance of current processes, especially as it pertains to the objectives or targets for this project effort.

15 min.,
Facilitator



EXHIBIT 11.1 (contd.)	
Process Analysis and Design Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
IV. Wrap-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review each action item captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	10 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Discuss whether additional people are needed at the work session to cover all the bases. ➢ Thank the team again for their support. ➢ Remind them of the date, time, and location of the work session. ➢ Remind them of the Process Analysis and Design Work Session objectives. ➢ Discuss any other relevant travel information (for example, the team dinner, recommended hotels). 	10 min., Project Manager or Facilitator (or both)

To follow up after the work session, allow two days to produce the deliverables and distribute it to the team. Within a week, check in with the project manager and sponsor to review the deliverables and respond to any outstanding questions. At this time, the deliverable is handed off to the project manager to take forward and use appropriately in support of the next steps in the project.

What Do I Need to Get Started?

There are some key pieces of information that will help you prepare for a process analysis and design work session. They'll provide the background you need to understand the project and the processes that are part of the project scope. If you are the project manager, you should have these materials prior to the session. It may be reasonable to provide this information to participants in advance of the work session, so that they can be prepared for productive participation in the face-to-face work session.

EXHIBIT 11.2

Process Analysis and Design Work Session Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To understand how work is done currently and its baseline performance measures
- To confirm process targets and select opportunities for improvement
- To define the target business processes and their associated impacts
- To understand the impacts associated with the process changes
- To identify and assign actions and tasks necessary to complete the process analysis and design

Process Analysis and Design Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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DAY 1

I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Process Analysis and Design Work Session and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Set the stage regarding expectations of what will be accomplished in the work session. ➢ Go one-by-one around the room (and phone) and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, ask, "Why are you coming to the table?"). 	<p>15 min., Project Sponsor with the Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➢ Review the objectives for the Process Analysis and Design Work Session, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review action item list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Walk through the list of action items that were captured at the end of the conference call to make everyone aware of the answers received and get statuses on outstanding items. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	<p>30 min., Facilitator</p>



EXHIBIT 11.2 (contd.)	
Process Analysis and Design Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
II. Validate the Current Processes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review scope and business processes to be analyzed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the scope of the effort, and the business areas and processes that are in scope for this work session. ➤ For each process to be reviewed in this work session, look at the draft of the "Business Processes Within Scope" table, and confirm the process segments that will be in scope. Look at the starting points and ending points, and adjust to reflect where the process begins and ends. Update the expected action to be taken: "stays the same," "modified," or "new." ➤ Use process decomposition, as appropriate, to link subprocesses together into business process areas, or to decompose process segments further to obtain a road map of the processes and process segments that are pertinent to this study. Refer to Chapter Twenty-Nine for more detail on process decomposition. 	45 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the current process descriptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For each process in scope for this work session, review the current process maps, or other form of process description, with the team. Refer to Chapter Thirty for more detail on process mapping. ➤ Confirm and adjust each map to be an accurate description of the current process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Boundaries of the process (start and end points) ◦ Outputs of the process and who receives them ◦ Inputs to the process and who supplies them ◦ Basic steps and decisions of the process and who does the work ➤ Do not belabor this to the point of analysis paralysis, but it is important to get an accurate understanding of how work is done currently and who does the work in order to grasp the magnitude of the gap between the current state and what needs to be done in the future state. 	30 min. per process, Facilitator

Process Analysis and Design Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review any factual data regarding baseline performance for this process, specifically as it pertains to the objectives and targets that are established for this project effort. 	
III. Review Targets and Identify Points of Change	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify improvement opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the objectives, targets, and current process data to identify opportunities for improvement. ➤ Prioritize and confirm which opportunities will be addressed (may use an Impact Matrix, or the more specialized Six Sigma House of Quality to relate opportunities to objectives and targets). Refer to Chapter Twenty for guidance on developing an Impact Matrix. ➤ Look at each process to determine which ones contribute to the improvement areas (may use an Impact Matrix or a more specialized Six Sigma House of Quality to assist with cross-referencing opportunities to objectives or targets, and processes or functionality to opportunities). ➤ Determine which processes will be altered or designed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Which processes can stay the same ◦ Which processes need to be modified and where specifically the process is breaking down ◦ Which processes are new ➤ Capture the rationale for process improvement to include in the Process Analysis and Design Template Appendix. 	<p>2 hrs., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define business process scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Capture a listing of pertinent business process scenarios that can be used to validate process designs or modifications. 	<p>45 min., Facilitator</p>

EXHIBIT 11.2 (contd.)

Process Analysis and Design Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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IV. Map the Target Processes: Process Changes or New Process Designs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify or design processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refer to Chapter Thirty for more detail on process mapping. ➤ For each process to be modified, map the process, noting specifically where changes are made and which targets are affected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Map the process activities first. ◦ Overlay with people (roles) who are responsible for doing the process activities. ◦ Note where in the process data is captured to provide measures that support targets. ➤ For each process to be newly designed, map the new process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Map the process activities first. ◦ Overlay with people (roles) who are responsible for doing the process activities. ◦ Note where in the process data is captured to provide measures that support targets. 	<p>60–90 min. per process, Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify target process impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As each new or modified target process is validated, note the following in the process design impact table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What is changed or new ◦ How this contributes to objectives or targets ◦ What the potential impacts are ◦ Rate the impact (1 = low, 5 = high) ◦ Generate ideas regarding how to address the impacts 	<p>30 min. per process, Facilitator</p>

DAY 2

V. Map the Target Processes: Process Changes or New Process Designs (continued)

Continue mapping target processes and noting process impacts.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modify or design processes (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refer to Chapter Thirty for more detail on process mapping. 	<p>60–90 min. per process, Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify target process impacts (continued) 	<p>30 min. per process, Facilitator</p>

Process Analysis and Design Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
VI. Confirm Processes Against Business Process Scenarios	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Walk back through each business process scenario to ensure that they have been addressed in the process maps. 	15 min. per process, Facilitator
VII. Validate the Guiding Factors	
During the discussion to this point, you've been capturing assumptions, constraints, dependencies, and touch points as they've been mentioned. Now is the time to review that information and add to it.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more information about assumptions and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more information about constraints and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate dependencies and touch points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more information about dependencies and touch points, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
VIII. Wrap-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review each action item or outstanding issue captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➤ Review the process for getting completed action items and issue resolutions to the Project Manager. ➤ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items and issues. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discuss what happens next in the project. ➤ Identify the follow-up subteams and leaders needed. ➤ Set a date and time for follow-up project team meetings. ➤ Thank the team for their effort over the past two days. 	30 min., Project Manager

Approved Project Charter

A project charter is a document that formally authorizes the existence of a project. It transforms the business case into the tangible objectives and scope and defines the key impacts for a project. To be able to define your requirements, the project charter must have been documented and approved by the project sponsor, stakeholders, and any other executives necessary to authorize and fund the project. (See Chapter Ten for more information regarding the project charter.)

Well-Defined Project Scope

As part of the project charter, the boundaries of the project must have been discussed with the project team and documented. These boundaries must include what's in scope as well as what's out of scope for this effort.

Business Processes to be Included in the Scope

This is a listing of the business areas and their business processes that are within the project scope. This should also include an initial analysis of where the individual processes start and end (the process boundary points) and whether the process is expected to stay the same, be modified, or a new process designed.

Supporting Research

By this stage in the project, research regarding internal and external customer needs will have been accomplished. These needs and expectations should have been formed into objectives and measurable targets. Once processes within scope have been identified, obtain any available information on baseline measurements regarding process performance.

Funding

To ensure that you have the right people involved, this project must be funded through the completion of process analysis and design.

An Assigned Business Project Manager

A project manager who represents the business must be assigned prior to holding a process analysis and design work session. Our preference is that the project manager be assigned at the time the project charter is created. If this was not the case in your situation, then assign the project manager now. This person will be responsible for guiding the team throughout the project effort and is a critical resource in ensuring that process designs are accomplished in a comprehensive manner that provides the outputs needed for the next steps of the project.

Who Should Be Invited?

There is no cookie-cutter approach. Every project requires a unique set of participants depending on the business areas and technologies that will be affected. However, we've listed a common set of contributors as a starting point:

- Project manager—The person responsible for the managing, tracking, and ultimate successful implementation of the project.
- Facilitator—The person responsible for guiding the team through the planning and execution of the work session.
- Project sponsor—The person paying for and sponsoring the project. This person may also function as one of the following:

Product manager, if the project is for a new or enhanced product

Process owner, if the project is streamlining an existing process

Marketing representative, if the project is related to a third-party partnership

Line-of-business manager

- Quality professional—The Six Sigma Black Belt or other quality adviser in your organization.
- Subject matter experts—Typically representatives from the business process areas that have an in-depth understanding of how the work gets done.
- Technology support partners—Those responsible for supporting the business processes with appropriate technology. They often attend business process design work sessions as observers in order to better understand what the business is trying to accomplish as they redesign the way they do their work. Technology partners also may suggest where specific data can be captured to support measures required by project objectives and process targets.
- Other support partners—Additional resources that might be required as a supporting expert, such as a representative from the legal, finance, risk, compliance, or audit departments.

What Will I Have When It's Over?

In addition to the intangible benefits and the knowledge gained through healthy dialogue and debate of ideas, the work session will produce tangible results. For the process analysis and design work session, these include:

- A draft process analysis and design document reflecting an understanding of how work is currently done, opportunities for improvement, target process maps, and the gaps between current and target processes
- A list of action items and tasks required to finalize the target processes, their supporting roles, or the measures that are to be captured within the processes



These outputs are a direct result of the work done with the team during the work session. Templates for these deliverables are available on the enclosed CD.

Techniques to Use

To facilitate this work session, familiarize yourself with the following tools and techniques. This is by no means a complete list, but we've found them to be extremely helpful in eliciting the necessary information for this deliverable. (Refer to Part Three of this book for details on using these techniques.)

General Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Sixteen: Flip-Charting
- Chapter Seventeen: Brainstorming
- Chapter Eighteen: Facilitated Dialogue
- Chapter Twenty: Prioritization Techniques (specifically Force-Field Analysis and Impact Matrices)
- Chapter Twenty-Two: Staying On Track: Agendas, Action Items, and Other Focusing Techniques

Specialized Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Twenty-Five: Scope Framing
- Chapter Twenty-Six: Guiding Factors: Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies, and Touch Points
- Chapter Twenty-Seven: Discovering Impacts
- Chapter Twenty-Nine: Process Decomposition
- Chapter Thirty: Process Mapping
- Chapter Thirty-One: Process Detail Table
- Chapter Thirty-Four: Developing a Timeline

Keys to Success

Every facilitated session has its lessons learned. Here are ours specifically for this type of work session. May you never have to travel down the same roads we did to learn these things the hard way.

- DON'T assume that everyone knows what the project is intended to accomplish. When you discuss the purpose of the project, you'll be amazed at the differing opinions you hear. Allow appropriate time for level-setting with the participants.
- DON'T allow premature discussions around solutions or the implementation of technology that will support the solution.
- DON'T rehash material from the prep conference call unless significant new information requires it.
- DON'T spend time on requirements gathering. That comes later.
- DON'T postpone critical process decisions. If there are some decisions the team simply cannot make, find out what additional information they need in order to make the decision, and assign it as a follow-up task.
- DON'T spend too much time wrestling with specific items. Give the team a limited amount of time to make the decision. If they can't, assign an action item for further research and discussion.
- DON'T spend too much time on current process documentation or analysis. Most of this should have been accomplished prior to the work session and simply reviewed and validated within the work session setting. Beware of "analysis paralysis," which can keep you stuck in the current environment rather than moving into modeling the target environment.
- DON'T dive to an inappropriate level of detail when mapping processes. Map to the level of detail at which you need to control variation.
- DON'T change just because you can. Don't measure just because you can. Ensure that changes and measures are appropriately linked to achieving objectives and targets and that the cost does not outweigh the benefit.
- DO understand the sections of the deliverable you're working to complete because the team will look to you for guidance.
- DO follow up to ensure that the necessary players will be present at the work session. Without the right people, you will not have a complete set of requirements.
- DO set expectations with project sponsor and project manager regarding the level of detail you'll be able to achieve in two days. You'll have target business processes defined, but there will be follow-up activity required to complete the documentation.

- DO capture on a flip chart additional information that surfaces during the session but doesn't fit within the Process Analysis and Design Template (like risks or requirements). Then add them as an appendix to the process analysis and design document for future use.
- DO plan for multiple process analysis and design work sessions, if appropriate, and make sure the team understands the specific scope of each work session.
- DO ensure that process changes and new process designs are supported with the appropriate rationale to link the changes to improvement opportunities that will help achieve objectives and targets.
- DO populate the sections of the PAD Template with seed material if it's available prior to the face-to-face work session. It's always easier to revise something than to create it from scratch.
- DO print the accumulated results of the first day of work at the end of the first work session day so the group can refer to it the next day.

Chapter 12

Defining Business Requirements

YOU'RE READY TO BUILD the business requirements for your project. But wait . . . what are business requirements and, better yet, what is a business requirements document? A business requirements document, often referred to as a BRD, formally captures the shared vision of what the solution needs to do in order to satisfy the customer and business needs. In other words, it describes the “what,” not the “how,” of the solution and reflects agreement among sponsors, operations, project team, and key stakeholders. This document will serve as the foundation for the next steps in the project life-cycle (designing the solution and building the test scenarios) and should contain (or at least reference) all the information the engineers, developers, and designers will need to understand what needs to be designed and what is different from that which exists today.

The BRD may contain some of the same sections you've previously seen in the project charter or process analysis document (for example, a scope table or a process definition). The information contained in the project charter was your best understanding at the time, but as you develop your requirements, you'll be deepening your understanding and uncovering additional insights.

Components of the Business Requirements Document

A BRD typically contains the following sections at a minimum.

Project Overview

This section provides the description of the project and contains:

- The purpose for and objectives of the project.
- The measurable targets necessary to meet those objectives.
- Critical success factors.

How Do I Keep the Information in the BRD in Sync with Other Documents?

One option is to leave these other documents as point-in-time reference documents, and cut and paste the relevant sections from these documents into the BRD as a starting point for review and validation. Another option is to keep these previous documents with you during the BRD work session, and update them as new information is discovered or new decisions are made that might alter their content.

Scope

This section validates the boundaries of the project (initially set during the project charter work session) and contains detailed information about:

- What's included in the project
- What's not to be addressed as part of the project and why

Requirements and Supporting Information

This section lists the detailed business requirements necessary to support the target environment, along with the supporting information necessary for clarity:

- Requirements table
- Context diagram
- Assumptions
- Touch points and dependencies
- Constraints
- Impacts resulting from the project

Sign-Off

This is where the project sponsor, project manager, and key stakeholders indicate that the requirements are complete and reflect their intentions.

Appendixes

This section allows the insertion of other information that is relevant to the business requirements—for example:

- Definitions of acronyms or uncommon terms used
- Current business process maps
- Target business process maps
- Target business process detail table
- Report matrix (optional)
- High-level timeline (optional)



See the enclosed CD for a copy of a standard Business Requirements Document Template.

Do I Need a Business Requirements Work Session?

The purpose of the business requirements work session is to identify and document the required business needs and rules necessary for the improved process, new product, system, or service. This includes capturing all necessary people, process, technology, and support requirements.

In today's world, these requirements are often gathered by business analysts through interviews with various stakeholder groups. Many times this approach is successful, but many times it's fraught with obstacles like these:

- Difficulty getting interview time with the necessary person (which adds to the overall timeline)
- Conflicting requirements that have to be reviewed with people who were already interviewed or, worse, conflicting requirements that are never resolved but just added to the list
- Overlooked information that doesn't get brought to the light until you're much further down the development path
- Differing understanding about what constitutes a good requirement

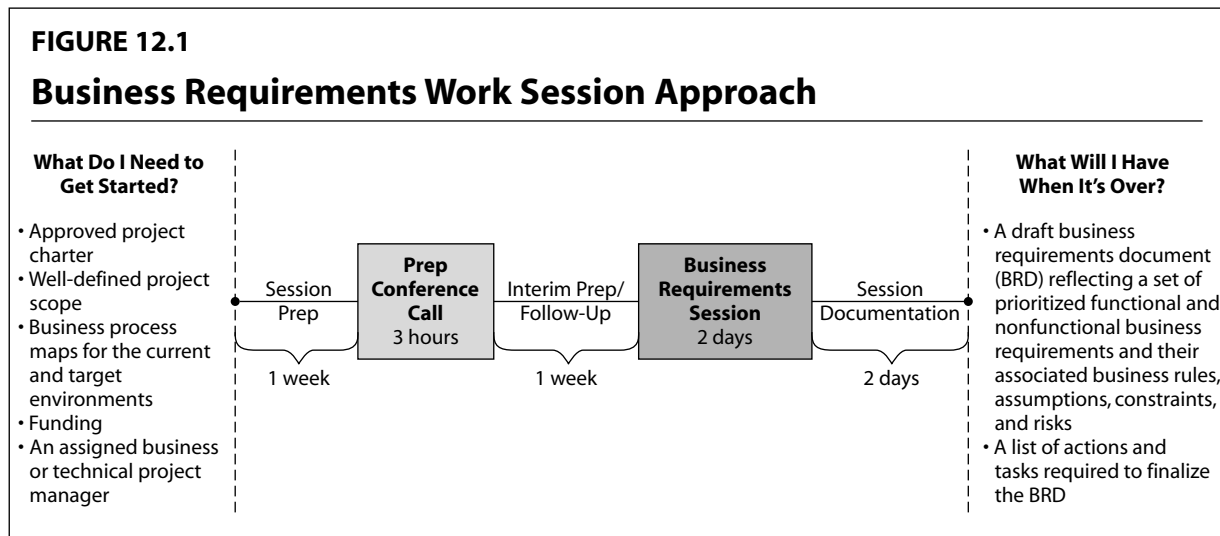
Conducting a facilitated business requirements work session does not cure all ills, but it will have important benefits:

- Building a shared understanding of what the solution needs to do to satisfy the customer and business needs
- Further defining the scope and impacts of this project to allow more accurate cost estimates and resourcing needs
- Promoting buy-in and ownership of the project and its requirements
- Defining the tasks necessary to complete the building of the business requirements for the project
- Generating a BRD, which will serve as an anchor point for change management, traceability, testing, and measurement of success

What Is the Approach?

We've already discussed the basics of work session preparation, delivery, and follow-up in Chapters Five through Nine, so we won't rehash that here. Instead, we want to show how the business requirements work session fits into that model.

The end-to-end timeline for this session is approximately three weeks, as shown in Figure 12.1.



Plan your approach to the business requirements work sessions carefully. Depending on the size of the project, you may need more than one session. It is not uncommon to convene multiple business requirements work sessions over the course of several weeks to ensure a robust, comprehensive definition of requirements. (For more information about approaches for structuring multiple work sessions, see Chapter Five.)

Hold a Prep Conference Call

To prepare participants for the face-to-face work session, hold a three-hour conference call with all planned attendees no less than one week prior to the session. This call is designed to bring the participants up-to-date on the project, confirm the scope definition, discuss the objectives of the business requirements work session, and identify any prework necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session.

During the conference call, you'll use the agenda in Exhibit 12.1 to structure the meeting. We've provided a description of each section of the agenda and who is typically responsible for presenting or leading that section. Where more detail is required, we've pointed to the chapter in the book with that information.

The information gathered in the prep conference call should be added to the Business Requirements Document Template (see the CD for a copy of this template) to be used as a straw man in the face-to-face work session. Any action items completed prior to the face-to-face work session may provide additional information for the template.



EXHIBIT 12.1

Business Requirements Prep Conference Call Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To bring Participants up-to-date on the project objectives and scope
- To develop a common understanding of the project to date: its purpose, objectives, goals, interdependencies, and history (decisions already made, work completed to date)
- To confirm the scope of the project effort
- To validate that all necessary work session Participants are involved
- To identify any prework necessary to enhance the value of the face-to-face session

Business Requirements Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Business Requirements Prep Call and acknowledge the effort and time they are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Go one by one around the room (and phone), and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, ask, "Why are you coming to the table?"). 	15 min., Project Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➢ Remind them that this is a preparatory call for the face-to-face meeting. ➢ Review the objectives for today's meeting, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	10 min., Facilitator

II. Project Overview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the project charter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ If a formal project charter has been created to describe this project, walk through the relevant portions with the team to bring them up to speed on what the project is about. ➢ Review the problem(s) this project is intended to solve. ➢ List the business decisions that have been made to date (for example, "We won't use any outside vendors," "We must do this for under \$X"). ➢ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	30 min., Project Sponsor
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EXHIBIT 12.1 (contd.)	
Business Requirements Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review & revise the purpose statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the existing purpose statement, and revise it as necessary to reflect the shared view of the team. ➤ See Chapter Twenty-Three for more insight on developing a purpose statement. 	10 min., Facilitator
III. Scope Setting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine the scope table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the existing scope, and update it with additional insights that have been gained as the project has progressed. Requirements will need to address all items listed in the in-scope column of the table. ➤ For more instruction on how to frame the scope, see Chapter Twenty-Five. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current assumptions, dependencies, and constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Walk through the assumptions, dependencies, and constraints identified in either the project charter or process analysis documentation. ➤ Add any new assumptions, dependencies, or constraints that can be identified by the team. 	15 min., Facilitator
IV. Break: Give the team a short break.	10 min.
V. Process Changes and Impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate key process changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify the processes that were mapped during the Process Analysis and Design Work Session. ➤ Confirm that these maps represent all of the processes that need to be addressed. ➤ Based on the team's understanding of the process analysis, identify the key process changes resulting from this project. 	20 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and update the impacts section of the BRD with additional people, process, or technology impacts based on review of the process changes. 	15 min., Facilitator

Business Requirements Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
VI. Wrap-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review each action item captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➤ Review the process for getting completed action items to the Project Manager. ➤ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm work session Participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine whether additional representatives from other organizational areas are needed at the work session to cover all the bases. ➤ If so, assign an action item to the Project Manager to follow up on getting their commitment to attend. 	5 min., Project Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thank the team again for their support. ➤ Remind them of the date, time, and location of the face-to-face work session. ➤ Remind them of the Business Requirements Work Session objectives. ➤ Discuss any other relevant travel information (for example, team dinner, recommended hotels). 	5 min., Project Manager or Project Sponsor (or both)

Conduct a Face-to-Face Work Session

The business requirements work session lasts two days. It can be held either on-site in a conference room or off-site at a hotel or other facility. (For guidance on choosing a location, see Chapter Seven.)

This face-to-face work session is where the meat of the work happens. The agenda in Exhibit 12.2 describes the steps you’ll go through with the team to help them craft their BRD. Remember to build in additional time for breaks (we suggest one fifteen-minute break in the morning and two ten-minute breaks in the afternoon) and lunch (usually thirty minutes if it’s catered and an hour if it’s not).

EXHIBIT 12.2

Business Requirements Work Session Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To define the detailed business requirements and associated rules for the project
- To understand the impacts and risks associated with this project
- To identify and assign actions and tasks necessary to complete the business requirements document

Business Requirements Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
DAY 1	

I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Business Requirements Work Session, and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Set the stage regarding expectations of what will be accomplished in the work session. ➢ Go one-by-one around the room (and phone), and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, ask, "Why are you coming to the table?"). 	<p>15 min., Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➢ Review the objectives for the Business Requirements Work Session, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review action item list <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Walk through the list of action items captured at the end of the conference call to make everyone aware of the answers received and get the status of outstanding items. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	<p>15 min., Facilitator</p>



Business Requirements Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate scope table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the scope table to update team members who were not able to attend the prep conference call. ➤ Update the table to reflect any changes resulting from action item completion. 	<p>15 min., Facilitator</p>
<p>II. Define the Process-Related Business Requirements The process maps were created as part of the Process Analysis Work Session. For each process map, complete the three steps listed below before moving to the next process map.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present target process maps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Present a high-level walk-through of the target process map with the team. Highlight the steps that are changing as a result of this project. ➤ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	<p>30 min. per process map, Project Manager, Process Owner, or Subject Matter Expert</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define supporting process-related business requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For each process step, determine if any new or enhanced technology-related support is needed (for example, new or additional data, new or enhanced functionality or capabilities). Document the requirement and the associated business rules. Prioritize each requirement as it's documented. ➤ If a list of high-level business requirements were generated from the Process Analysis and Design Work Session, use this as a starting point. ➤ You may also include process-related requirements that are not technology based, such as requirements for training, communication, or business procedure. ➤ For more information on completing the requirements table, see Chapter Thirty-Three. 	<p>60 min. per process map, Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define reporting requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask the team if there are reporting requirements that have not been discussed to date. ➤ If reporting is an extensive piece of the project, consider completing a report matrix. For information on the report matrix, see Chapter Thirty-Three. 	<p>30 min. per process map, Facilitator</p>

EXHIBIT 12.2 (contd.)	
Business Requirements Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
DAY 2	
III. Define the Non-Process-Related Requirements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify additional technology-related requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Identify any requirements that were not captured as part of the review of the target processes. These are typically more overarching requirements that address such areas as conformance (security, legal, compliance, and audit), performance, and retention. ➢ Prioritize each requirement as it's documented. ➢ For more information on completing the requirements table, see Chapter Thirty-Three. 	90 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify additional non-technology-related requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Identify any additional requirements (for example, training, communication, resource, service-level) that have not yet been captured. ➢ Prioritize each requirement as it's documented. ➢ For more information on completing the requirements table, see Chapter Thirty-Three. 	30 min., Facilitator
IV. Put Requirements in Context	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a context diagram <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Create a view of the project within the context of its implementation environment. This diagram shows the bridges that must be in place within the environment to connect the processes, people, and supporting technology that are at the core of the project effort to the other people or systems with whom they need to share information. This picture of incoming and outgoing flows of information is critical to understanding the full scope of the effort to implement the project. ➢ For more detail regarding context diagramming, see Chapter Thirty-Two. 	45 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify additional requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review the context diagram, and add requirements to the requirements table that support the information flows to or from other systems or people. 	15 min., Facilitator

Business Requirements Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
V. Confirm Requirements Comprehensiveness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate against scope table <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Go back to the scope table, and walk through each section to confirm that all of the items listed in the in-scope column have been addressed in the requirements table. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate against process scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review each business scenario identified during process analysis to confirm that it has been addressed as part of the requirements definition. ➤ If there are additional scenarios that need to be covered, identify them now, and confirm that all necessary requirements have been documented. 	30 min., Facilitator
VI. Identify Risks	
This is an initial analysis of the risks associated with the project and its related process changes. A more detailed risk analysis or failure mode effects analysis can be performed outside this work session.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Document any risks associated with the project or its related process changes, and rank each for visibility, detectability, and severity. ➤ Identify mitigation strategies as needed. ➤ For more information about risks and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Eight. 	45 min., Facilitator
VII. Confirm Supporting Information	
During the discussion to this point, you've been capturing assumptions, constraints, dependencies, touch points, and impacts as they've been mentioned. Now is the time to review that information and add to it.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review assumptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more information about assumptions and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	20 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more information about constraints and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate dependencies and touch points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more information about dependencies and touch points, see Chapter Twenty-Six. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding impacts is key to making decisions about cost, effort, and resourcing. To learn how to perform this activity, see Chapter Twenty-Seven. 	30 min., Facilitator

EXHIBIT 12.2 (contd.)	
Business Requirements Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm objectives and targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ The objectives and targets are a critical anchor point for the project effort. Now that we've documented the requirements and reviewed all the supporting information, walk through the project objectives and targets one more time to confirm that the requirements support them appropriately. If they do not, do we change the requirements, or are the objectives and targets in need of adjustment? Resolve this before going any further. 	15 min., Facilitator
VIII. Build Project Timeline (optional)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines are a way of depicting the events, tasks, or milestones necessary to successfully implement or roll out the project. See Chapter Thirty-Four for guidelines on when this activity is most appropriate and how to facilitate it. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since this is an optional activity, the work session agenda times would need to be adjusted to accommodate the additional time required to perform this activity. 	2 hrs., Facilitator
IX. Wrap-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review each action item or outstanding issue captured during the meeting to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items and issue resolution to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on issues and action items. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Discuss what happens next in the project. ➢ Identify the follow-up subteams and leaders needed. ➢ Set a date and time for follow-up project team meetings. ➢ Thank the team for their effort over the past two days. 	30 min., Project Manager

After the work session, allow two days to produce the deliverable and distribute it to the team. Within a week, check in with the project manager and sponsor to review the deliverables and respond to any outstanding questions. At this time, the deliverable is handed off to the project manager to take forward and use appropriately in support of the next steps in the project.

What Do I Need to Get Started?

There are some key pieces of information that will help you prepare for a business requirements work session. They'll provide the foundation for understanding and building requirements. If you are the project manager, you may already have these items at hand. If not, work with the project sponsor and team to gather or develop this content prior to moving forward with the session.

Approved Project Charter

A project charter is a document that formally authorizes the existence of a project. It transforms the business case into the tangible objectives and scope and defines the key impacts for a project. To be able to define your requirements, the project charter must have been documented and approved by the project sponsors, stakeholders, and any other executives necessary to authorize and fund the project. (See Chapter Ten for more information regarding the project charter.)

Well-Defined Project Scope

As part of the project charter, the boundaries of the project must have been discussed with the project team and documented. These boundaries must include what's in scope, as well as what's out of scope for this effort.

Business Process Maps for the Current and Target Environments

If this project has any process implications, the team will need to have an understanding of the future process and how it differs from the current one prior to creating detailed business requirements.

Funding

To ensure that you have the right people involved, this project must be funded through the completion of requirements development.

An Assigned Business or Technical Project Manager

A project manager must be assigned prior to holding a business requirements work session. Our preference is that the business project manager be assigned at the time the project charter is created. If this was not the case in your situation, then assign the project manager now. This person will be responsible for guiding the team throughout the project effort and is a critical resource in ensuring that requirements are comprehensive.

Who Should Be Invited?

There is no cookie-cutter approach. Every project will require a unique set of participants depending on the business areas and technologies that will be affected. However, we've listed a common set of contributors as a starting point for you to use:

- **Project manager**—The person responsible for the managing, tracking, and ultimate successful implementation of the project from both the business and technical sides. (There may be more than one project manager.)
- **Facilitator**—The person responsible for guiding the team through the planning and execution of the work session.
- **Project sponsor**—The person paying for or sponsoring the project. This person may also function as one of the following:
 - Product manager, if the project is for a new or enhanced product
 - Process owner, if the project is streamlining an existing process
 - Marketing representative, if the project is related to a third-party partnership
 - Line-of-business manager
- **Quality professional**—The Six Sigma Black Belt or other quality adviser in your organization.
- **Subject matter experts**—Typically representatives from the business or technology areas that are affected by the project.
- **Technology support partners**—Those responsible for translating the business requirements into system modifications or enhancements on the affected systems or applications.
- **Other support partners**—Additional resources that might be required as a supporting expert, such as a representative from the legal, finance, risk, compliance, or audit departments.

What Will I Have When It's Over?

In addition to the intangible benefits and the learnings gained through healthy dialogue and debate of ideas, the work session will also produce tangible results. For the business requirements work session, these include:

- A draft BRD for the business solution reflecting a set of prioritized business requirements and their associated business rules, assumptions, constraints, and risks
- A list of actions and tasks required to finalize the BRD



These outputs are a direct result of the work done with the team during the work session. Templates for these deliverables are available on the enclosed CD.

Since no two projects are alike, there may be some additional outputs you need to weave into the agenda—for example:

- A report matrix that describes the purpose, information sources, audience, frequency, specific calculations or algorithms, and selection criteria for required reports. (See Chapter Thirty-Three for more information on the report development matrix.)
- A high-level project timeline noting key milestones and dependencies. (See Chapter Thirty-Four for more information about developing a project timeline.)



Samples of these are also included on the CD.

Techniques to Use

To facilitate this work session, familiarize yourself with the following tools and techniques. This is by no means a complete list, but we've found them to be extremely helpful in eliciting the necessary information for this deliverable. Refer to Part Three of this book for details on using these techniques.

General Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Sixteen: Flip-Charting
- Chapter Seventeen: Brainstorming
- Chapter Eighteen: Facilitated Dialogue
- Chapter Nineteen: Nominal Group and Affinity Analysis
- Chapter Twenty: Prioritization Techniques

- Chapter Twenty-One: Breakout Groups
- Chapter Twenty-Two: Staying On Track: Agendas, Action Items, and Other Focusing Techniques

Specialized Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Twenty-Five: Scope Framing
- Chapter Twenty-Six: Guiding Factors: Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies, and Touch Points
- Chapter Twenty-Seven: Discovering Impacts
- Chapter Twenty-Eight: Risk Analysis Matrices
- Chapter Thirty-Two: Context Diagramming
- Chapter Thirty-Three: Requirements Table
- Chapter Thirty-Four: Developing a Timeline

Keys to Success

Every facilitated session has its lessons learned. Here are ours specifically for this type of work session. May you never have to travel down the same roads we did to learn these things the hard way.

- DON'T rehash material from the prep conference call unless significant new information requires it.
- DON'T delve into requirements development on the prep conference call. This level of detail needs to wait until everyone is on a level playing field and in the same room.
- DON'T allow the team to focus on how the requirements will be implemented. They'll be tempted to solve this problem, but remind them that their job is to describe what they need.
- DON'T spend too much time on wrestling with specific items. Give the team a limited amount of time to make the decision. If they can't, assign an action item for further research and discussion.
- DON'T allow technologists to run the work session. They were not invited to constrain what can and cannot be done. Instead, ask them to help you maintain the delicate balance between feasibility and desire by indicating which requirements would greatly lengthen the implementation time frame.
- DON'T allow this to become a business wish list session. You are there to build the requirements necessary to design, develop, and implement the new system, process, product, or service. When they start to drift off track, remind them again of the project objectives.

- DO understand the sections of the deliverable you're working to complete, because the team will look to you for guidance.
- DO follow up to ensure that the necessary players will be present at the work session. Without the right people, you will not have a complete set of requirements.
- DO set expectations with the project sponsor and project manager regarding the level of detail you'll be able to achieve in two days. You'll have a comprehensive set of requirements, but there will be follow-up activity required to complete the documentation.
- DO plan for multiple business requirements work sessions if appropriate, and make sure the team understands the specific scope of each session.
- DO beware of scope creep. If the team starts to rationalize including requirements because it's easier (even though they previously identified those items as out of scope), bring it to their attention and force a decision.
- DO populate the sections of the BRD Template with seed material prior to the face-to-face work session if it's available. It's always easier to revise something than to create it from scratch.
- DO confirm requirements against project objectives and targets. If the requirements are not in sync with objectives and targets, then resolve the disparity before moving forward.
- DO print the accumulated requirements at the end of the first work session day so the group can refer to it the next day.
- DO recognize that gathering requirements in group settings can support a variety of system development methods and approaches. This works just as well in agile methods as it does for more classic systems development approaches. It's all about getting the right people in the room to make decisions about what needs to be done.

Chapter 13

Assessing Risks

RISKS ARE EVENTS or issues that might cause a project to fail to meet its intended objectives. Risks might also cause a detrimental customer or business impact. It's helpful to understand the risks associated with a project to determine whether to spend the time, effort, and cost required to mitigate it or to accept it as a necessary risk of doing business.

The exercise [of assessing risks] proved to be a value-added process for communication by level-setting expectations. Documenting mitigations helped increase confidence by identifying areas where we have higher risks.

Crystal Mundie,
senior change manager,
Card Services Division,
Bank of America

As part of the business requirements work session, high-level risks are identified. But for complex projects that are critical to business strategy or revenue, a more detailed and thorough assessment of risk is beneficial. A risk assessment work session can be held to discover risks while development of requirements is still in progress. Many times this exploration of risks leads to the identification of additional business requirements, so consider assessing risks early enough to enable clarification of scope and requirements deliverables.

The early project phases are not the only place where assessment of risk is important. As you approach implementation, additional risk assessment work sessions may be convened to focus on risks specifically related to testing and implementation.

Components of the Risk Assessment Document

A risk assessment document typically contains the following sections at a minimum.

Executive Summary

This section recaps critical or important discoveries made during the risk assessment. It serves to bring those not in attendance up to speed on issues discussed and progress made.

Project Overview

This section documents the purpose and objectives of the project as determined in previous work sessions. This is intended as background for anyone using the documentation.

Scope

This section validates the boundaries of the risk discussion. These boundaries may be narrower than those that were initially set during the project charter work session to allow the risk assessment to be focused on specific areas of interest. This section contains detailed information about:

- What's included in the risk assessment
- What's not included, and why

Risk Matrix

This matrix contains the project, business, process, and customer risks associated with the area of scope previously identified, along with the supporting information necessary for clarity. Depending on the version of risk assessment performed, it may include:

- Causes and affects of the risk.
- The severity, probability of occurrence, and ability to detect the effects of the risk.
- Mitigating actions and contingency plans required, as appropriate.

Appendixes



This section allows the insertion of other information that is relevant to the risk assessment—for example, definitions of acronyms or uncommon terms used. See the enclosed CD for a copy of the Risk Assessment Template.

Do I Need a Risk Assessment Work Session?

The purpose of the risk assessment work session is to identify and document the risks associated with the new or improved process, product, system, or service. Assessing the risks associated with a project provides senior management the necessary information to make key decisions about the amount of risk they're willing to accept before implementation.

Conducting a facilitated risk assessment work session will:

- Provide increased awareness for senior management regarding the level of risk surrounding the project.
- Allow identification of the project, business, process, and customer risks and a joint assessment of the resulting impacts.
- Enable the team to reach agreement on the recommended actions required for each risk, whether it is additional research, new requirements, mitigations, or contingency plans.

What Is the Approach?

We've already discussed the basics of work session preparation, delivery, and follow-up in Chapters Five through Nine, so we won't rehash that here. Instead, we want to show how the risk assessment work session fits into that model.

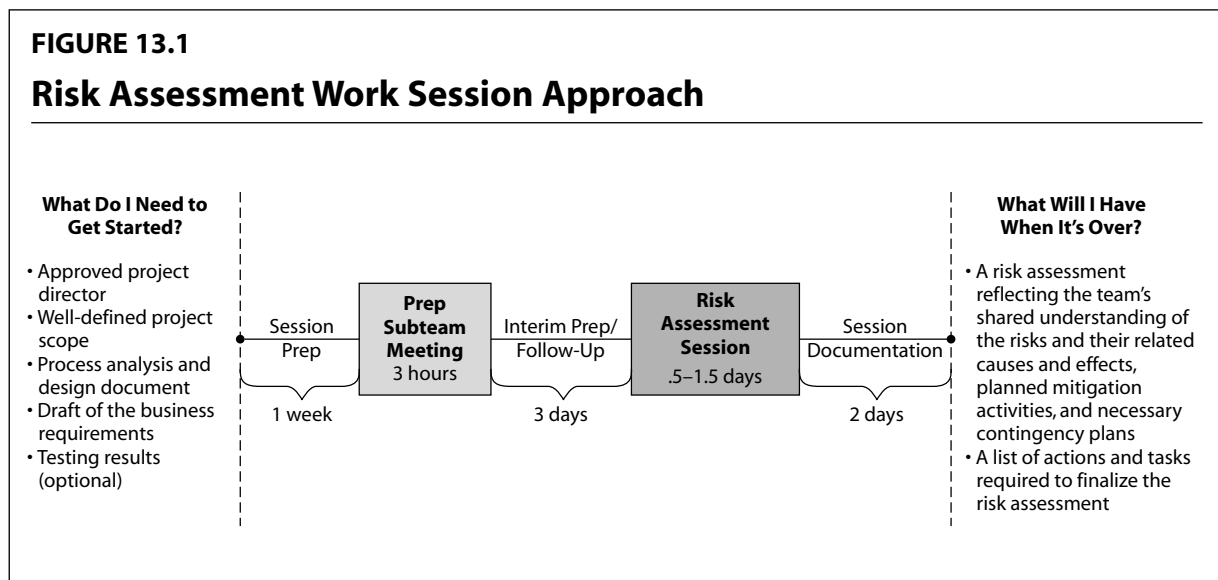
The end-to-end timeline for a risk assessment work session is approximately two weeks, as shown in Figure 13.1. The time frame may change depending on the rigor desired for the risk assessment: the more rigorous the effort needs to be, the longer the session will be.

Determine the Type of Risk Assessment Needed

To prepare for the face-to-face work session, first determine which type of risk assessment is needed: standard analysis, failure modes and effects analysis (FMEA), or a less rigorous version of the FMEA, which we refer to as a hybrid risk analysis. The type of risk assessment required depends on the complexity and visibility of the project and the rigor desired by the sponsoring parties. The choice may also be influenced by the quality methodology followed within the organization, so check there first.

The standard risk assessment is best used early in the project lifecycle, typically as part of the early definition and requirements stages of a project effort. It allows assessment of high-level risks including customer, finance, operation, and market risks, as well as consideration of the project risks. This is the version typically included in the business requirements document.

The FMEA focuses on process or product failure and is best used at the point in the project lifecycle where finalized process maps, procedures, or reliable product data (such as blueprints and detailed functionality) are available for analysis. It looks for all the ways in which a product or process can fail and allows assessment of those failures based on their probability of occurrence, severity, and ability to be detected. It also allows rescoreing of those failures



after implementation. Typically the FMEA does not address project risk. (See Chapter Twenty-Eight for more information about standard risk categories.)

The less rigorous or hybrid version of the FMEA is driven by the customer and topic rather than the process. Its scoring of probability of occurrence, severity, and detection uses a high, medium, or low scale rather than the scale of 1 to 10 used in a strict FMEA. And unlike the strict FMEA, the scoring is based on group experience rather than hard data.

Hold a Prep Meeting

No fewer than three days prior to the session, hold a three-hour face-to-face meeting with three to five core team members. This meeting is designed to draft a risk matrix that can be used as a starting point in the work session. The core team members involved must be intimately familiar with the information listed in the “What Do I Need to Get Started?” section of this chapter.

Use the agenda in Exhibit 13.1 to structure the meeting. We’ve provided a description of each section of the agenda and who is typically responsible for presenting or leading that section. Where more detail is required, we’ve pointed to the chapter in the book with that information.

EXHIBIT 13.1

Risk Assessment Prep Meeting Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To identify in- and out-of-scope topics for this risk assessment
- To draft a risk matrix that can be used as a starting point in the work session
- To determine categories and scoring scales to be used in the work session

Risk Assessment Prep Meeting Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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I. Introductions & Objectives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome everyone to the prep meeting, and ask them to introduce themselves and the department they represent. • Review the objectives for today’s meeting to make sure everyone is in sync with what you’re trying to accomplish. • Confirm that the attendees are all familiar with the project scope, process changes required, and business requirements gathered to date. • Quickly run through the agenda and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
--	---------------------------------





EXHIBIT 13.1 (contd.)

Risk Assessment Prep Meeting Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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II. Risk Assessment Scope

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the scope table provided on the CD, discuss and document what will be in and out of scope for discussion during the Risk Assessment Work Session. • Example of scope for a data-conversion risk session: <table border="0" style="width: 100%; margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>In Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Readiness of applications for conversion ▪ New application development risks ▪ Conversion weekend risks ▪ Postconversion risks, including problem resolution, escalation, and support </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Out of Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General training (not conversion related) ▪ Existing problems that are not directly related to conversion (e.g., not all e-mail addresses are valid, offshore scheduling) ▪ Cost of project ▪ Benefits ▪ Conversion-related decisions already made </td> </tr> </table> 	<p>In Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Readiness of applications for conversion ▪ New application development risks ▪ Conversion weekend risks ▪ Postconversion risks, including problem resolution, escalation, and support 	<p>Out of Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General training (not conversion related) ▪ Existing problems that are not directly related to conversion (e.g., not all e-mail addresses are valid, offshore scheduling) ▪ Cost of project ▪ Benefits ▪ Conversion-related decisions already made 	<p>30 min., Facilitator</p>
<p>In Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Readiness of applications for conversion ▪ New application development risks ▪ Conversion weekend risks ▪ Postconversion risks, including problem resolution, escalation, and support 	<p>Out of Scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General training (not conversion related) ▪ Existing problems that are not directly related to conversion (e.g., not all e-mail addresses are valid, offshore scheduling) ▪ Cost of project ▪ Benefits ▪ Conversion-related decisions already made 		

III. Risk Matrix Development

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Talk to the team about their definition of the word <i>risk</i>. ➢ Walk through the standard definition and see if it applies. A risk is “an event or issue that might cause a project to fail to meet its intended objectives and/or might cause a detrimental customer or business impact.” ➢ Agree on a definition that is most applicable to this project. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ An initial analysis of the risks associated with the project and its related process changes should have been included in the business requirements document. Use it as a starting point for discussion or allow the team to brainstorm the risks associated with implementing the new or enhanced product, process, service, or system. 	<p>60 min., Facilitator</p>

Risk Assessment Prep Meeting Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For more insight into the brainstorming technique, see Chapter Seventeen. ➤ If time allows, describe the remaining columns on the risk matrix, and work with the team to fill in the columns for each risk identified. Do not complete any of the categories that require scoring. Leave this as an activity for the full team to do at the work session. 	
<p>IV. Break: Give the team a short break. 10 min.</p>	
<p>V. Scoring Scales and Categories</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine categories (optional) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If the team feels that having categories might help those in the work session think about risks more comprehensively, review the risks identified to determine what categories might best represent their list. 	<p>15 min., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define scoring scales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review the scoring scales associated with the Severity, Occurrence, and Detection columns. ➤ Determine if these are acceptable. ➤ Create definitions or examples to clearly describe the difference between the rankings (for example, specify the real difference between a "1" and a "2" or a "high" and a "medium"). 	<p>30 min., Facilitator</p>
<p>VI. Wrap-Up</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any action items were captured during the meeting, review each one to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. • Review the process for getting completed action items to the Project Manager. See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. • Thank the core team for their assistance. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>



The information gathered in the prep meeting should be added to the Risk Assessment Template (see the CD for a copy of this template) to be used as a straw man in the face-to-face work session. Any action items completed prior to the work session may provide additional information for the template.

Conduct a Face-to-Face Work Session

The risk assessment work session is a face-to-face working session extending from a half-day to one and a half days, depending on the amount of rigor desired: the more rigorous the effort, the longer the session needs to be. It can be held either on-site in a conference room or off-site at a hotel or other facility. (For guidance on choosing a location, see Chapter Seven.)

This face-to-face work session is where the meat of the work happens. The agenda in Exhibit 13.2 describes the steps you’ll go through with the team to help them assess their risks. For example purposes, we’ve assumed that this risk assessment work session is one day in length. If it’s shorter or longer, you can adjust the time frames for each activity accordingly.

EXHIBIT 13.2

Risk Assessment Work Session Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To identify the risks surrounding this project effort and its outcomes
- To understand the causes of those risks and assess the severity, probability of occurrence, and detectability of each
- To reach joint agreement on the recommended actions required (for example, research, new requirements, mitigations, or contingencies) for each risk
- To identify and assign actions and tasks necessary to complete the risk assessment document

Risk Assessment Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
I. Kick-Off	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Welcome everyone to the Risk Assessment Work Session and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➢ Set the stage regarding expectations of what will be accomplished in the work session. Highlight why this special risk session has been asked for and the value expected from it. ➢ Go one-by-one around the room (and phone) and have each attendee state his or her name, department, and stake in the project (for example, ask, “Why are you coming to the table?”). 	15 min., Project Manager



Risk Assessment Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➤ Review the objectives for the Risk Assessment Work Session, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	10 min., Facilitator
II. Risk Assessment Scope	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope framing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The goal of this activity is to clearly understand the boundaries of the risk assessment. It may encompass all segments and phases of the project, or it may be focused on specific pieces of the implementation. ➤ Review the scope table created during presession planning, and update as necessary. ➤ For more instruction on how to frame the scope, see Chapter Twenty-Five. 	30 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For in-scope or out-of-scope items that required additional conversation, capture the reasoning behind why that item was designated in or out of scope. This will eliminate rehashing of the topic in the future. 	10 min., Facilitator
III. Perform Risk Analysis	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review table layout, risk categories, and scoring scales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Walk through each column on the risk matrix, describing its expected content as you go. ➤ Review the categories and scoring scales developed during the presession meeting. Revise them as needed to represent the views of the team. 	20 min., Facilitator

EXHIBIT 13.2 (contd.)	
Risk Assessment Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the process changes or product description (optional) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To update the team on the resulting process changes, walk the team through the target process maps or process design impact table developed during the process assessment and design work session. ➤ If the project is product specific, with little or no process changes, walk the team through the product description documented in the project charter. 	<p>40 min., Project Manager or Subject Matter Expert</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Walk through the draft matrix created during presession planning. For each risk listed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Clarify wording and get agreement on the risk identified. ◦ Get concurrence on severity, probability of occurrence, and detection (ability to detect). ◦ For FMEA and FMEA hybrid matrices, add to current controls (planned mitigation) for each cause, as known. ➤ Add new risks, and fill in all associated data. ➤ For more information about risks and how to capture them, see Chapter Twenty-Eight. 	<p>3 hrs., Facilitator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop recommended actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explain the difference between mitigation and contingency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mitigation actions are put in place to prevent the issue or risk from occurring. ◦ Contingencies are actions that will be taken if the risk actually occurs. ➤ Determine which risks were identified as high priorities. ➤ Identify mitigation or contingency plans to address the high-priority risks. 	<p>60 min., Facilitator</p>

Risk Assessment Work Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
IV. Wrap-Up	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify session highlights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Session highlights provide the team an opportunity to reflect on discoveries made, concepts learned, or “aha’s” revealed. ➢ Explain that an executive summary will be created as a result of this session. Go around the room and ask each person to identify one highlight he or she feels is relevant to the executive summary. Capture this information on a flip chart. 	15 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Review each action item or outstanding issue captured during the meeting to ensure clarity, and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items and issue resolutions to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on issues and action items. 	20 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Discuss what happens next in the project and how the risk assessment will be used. ➢ Thank the team for their effort over the past two days. 	10 min., Project Manager

Remember to build in additional time for breaks (we suggest one fifteen-minute break in the morning and two ten-minute breaks in the afternoon) and lunch (usually thirty minutes if it’s catered and an hour if it’s not).

After the work session, allow two days to produce the deliverable and distribute it to the team. Within a week, check in with the project manager and sponsor to review the deliverables and respond to any outstanding questions. At this time, the deliverable is handed off to the project manager to take forward and use appropriately in support of the next steps in the project.

What Do I Need to Get Started?

There are some key pieces of information that will help you prepare for a risk assessment work session. They'll provide the background you need to understand the people, processes, and technology involved in the project. If you are the project manager, you may already have these items at hand. If not, work with the project sponsor and team to gather or develop this content prior to moving forward with the session. Consider providing this information to participants in advance of the work session to prepare them for productive participation in the work session.

Approved Project Charter

A project charter is a document that formally authorizes the existence of a project. It transforms the business case into the tangible objectives and scope, and defines the key impacts for a project. To be able to assess risks, the project charter must have been documented and approved by the project sponsors, stakeholders, and any other executives necessary to authorize and fund the project. (See Chapter Ten for more information regarding the project charter.)

Well-Defined Project Scope

As part of the project charter, the boundaries of the project must have been discussed with the project team and documented. These boundaries must include what's in scope, as well as what's out of scope, for this effort.

Process Analysis and Design Document

If this project has any process implications, the team will need an understanding of the future process and how it differs from the current prior to have a full understanding of the potential risks. (See Chapter Eleven for more information regarding the PAD document.)

Draft of the Business Requirements

Depending on when you perform the risk assessment, you may or may not have completed your definition of the business requirements. Get copies of the requirements to date to allow the team to become familiar with the requisite changes and thereby better assess the risks.

Results from Testing

This occurs if the risk assessment is being conducted later in the project lifecycle. Any information regarding the process or product performance or errors encountered during software testing or technology pilots would better allow the team to assess risks and impacts.

Who Should Be Invited?

There is no cookie-cutter approach. Every project will require a unique set of participants depending on the business areas and technologies affected. However, we've listed a common set of contributors as a starting point:

- **Project manager**—The person responsible for the managing, tracking, and ultimate successful implementation of the project from the business and technical sides. (There may be more than one project manager.)
- **Facilitator**—The person responsible for guiding the team through the planning and execution of the work session.
- **Project sponsor**—The person paying for or sponsoring the project. This person may also function as one of the following:

Product manager, if the project is for a new or enhanced product

Process owner, if the project is streamlining an existing process

Marketing representative, if the project is related to a third-party partnership

Line-of-business manager

- **Quality professional**—The Six Sigma Black Belt or other quality adviser in the organization.
- **Subject matter experts**—Typically representatives from the areas of business or technology areas that are affected by the project.
- **Technology support partners**—Those responsible for translating the business requirements into system modifications or enhancements on the affected systems or applications.
- **Other support partners**—Additional resources that might be required as a supporting expert, such as a representative from the legal, finance, risk, compliance, or audit departments.

If this risk assessment work session is being held to focus on risks specifically related to testing and implementation, consider adding the following participants to the list:

- **Test lead**—The person responsible for putting together the test plan and ensuring its completion
- **Production support representative**—The person responsible for the ongoing support and monitoring of the system after implementation
- **Vendors**—Any vendors that are involved in development, testing, or implementation efforts for this project

What Will I Have When It's Over?

In addition to the intangible benefits of the learnings gained through healthy dialogue and debate of ideas, the work session will also produce tangible results. For the risk assessment work session, this includes:

- A risk assessment reflecting the team's understanding of project, process, product, and service risks, causes, and effects, along with their severity, probability of occurrence, and detectability.
- Identification of high-priority risks and associated planned mitigation activities and contingency plans.
- A list of actions and tasks required to finalize the risk assessment.



These outputs are a direct result of the work done with the team during the work session. Templates for these deliverables are available on the enclosed CD.

Techniques to Use

To facilitate this work session, familiarize yourself with the following tools and techniques. This is by no means a complete list, but we've found these to be extremely helpful in eliciting the necessary information for this deliverable. Refer to Part Three of this book for details on using these techniques.

General Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Sixteen: Flip-Charting
- Chapter Seventeen: Brainstorming
- Chapter Eighteen: Facilitated Dialogue
- Chapter Nineteen: Nominal Group and Affinity Analysis
- Chapter Twenty: Prioritization Techniques
- Chapter Twenty-One: Breakout Groups
- Chapter Twenty-Two: Staying On Track: Agendas, Action Items, and Other Focusing Techniques

Specialized Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Twenty-Five: Scope Framing
- Chapter Twenty-Six: Guiding Factors: Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies, and Touch Points
- Chapter Twenty-Seven: Discovering Impacts
- Chapter Twenty-Eight: Risk Analysis Matrices

Keys to Success

Every facilitated session has its lessons learned. Here are ours specifically for this type of work session. May you never have to travel down the same roads we did to learn these things the hard way.

- DON'T overreact too early in the work session to the slow pace at which you're completing the risk matrix. It usually takes some time for the team to get used to the process, so the first five rows you attempt to complete in the matrix may take longer than anticipated. After that, the group will settle in and pick up their pace.
- DON'T allow this to become a "what-if?" nightmare. Force the team to deal with the most probable scenarios rather than the extremes.
- DON'T try to fix why the root causes are occurring. Instead, identify the steps necessary to minimize, avoid, or eliminate the problem *for* this project. If further long-term action is desired, assign an action item for follow-up.
- DON'T consume precious work session time by capturing mitigating actions and contingency plans for every risk. There are some risks that the team will be willing to accept. Other risks will require the identification of mitigating actions to prevent the risk from occurring, and still others might require contingency plans as well as mitigating actions.
- DON'T worry about document format until after the work session.
- DO follow up to ensure that the necessary players will be present at the work session. Without the right people, you will not have a complete understanding of the potential risks.
- DO work with a core team to create a draft matrix prior to the session. It's always easier to revise information than create from scratch.
- DO discuss the decision-making process up front with the team. Make sure they understand that the project manager or project sponsor will serve as the tie-breaker if the team can't agree on ranking or other factors.
- DO realize that each risk assessment matrix is a work of art. Expect changes to your standard template to accommodate the terminology or interests of the team.
- DO know the reason for each column on the risk assessment matrix and what type of information you expect to capture in it (be prepared with examples for the first few).
- DO attempt to incorporate fun into risk assessment work sessions. These types of sessions can be tedious and repetitive, so have fun where possible. Toss a ball to a participant to signal that it's that person's turn to answer a question, pass around a big hammer to anyone who is repeatedly negative, and get the team engaged as much as possible.
- DO get concurrence on the rating scales before using them. Create handouts or post the rating scales and definitions on a flip chart so they can continuously be referenced.

Chapter 14

Convening Work-in-Progress Reviews

AS A PROJECT MANAGER or sponsor of a large, complex project, have you ever wondered if everyone is really on the same page? Have you stayed up late worrying about whether you've missed some key dependency that will bite you later? As you coordinate efforts between subteams, are you continually fretting that something is falling through the cracks? Has your project been delayed or derailed? Is the progress or quality of the deliverables questionable? If any of these are true, then work-in-progress review sessions are just what you need. A work-in-progress review session is a work session designed to perform a checkup on the status of a project and its deliverables at key points throughout the project lifecycle. It validates that the project is going in the right direction, confirms the project timeline, and ensures that all project subteams are working on the right priorities.

The work-in-progress review session brings the project core team and project subteam leaders together to walk through key deliverables. This discussion promotes better understanding of interdependencies, identifies at-risk deliverables, and allows discussion around time frames. This enlightened understanding keeps the team and management aware of potential landmines and allows escalation steps to be taken to prevent project delays that otherwise might have gone unnoticed.

If you are using agile project management or development approaches, work-in-progress review sessions are much more a part of daily project life. They happen as a regular part of the project and are not as formal as we describe here.

Occasionally we receive resistance from project managers or team members about the work-in-progress review concept. They feel their deliverables are “not complete enough” to present to a larger audience. They fear that preparing for the review will create an additional burden on their already

overtaxed schedule. It is important to stress that this work-in-progress review session is not intended to create additional work. It is intended to demonstrate the current state or status of the deliverables, obtain team input on quality and consistency, and understand what gaps need to be closed or issues resolved in order to complete the deliverables. It improves collaboration and awareness, and highlights issues or concerns early while they can still be addressed without derailing or delaying the project. It is not a witch-hunt to find out who's doing well and who's not. So leave the deliverables in their current state. There's no need to pretty them up or accelerate the timeline to finalize anything. This is just a point-in-time status on progress. Work-in-progress review sessions are our friends!

Unlike other work sessions, which have a standard deliverable template, the output from the work-in-progress review session consists of the work-in-progress (WIP) deliverable table and any updates to project deliverables suggested by the team during the walk through. The table is used to manage the deliverable discussion. It lists each deliverable that will be discussed by the subteam leaders, and the allotted amount of time they have on the agenda. It allows the subteam leaders to provide the estimated percentage complete for each deliverable, the target completion, date, and any associated issues or dependencies.

A WIP table typically contains at a minimum the columns shown in the example in Table 14.1:

- *Subteam*: The name of the subteams within the project.
- *Subteam Leader/Location*: The name of each subteam leader and his or her location in the country (or world).
- *Time Allotted*: How much time each subteam leader will have to discuss their deliverables.
- *Deliverable Number*: A unique number to allow the team to refer easily to specific items on the list. This number will also be used for identifying dependencies between deliverables.
- *Key Deliverables*: The key deliverables or items being worked on by each subteam. This is not meant to be a task list or project plan replacement, so limit the list to those items that are critical within each subteam. If you use a work breakdown structure (WBS) to guide your projects, these deliverables may already be listed as tasks or milestones.
- *Target Completion Date*: The target completion date for the deliverable. If you use a WBS to guide your projects, these due dates may already be listed.
- *% Complete*: What percentage of the deliverable is currently complete.

TABLE 14.1

Work-in-Progress Deliverable Table

Subteam	Subteam Leader/ Location	Time Allotted	#	Key Deliverables	Target Completion Date	% Complete	Dependent on #	Issues/ Comments
Technology	Bill Gates/CA	30 min.	1	High-Level Design	8/6/05	99%		Content done. Just awaiting verbiage clean-up
			2	Detailed Specifications	8/11/05	95%		Still gathering: -Detailed specs from Manufacturing -Network specs
Training/ Communication	Mrs. Doubtfire/AZ	15 min.	4	Needs Analysis	8/13/05	70%		Still gathering: -Identification of differences in process for India call center -Understanding of how applications must be received for non-U.S. customers
			5	Design Approach	8/17/05	100%		
			6	Detail Design Document	8/26/05	0%	5	Will require approval from all affected business units & stakeholders
Web Site	Kris Kringle/AK	15 min.	7	Training Material	9/17/05	0%	6	
			10	Wire Frames	7/26/05	100%		
			11	Content	8/15/05	90%	15	Still need to finalize wording on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
			12	Visual Design for Header	8/4/05	100%		
			13	Initial Test Plan	8/4/05	100%		

Subteam	Subteam Leader/ Location	Time Allotted	#	Key Deliverables	Target Completion Date	% Complete	Dependent on #	Issues/ Comments
Legal	Perry Mason/NY	15 min.	14	Contract Approval	7/12/05	100%		
			15	Finalized Terms & Conditions	8/20/05	90%		
			16	Conceptual Design Approvals	9/15/05	0%		
Testing	Tim Toolman/MI	30 min.	17	Test Plan by Unit	8/31/05	25%	2	
			18	Integrated Test Plan	8/31/05	0%		
			19	Test Scripts by Unit	8/31/05	25%	2 10	
			20	Integrated Test Scripts	8/31/05	0%		
Implementation	Harry Kerry/TX	30 min.	21	Roles/ Responsibilities	9/15/05	2%		All business subteams need to provide whom to contact for issues in each business area postimplementation
			23	Escalation Plan	9/15/05	2%		

- *Dependent on #:* Whether a specific deliverable is dependent on completion of or information from another deliverable on the list. Discussion around this topic often results in “aha’s” since subteams often work in isolation with minimal interaction or knowledge of how their deliverables are actually used in other subteams.
- *Issues/Comments:* Issues hindering progress or needing escalation and other informational comments.



See the enclosed CD for a copy of the WIP Table.

Do I Need a Work-in-Progress Review Session?

Work-in-progress review sessions are a great addition to complex, multidimensional projects. They help the project manager stay abreast of each subteam’s progress and hurdles so they can be addressed before causing project delays. But they can also be beneficial for smaller projects. They provide a way for the project manager to get the status of outstanding sections within a specific deliverable like the process analysis and design document or the business requirements document. Regardless of the size of the project, a work-in-progress review session can ensure that the project is ready to move to the next phase. For Six Sigma projects, it’s a great way to get prepared for the exit tollgates (or status checkpoints) required at the end of each project phase.

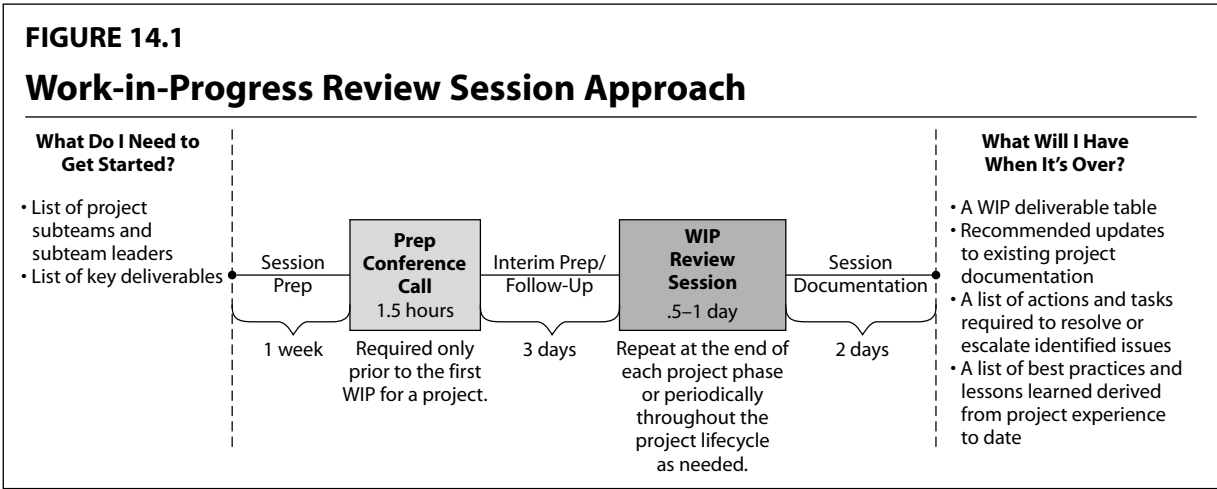
Conducting a facilitated work-in-progress review session will:

- Provide understanding of the work completed to date and the status of work still pending.
- Ensure quality of and consistency among deliverables.
- Identify or clarify project interdependencies.
- Highlight potential roadblocks so they can be dealt with early.
- Allow the capture of best practices and lessons learned to date.
- Provide confidence in the project plan and timeline.

What Is the Approach?

We’ve already discussed the basics of work session preparation, delivery, and follow-up in Chapters Five through Nine, so we won’t rehash that here. Instead, we want to show how the work-in progress review fits into that model.

The end-to-end timeline for the first work-in-progress review session is approximately two weeks, as shown in Figure 14.1. After that, you’ll be able to execute repeated reviews at various stages throughout the project lifecycle without the prep conference call and interim follow-up, reducing the turnaround time to about one week. The length of the work session



itself depends on the level of detail desired during the review and the complexity of the project. If you have several subteams and want some deeper information you'll need a longer session.

Unlike other types of work sessions we've discussed, the work-in-progress review session doesn't need to be face-to-face. Although we believe that nothing substitutes for the benefits gained from being face-to-face to review deliverables, it is a work session that can be convened successfully with remote participants. Make every effort, however, to have a visual mechanism available for sharing of information (such as NetMeeting, PictureTalk, or similar meeting software) and reliable phone conference capability. Since work-in-progress review sessions are designed to allow participation from around the globe, be sure to consider the impact of various time zones.

Hold a Prep Conference Call

Work-in-progress review sessions must be well planned to be effective, so no less than one week prior to your first review, hold a ninety-minute conference call with all planned work session attendees. This call is designed to introduce the participants to the purpose of the work session and the WIP deliverable table. To enable everyone to follow along, send a copy of the table to all participants prior to the call. (This table should already include the items noted in the "What Do I Need to Get Started?" section of this chapter.)

After the first WIP review, the team will be familiar with the process, so for subsequent WIP reviews with the same project audience, you will not need to have a prep conference call unless subteams or subteam leaders change. An e-mail requesting the presenters and time allotments required should be sufficient.

Use the agenda in Exhibit 14.1 to structure the meeting. We've provided a description of each section of the agenda and who is typically responsible for presenting or leading that section. Where more detail is required, we've pointed to the chapter in the book which contains that information.

EXHIBIT 14.1**Work-in-Progress Review Prep Conference Call Agenda**

Meeting Objectives

- To understand the purpose of a Work-in-Progress (WIP) Review
- To gain familiarity with the WIP deliverable table
- To create the agenda for the WIP Review

Work-in-Progress Review Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welcome everyone to the WIP prep call and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➤ Ask each Participant to state his or her name and the subteam. 	5 min., Project Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➤ Quickly review the objectives for today's meeting and relevant ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	5 min., Facilitator

II. Overview of WIP Review

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explain the purpose of the WIP Review and why you've decided to use this type of work session for this project. ➤ Answer any questions the team may have. 	5 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Discuss what's expected from the subteam leaders at the WIP Reviews. As a subteam leader, you (or your designee) will be walking through your key deliverables with the team. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They'll need to determine what would be most valuable to present to the team: the whole deliverable, key portions that need input, an overview, table of contents, or something else. 	15 min., Facilitator



Work-in-Progress Review Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No formal presentation or special format is required. ◦ Stress that this review is not intended to create additional work or require extensive prep time: “We don’t want this review to disrupt the existing project timeline. We will review deliverables in their current state.” ➤ They should be prepared to answer the following questions about each deliverable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What is the purpose of this deliverable? Who will use it, and how? ◦ What’s your current percentage complete? ◦ Is your deliverable on target to complete by the stated date, behind, or ahead of schedule? ◦ Are there any unresolved issues preventing forward progress? ◦ Is this deliverable dependent on or waiting for information from any other deliverable? ➤ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	
III. Review the WIP Deliverable Table	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe the description of each column. ➤ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	10 min., Facilitator
IV. Craft the WIP Review Agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm subteams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Confirm that the list of subteams is accurate. Update as needed. ➤ Confirm that each of the subteam leaders will be presenting at the WIP Review. If not, change the name listed in the WIP deliverable table to reflect the person who will be presenting. ➤ Determine the order of presentation on the agenda (which subteam should go first, second, and so on). 	15 min., Facilitator

EXHIBIT 14.1 (contd.)

Work-in-Progress Review Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Confirm that the deliverables listed in the table for each subteam are correct. Update as needed. ➢ Validate that the order of the deliverables in the table is the order in which they will be presented. Update as needed. ➢ As a result of discussion or input from the team during the WIP Review, they may need to make updates to their deliverables. If this is the case, how do they want the updates handled? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do they want the work session analyst to capture the list of items so they can update the deliverables after the meeting? ○ Do they want the Facilitator to update the deliverables as they're being presented? ○ Other options? 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify time allotments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Ask each subteam leader how much time they will need to present the subteams' deliverables. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This time will vary for each subteam depending on the number of deliverables being discussed and the stage they are at in their development process. ○ These time limits will be strictly managed during the WIP Review Session to ensure that everyone gets a chance to participate. ➢ The summation of these times will ultimately determine whether a half-day or full-day WIP Review Session is needed. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
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V. Wrap-Up

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ If any action items were captured during the meeting, review them to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on action items. 	<p>5 min., Facilitator</p>
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Work-in-Progress Review Prep Conference Call Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm WIP Review Session Participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Determine whether additional representatives or stakeholders would benefit from attending the WIP Review Session. ➢ If so, assign an action item to the Project Manager to follow up on getting their commitment to attend. 	<p>5 min., Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Let them know that an updated WIP deliverable table will be distributed after this meeting. They'll need to review it for accuracy. ➢ Remind them of the date and time of the WIP Review Session. ➢ Remind them to send their deliverables or what they want presented to the team at the WIP Review Session to the Project Manager and Facilitator at least one day prior to the review session. ➢ Answer any final questions. ➢ Thank the team again for their work in making this project a success. 	<p>5 min., Project Manager</p>



The information gathered in the prep conference call should be added to the WIP Deliverable Table (see the CD for a copy of this template) and redistributed to the team prior to the review session. They will need to examine the table prior to the review session to:

- Validate that the correct deliverables are listed.
- Confirm that they can meet the allotted time frame.
- Be prepared to provide the target completion date and percentage complete for each deliverable.
- Determine what would be most valuable to present to the team: the whole deliverable, key portions that need input, an overview, table of contents, or something else.

Remember that anything that needs to be reviewed in the session must be sent to the project manager and facilitator at least one day in advance so it can be distributed to the team.

Conduct the Review Session

The work-in-progress review session is typically a half-day to full-day work session designed to promote the review and assessment of in-progress deliverables for the current project phase. This work session is intended to get project team members and critical other participants together to assess the project direction and progress. This provides the opportunity to adjust deliverables to be more aligned with one another and to redirect the team as necessary in midphase. It also ensures that the deliverables will be of higher quality as the team approaches the end of the project.

This work session does not require that all team members be face-to-face. Assuming that the deliverables to be presented have been distributed in advance, this session allows participation from people across the globe. One of the added values of this type of work session comes from all participants' hearing and engaging in the work being performed by other sub-teams; however, you may consider allowing those in more remote time zones to attend for just their portion of the review. Consider using a virtual meeting tool (like NetMeeting, PictureTalk, or PlaceWare) to make review of the information more interactive.

This review session is where the enlightenment happens. The agenda in Exhibit 14.2 describes the steps you'll go through with the team to help them review the progress on their deliverables. In the agenda, we've assumed that this work-in-progress review session is one day in length. If it's shorter or longer, adjust the time frames for each activity accordingly. Remember to build in additional time for breaks (we suggest one fifteen-minute break in the morning and two ten-minute breaks in the afternoon) and lunch (usually thirty minutes if it's catered and an hour if it's not).

After the review session, allow two days to produce the deliverables and distribute them to the team. Within a week, check in with the project manager and sponsor to review the deliverables and respond to any outstanding questions. At this time, the deliverable is handed off to the project manager to take forward and use appropriately in support of the next steps in the project.

EXHIBIT 14.2

Work-in-Progress Review Session Agenda

Meeting Objectives

- To review subteam deliverable progress to date against plan
- To understand interdependencies between deliverables
- To reach agreement on necessary adjustments to deliverables and time lines
- To resolve cross-deliverable issues and questions
- To identify best practices and lessons learned to date

Work-in-Progress Review Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
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I. Kick-Off

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Welcome everyone to the Work-in-Progress (WIP) Review Session and acknowledge the effort and time these people are spending on behalf of the project. ➤ If there are Participants who weren't in the prep conference call, set the stage regarding expectations of what will be accomplished in the WIP Review Session. Explain the purpose of the WIP Review Session and value gained from it for the project. ➤ Ask each Participant to state his or her name and subteam or area he or she represents. 	<p>10 min., Project Manager</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the project status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Answer the following questions to bring the team up-to-date on the current status of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What's the history of the project? (When did it begin? Which phase of the project lifecycle are we in? Who are the new team members, if any?) ○ What were the original business objectives? Have they changed? ○ Has the scope of the effort altered? If so, please describe. ○ What is the status of the project at this point? Is the project in "red, yellow, green" status? Use whatever indicators of project status are relevant within the organization. ○ Are we still adhering to the original time-line? If not, what has changed, and why? ➤ Answer any questions the team has as you go. 	<p>15 min., Project Manager</p>

EXHIBIT 14.2 (contd.)

Work-in-Progress Review Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe your role as a Facilitator versus their role as Participants. You guide the process; they provide the knowledge, expertise, and content. ➤ Review the objectives for the WIP Review Session, the agenda, and the ground rules by which everyone should play. See the enclosed CD for a list of the standard ground rules. 	<p>5 min., Facilitator</p>

II. Deliverable Review

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Describe the process that will be followed during the WIP Review Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ “We’ll present in the order listed on the WIP deliverable table.” ◦ “Feel free to ask questions of the presenter as we go. If there are a lot of questions, we may need to hold them until the end to ensure the presenter can get through the deliverables.” ◦ “There will be approximately two minutes between presentations to allow changing from one presentation to the next.” ◦ “Please confirm how you want updates or comments regarding the deliverables captured: within the deliverable itself or on a separate list.” ◦ “We’ll be strictly adhering to the time limits noted on the WIP deliverable table.” <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Let each presenter know when he or she has 5 minutes left.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Consider using a stopwatch to time each presentation.</p> ◦ “Action items will be captured as we go and reviewed at the end of this meeting.” ➤ Answer any questions the team has about the process. 	<p>10 min., Facilitator</p>
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Work-in-Progress Review Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present deliverables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Walk through each deliverable in order. Answer the following questions for each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What is the purpose of this deliverable? Who will use it and how? ◦ What’s your target completion date? ◦ What’s your current percentage complete? ◦ Is your deliverable on target to complete by the stated date, behind, or ahead of schedule? ◦ Walk through what you’ve selected to present, synthesizing content, highlighting issues and concerns, and answering any questions. ◦ Are there any unresolved issues preventing forward progress? ◦ Is this deliverable dependent on or waiting for information from any other deliverable? ➤ As issues are identified, the Facilitator should ask how these might affect the project timeline. This list of action items will identify tasks for either resolving the identified issues or notifying management that the issue exists (i.e., escalating it) so that it can get the attention and resources necessary to resolve it. ➤ Repeat this process for each subteam. 	<p>5 hrs. (divided across subteams as stated in the WIP deliverable table), Subteam Leader or Designee</p>
<p>III. Wrap-Up</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify lessons learned <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Using the Force-Field Analysis technique, ask the team to identify things that have been helpful in enabling them to make progress, and list them on one flip chart. On a second flip chart, ask them to identify things that hindered their progress. ➤ As time allows, translate these items into do’s and don’ts for future project efforts. ➤ See Chapter Twenty for more information on facilitating Force-Field Analysis. 	<p>30 min., Facilitator</p>

EXHIBIT 14.2 (contd.)	
Work-in-Progress Review Session Agenda	Estimated Time & Responsible Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review follow-up actions needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ If any action items were captured during the meeting, review them to ensure clarity and assign owners and due dates. ➢ Review the process for getting completed action items and resolved issues to the Project Manager. ➢ See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information on issues and action items. 	20 min., Facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Discuss what happens next in the project. ➢ Set a date for the next WIP Review Session. ➢ Thank the team again for their participation. 	10 min., Project Manager

What Do I Need to Get Started?

There are some key pieces of information that will help you prepare for a work-in-progress review session. They'll provide the background you need for planning and facilitating the review. If you are the project manager, you may already have these items at hand. If not, work with your subteams to gather or develop this content prior to the work-in-progress review session prep call:

- List of project subteams and subteam leaders. This information should be entered into the WIP deliverables table and confirmed as part of the prep conference call.
- List of key deliverables. This is not a list of all project deliverables, but those that are considered milestones, constraints, or significant to the timely completion of the project. This information should be entered into the WIP deliverables table and confirmed as part of the prep conference call.

Who Should Be Invited?

There is no cookie-cutter approach. Every project will require a unique set of participants depending on the business areas and technologies affected. However, we've listed a common set of contributors as a starting point for you to use:

- Project manager—The person responsible for managing, tracking, and the ultimate successful implementation of the project from the business and technical sides. (There may be more than one project manager.)

- Program manager—If your organization has a Program Management Office (PMO), consider inviting the person overseeing projects for your division. He or she may benefit from understanding the issues your project is facing. This person may also assist in escalating resolution and prevent these issues from recurring on future projects.
- Facilitator—The person responsible for guiding the team through the planning and execution of the work session.
- Project sponsor—The person paying for or sponsoring the project. This person may also function as one of the following:
 - Product manager, if the project is for a new or enhanced product
 - Process owner, if the project is streamlining an existing process
 - Marketing representative, if the project is related to a third-party partnership
 - Line-of-business manager
- Quality professional—The Six Sigma Black Belt or other quality adviser in your organization.
- Subteam leaders (or their designees)—Representatives from the business or technology areas that are heading up specific components of the project.
- Project team members—Members of the project team who are not considered subteam leaders but are subject matter experts and would benefit from understanding the current status of deliverables or might contribute to issue resolution.
- Other support partners—Supporting resources from the legal, finance, risk, compliance, or audit departments that might benefit from understanding current deliverable status or might contribute to issue resolution.

What Will I Have When It's Over?

In addition to the intangible benefits and the learnings gained through healthy dialogue and identification of issues, the review session will produce tangible results. For the work-in-progress review session, this includes:

- A WIP deliverable table reflecting the team's understanding of key deliverables, due dates, status, dependencies, and issues.
- Recommended updates to existing project documentation, such as revisions to the project charter, BRD, communication plan, test plan, or project timeline.
- A list of action items that will identify tasks for either resolving the identified issues or notifying management that the issue exists (that is,

escalating it) so that it can get the attention and resources necessary to resolve it.

- A list of best practices and lessons learned derived from project experiences to date.



These outputs are a direct result of the work done with the team during the work session. Templates for these deliverables are available on the enclosed CD.

Techniques to Use

To facilitate this work session, familiarize yourself with the following tools and techniques. This is by no means a complete list, but we've found these to be extremely helpful in eliciting the necessary information for this deliverable. Refer to Part Three of this book for details on using these techniques.

General Facilitation Techniques

- Chapter Sixteen: Flip-Charting
- Chapter Seventeen: Brainstorming
- Chapter Eighteen: Facilitated Dialogue
- Chapter Twenty: Prioritization Techniques (specifically Force-Field Analysis)
- Chapter Twenty-Two: Staying On Track: Agendas, Action Items, and Other Focusing Techniques

Keys to Success

Every facilitated session has its lessons learned. Here are ours specifically for this type of work session. May you never have to travel down the same roads we did to learn these things the hard way.

- DON'T allow the team to "pretty up" deliverables or create specialized presentations for the review session. This is just a point-in-time status on progress, so leave the deliverables in their current state.
- DON'T assume that everyone knows or remembers the goals of the project, especially if the project has been stalled or new associates have joined the project team.
- DON'T forget to account for time zones when scheduling the review. You may want to consider allowing those in more distant time zones to attend for just their portion of the review.

- DO strictly adhere to the time allotted for each presenter so that everyone has an opportunity to fully participate.
- DO capture project interdependencies, action items, issues, and lessons learned throughout the review session.
- DO remember that meeting face-to-face is not required for the work-in-progress review session. It can be effectively run with a conference call, assuming that the deliverables to be presented have been distributed to the team in advance.
- DO use current project documentation (regardless of its condition). This work session is not intended to create additional work for the team members.
- DO make every effort to portray the work-in-progress review session in the spirit for which it is intended. It is not a witch-hunt to find out who's doing well and who's not.

Part Three

The Techniques

Section Five

General Facilitation Techniques

Engaging the Group

IF ALL YOU HAVE IS A HAMMER, every problem will be a nail. Don't get caught in the rut of doing the same thing over and over again just because you can. Good facilitators have a broad set of techniques and skills in their toolbox. Great facilitators have the wisdom to know when and how to apply them intelligently.

Chapters Fifteen through Twenty-Two describe proven general facilitation techniques that enable a facilitator to manage the group interaction effectively. When choosing a technique to use, ask yourself which technique will best engage the group in this circumstance. Which technique will best display the group's output in a manner that is easily conveyed and understood? Which technique will enhance the sharing of information and knowledge? You won't go wrong if you focus on choosing techniques that help the group communicate effectively. After all, it's really all about communication, as we highlight in Chapter Fifteen.

With any technique, it is important to understand the nature of the problem or challenge before trying to apply a technique. In determining the right general facilitation technique to address your specific situation, you need to:

- Know the purpose and capabilities of the technique.
- Know the conventions of the technique.
- Understand how the technique contributes to the activity at hand.
- Choose a facilitation technique that will best engage the group in the activity. This is going to depend on what you need to accomplish, the time of day, the energy level of the group, the type of participation (visual: face-to-face, or auditory: over the phone), and the nature of the activity itself.

- Vary the facilitation techniques throughout the work session to keep the work session interesting.
- Develop your own expertise in using the technique, so that the technique does not distract you from your role as facilitator. The techniques you use need to be second nature to you.

Chapter 15

It's All About Communication

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more or less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

—LEWIS CARROLL

COMMUNICATION. IT CAN MAKE or break your work session. When people are communicating successfully, amazing results can occur. When they are not communicating, no amount of time spent in a work session can accomplish objectives.

We are now entering the part of the book that presents useful work session techniques. Applying any approach or technique within a work session requires interaction with others. And that requires communication. As we are well aware from earlier discussions, projects succeed or fail largely because of people challenges, not technology challenges. Communication is central to work session success.

Why Communication Is So Important

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines communication as "the exchange of information through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior." In other words, communication is not just speaking and hearing words. Words provide one type of symbol through which we communicate, but communication extends well beyond words into other symbols, signals, and behaviors. Words, motions, facial expressions, body position, sounds. "All behavior, not only speech, is communication, and all communication affects behavior" (Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson, 1967, p. 22).

In previous chapters, we looked at work session benefits. Without effective communication, these benefits do not exist. Collaborating to build a high-quality deliverable in an accelerated time frame, effective sharing of information and ideas that enable creative decision making, and achieving joint ownership of results can happen only when communication is open and effective.

Each output from a work session must have meaning. It must present some useful set of information in an organized fashion to an audience that will use that information to further the objectives of the project. Without shared understanding, the deliverable means nothing. It is a set of data on a page. Someone checks it off the to-do list and continues merrily on their way.

To gain the full benefit of facilitated work sessions, we must first and foremost understand effective communication: what it is, how to enable it, and how to effectively capture the results to build valuable work session outputs.

Effective Communication Basics for Facilitators

Effective communication, by our definition, is achieved when every participant within a work session:

- Understands the work session objectives.
- Is participating actively in the exchange of information and ideas.
- Contributes to team decision making and understands the rationale supporting decisions.
- Understands the outputs created and can explain them to others.

An effective facilitator understands basic principles that contribute to effective communication and practices them to guide the work session process successfully. Consider the principles that follow.

Words Mean Different Things to Different People

Say the word *dog* in a group setting. Some folks will get all warm and fuzzy remembering Fido, the companion of their youth. Others (perhaps the mail carrier) will bristle at the mention of the word. So it is with words. As a facilitator, it is imperative that you understand the group meaning of the words that are being used and captured. Here are some tips that might help you clarify and get the team to agree on the meaning of words:

- *Use the words and phrases of your participants.* If participants use a particular term or phrase repeatedly, adopt it and incorporate it into your questioning and capture of information. Individual rapport and group

understanding are generated much more quickly when you use the language of the participants as they describe their business, discuss their challenges, and seek solutions.

- *Create a glossary of terms.* Maintain a list of definitions to keep everyone aware of the meaning of terms, phrases, and acronyms. This is valuable to participants in the work session and will be invaluable to those not in the work session who need to understand the resulting documentation.

- *Search for and clarify the “-nym” words.* Listen attentively to group dialogue, and understand what words are synonyms to the words or terms being used by your participants. This will help the team synchronize when they are using two different terms but essentially meaning the same thing. Also listen for homonyms—words or phrases that sound alike but have different meaning. These can be especially dangerous, since participants believe they are saying and meaning the same thing, when in fact there are multiple interpretations occurring.

- *When you hear a word or phrase being used or perceived negatively, avoid it.* Listen for words and phrases that set people off, and avoid them as much as possible. Every individual and work group has certain words or phrases that are overused or remind them of previous project failures or negative experiences.

It would be helpful to find out in advance of the work session what some of these terms may be. During preparation, ask the project sponsor or project manager what terms or phrases might spark a negative response from the group. Or ask the team, “What have you experienced in a project that you never want to experience again?” Their answers will give you clues to negative experiences. Listen for the words they use when they respond to this question. If there are specific terms or phrases used repeatedly to describe the negative experience, make note of this and avoid using these words with the work session team.

Pay Attention to All Behavior, Not Just Verbal Communication

According to Kosmo Kramer on *Seinfeld*, “Ninety-four percent of our communication is nonverbal.” Experts differ on the exact percentage, but Kramer’s point is well made. Communication does not come from words alone. Psychologist Albert Mehrabian (1972) provides this information:

- Seven percent of meaning is in the words that are spoken.
- Thirty-eight percent of meaning is within tone and inflection (the way that words are said).
- Fifty-five percent of meaning is in facial expression or posture.

With such a large amount of communication occurring through nonverbal modes, here are a few tips for successfully recognizing and incorporating nonverbal meaning into work session communication:

- *Encourage face-to-face participation whenever possible.* Mehrabian's research suggests that without visual insights into nonverbal communication, the meaning of the dialogue can be only 45 percent complete. Great care needs to be taken when conversation is not face-to-face to make sure that what's not being said is still being understood.

- *Don't overreact to nonverbal cues.* Don't make judgments based on nonverbal communication without considering the context. Observe your audience and their overall engagement with the dialogue. Not everyone who sits with arms crossed is stubborn or in disagreement with the speaker. Some people just like to sit with their arms crossed. Those who prefer visual modes of processing information will want others to look at them when they are speaking. Those who are more inclined to process information in an auditory manner, however, may look away and incline their ear to the speaker rather than look at him or her. Don't overreact to the first occurrence of a possible disconnect in communication.

- *Clarify verbally what you may be sensing from nonverbal behaviors.* The great philosopher (and sometimes baseball player) Yogi Berra once said, "You can observe a lot just by watching." As a facilitator, be diligent in observing the nonverbal behaviors of the team. Watch the dynamics when things are positive and people are engaged. What changes when they start to disagree or engage in debate? Who shuts down? Who talks to whom? Does someone dominate? Does someone disengage? Your job as a facilitator is to recognize nonverbal cues and appropriately address them to maintain balanced participation and ensure that all voices are heard. For example, if someone maintains a furrowed brow during exchange of information and is not participating in the exchange, direct a question to that participant, such as, "Jim, we haven't heard from you. Do you have something to add to the discussion?" As another example, if one or more participants are disengaging entirely, reading other materials, or continuing to have side conversations, take a break and talk with them to understand their concerns and what might be done to address them. If the nonverbal behavior indicates that participants are disagreeing or disconnecting, don't ignore it. Address it and get the team back on track.

You Are 100 Percent Responsible for the Communication

You might be thinking, *Say it isn't so!* You thought communication was a two-way street, didn't you? A fifty-fifty transaction. Well, yes and no. A psychologist once taught us that the meaning of communication is the response

it elicits, and the speaker is responsible for clearly articulating his or her communication in order to receive an appropriate response. What is an “appropriate response”? In a work session setting, an appropriate response is anything that productively leads the team to achieving its objectives. You cannot control the responses of another person, but you can control how you communicate to guide that person’s responses in a healthy and productive direction. Here are some suggestions:

- *Take responsibility for the communication.* When you sense that someone does not understand a question or a comment, refrain from using the habitual phrase, “You don’t understand,” followed by another attempt to tell this person what he or she doesn’t understand. This only sets the stage for a very uncomfortable or negative response from the person who does not understand. Instead, say, “I’m not making myself clear; let me ask [or say] that a different way,” followed by a rewording of the question or clarification of the comment. That keeps responsibility for the communication on you as the speaker and does not shine a negative light on the person who is having difficulty understanding. It allows the entire interaction to remain positive.

- *Remove negative-challenge phrases from your vocabulary.* Table 15.1 is a short list of words and phrases that we often use without even thinking, and we can unknowingly put the listener into a negative frame of mind. Start paying attention to these phrases when you use them and when you hear others using them. Consider substituting alternate words or phrases that are less negative.

- *Do not assume that silence is consent.* It is important to get the confirmation of the group when decisions are made. This closes the communication loop and ensures ownership by the team for work session outcomes. A verbal confirmation of consent is better than nonverbal confirmation. It’s hard for someone to disagree later with decisions and work session results that he or she verbally consented to throughout the work session process.

TABLE 15.1
Negative Phrases and Positive Alternatives

Negative Phrase	Positive Alternative
“What’s your problem?”	“You seem [troubled, concerned]. What’s on your mind?”
“What’s wrong with you?”	“Is something wrong?”
“Let me tell you ...”	“Let me share my [experience, thoughts].”
“You don’t want that.”	“How will that contribute to our solution?”

Tap into the Power of “Consideration”

Magic happens when you use the word *consider*. Often a group can be so focused on finding the right answer or the one answer that they forget to explore. As a facilitator, when you use the word *consider*, you give the group permission to play with an idea. “Consider what Kim just said. What if we could [what Kim just said]?” Or, “Consider for a moment that [this constraint] does not exist. What would you do differently?” *Consider* is a powerful word that enables the mind to go places it might not otherwise go. Use it effectively.

Know Yourself, and Become What the Group Needs

The more we understand ourselves and those around us, the more effectively we can communicate. It is critical for facilitators to understand themselves. What do you prefer? Do you like the big picture, or are you more comfortable with details? Do ideas pop up for you, or do you follow a logical sequence to explore a problem? Do you make your decisions based on detached reasoning guided by principles of right and wrong, or do you prefer to take action based on values and how people will be affected? Are you structured or spontaneous? The more you understand yourself and your natural preferences, the better you will be able to choose what style is most appropriate to the situation at hand. Here are a few tips regarding your own style and behaviors as a facilitator:

- *Be aware of your own preferences.* We are partial to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) as a tool to determine your natural preferences regarding how you take in information and take action. The MBTI helps you understand your preferred speed of interpersonal interaction, as well as your preference for organizing the world around you. This can have a great impact on your awareness as a facilitator and help you understand why certain activities are more naturally enjoyable to you than others. Knowing your own preferences helps you understand in advance what may cause you to tire and what will energize you. (See Resource B in Part Four for more MBTI resources.)

- *Expect anything.* When working in group settings, you will experience an abundance of individual preferences and personalities that may differ from yours. Do not expect everyone to respond as you do. And don’t be thrown off balance when they don’t respond as you prefer. Anticipate the effects of group diversity, and plan accordingly. Your job as a facilitator is to engage the entire group, not just a select few. That means you need to be comfortable with a variety of communication techniques that will allow you to honor the preferences of the group and connect with each of them effectively. For example, if you prefer to stay with the big picture, you will need

to switch gears from time to time during the work session to attend to detailed information. If some in your group prefer visually processing information yet you prefer to process information in an auditory manner, you must discipline yourself to use both words and diagrams to display the group ideas and decisions.

It can be helpful to have a cofacilitator or work session analyst who has a different set of preferences from the primary facilitator. This can help to connect more quickly to a variety of personalities within the group. (See Chapter Six for practical ways to connect with the group.)

- *Your preferences should not dictate your behaviors.* You are not your behavior. You are the one who chooses your behavior. Do not become a slave to your preferences. Do not become stuck in the way you normally react to or handle situations. You must recognize when you need to act in a manner that is *out of the norm* for you if it meets the needs of the group. For example, if you typically prefer to spend extensive time pondering internally before interacting with people, you must learn how to speed up your interpersonal response time when in front of a group. If you are naturally inclined to consider “just the facts, ma’am” when making decisions, you must develop the ability to question the group in ways that will incorporate not just facts but also values, culture, and human impacts into problem solving. Be aware of your preferences, and develop the ability to move into other behaviors to best serve group needs.

Keys to Success

- DON'T go by words alone. Be aware that all behavior is communication. Pay attention to both the words being spoken and what's being communicated nonverbally.
- DON'T create a work session output or deliverable unless it enriches the shared understanding of the team. If it doesn't, then it shouldn't exist. Know your audience when creating deliverables, and ensure that the outputs are created to enable communication.
- DON'T be a slave to one tool, one preference, or one behavior. Make sure you have enough skills in your communication toolbox that you can switch tools when the situation calls for it.
- DO realize that effective communication is essential to work session success. Applying any approach or technique within a session requires interaction with others, and that requires communication. Before you practice any other work session technique, endeavor to become aware of your communication strengths and weaknesses.

- DO understand basic principles of effective communication and practice them. Work with the following list, and add to it as you learn additional principles that work for you:

Words mean different things to different people.

Use the words of your participants.

Create a glossary of terms.

Search for and clarify the “-nym” words.

When you hear a word or phrase being used or perceived negatively, avoid it.

Pay attention to all behavior, not just verbal communication.

Encourage face-to-face participation whenever possible.

Don't overreact to nonverbal cues.

Clarify verbally what you may be sensing from nonverbal behaviors.

You are 100 percent responsible for the communication.

Take responsibility for the communication.

Remove negative-challenge phrases from your vocabulary.

Don't assume that silence is consent.

Tap into the power of “consideration.”

Know yourself, and become what the group needs.

Be aware of your own preferences.

Expect anything.

Your preferences should not dictate your behaviors.

- DO practice communication techniques. A facilitator has a lot to think about during a work session. Managing the communication of the group cannot take all of your attention. So practice communication techniques diligently to make them second nature to you.

Chapter 16

Flip-Charting

What It Does	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helps the group retain what has been discussed and refer back to what has been agreed on• Provides a group memory and visual reminder of the group's work and progress• Encourages participation and synergy of ideas by visually displaying information• Verifies that an idea or suggestion has been understood and recorded• Focuses the group's attention on key points or processes—the work at hand• Saves time by helping you organize and think through priorities and topics so that basic flip charts can be posted in advance of the work session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To display prepared information such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">AgendasMeeting objectivesGround rulesPrepared definitionsCategoriesRanking, rating scales• To capture the substance of the work session decisions and deliverables such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Working decisionsAssumptionsImpactsConstraintsAction itemsRisksDependenciesParking lot itemsWork session deliverables

FLIP-CHARTING IS AN important meeting tool, not only for presenting but also for capturing relevant information throughout the work session. And it can be performed using electronic (via laptop and projector) and standard (flip chart pad and stand) methods.

Facilitating the Technique

Flip-charting, also known as scribing or recording, is not always as easy as it seems. Here are some tips on using flip charts effectively in your work session.

Displaying Prepared Information

1. Determine what information you want to display throughout the work session to guide group progress or discussion. Some common items are:
 - Agendas.* Displaying the agenda allows the team to track its progress over the course of the work session.
 - Objectives.* This gives the group an anchor to refer to when they're getting off-track.
 - Ground rules.* Displaying the ground rules allows the facilitator to be able to remind the team of their agreements as needed.
2. Create the flip charts prior to the work session.
3. Use color and graphics (if you're gifted) to draw attention to the key points on each flip chart.
4. Post the flip charts visibly in the room, and leave them there throughout the work session.

Recording New Ideas

1. Determine what information you want to capture throughout the work session. Some common items are:
 - Working decisions:* These are team decisions that guide the building of deliverables for the work session.
 - Action items:* Capturing this information on a flip chart during the work session ensures that participants leave with agreement on what needs to be done, by whom, and by when. This information can then be sent out as a written reminder.

Electronic Versus Standard Flip-Charting

How do you know whether to record something on a flip chart or a laptop? If you're displaying what you capture to the group, are flip charts still needed? Here are the general rules of thumb.



When to Capture Information on Standard Flip Charts

- The items need to be remembered by the team (for example, meeting objectives).
- The items need to be referred to by the facilitator (for example, ground rules).
- The items can be checked off to show progress (for example, agendas or lists).



When to Capture Information Electronically

- The information must be quickly printed for use during or immediately after the meeting.
- The information is highly changeable.
- There is a large volume of information to be captured.
- Your typing speed won't impede group progress.

Impacts, risks, assumptions, and dependencies: Having a flip chart available to record these types of items as they come up during the work session increases the amount of information you can capture without impeding the flow of the work session.

Parking lot items: It is helpful to capture issues that are not part of the planned agenda or topic at hand on a flip chart. Putting these items in the “parking lot” allows participants to see that their concerns have been documented for future discussion.

Work session deliverables: The actual output to be generated by the work session. This may be in a predetermined document format, or it may be lists, tables of information, diagrams, or other agreed-on models.

2. Decide who will do the flip-charting—you or someone else. This decision should be made prior to the work session. If you are working with a work session analyst, that person’s role is to assist with the capture of information. Discuss the planned activities so he or she will be prepared to capture what’s needed.
3. Put up blank placeholder flip chart pages around the room to use as needed during the work session. This allows you to capture information quickly without turning or tearing off flip chart pages.
4. Question the participants carefully, and listen actively. Do not just mechanically write down everything that the group says. Once clear ideas begin to form, capture as much as possible to summarize what the speaker is saying. Repeat it back to the speaker to validate that you’ve captured the comment.
5. When capturing information, use the words and phrases of the participants to the greatest degree possible. Reword only when necessary to synthesize multiple ideas or integrate with previous group decisions or comments. When rewording, get the consensus of the group regarding the final phrasing.
6. Remind the team that all information on the flip charts will be incorporated into the final documentation.

Variations

There are alternate methods of performing this technique. Here is a variation we’ve found to be both interesting and effective:

- Some meeting rooms are equipped with electronic whiteboards. These are environmentally friendly and work nearly as well as flip charts. But they have one major drawback: if you run out of room on an electronic

whiteboard, you cannot tape the work up for everyone to see and start on a fresh sheet. However, on the positive side, you can immediately print out what's on the board and make copies for everyone to refer to during the meeting.

Materials Needed

Depending on the method used to capture the information, you'll need different materials.

Capturing the Information on Flip Charts

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts on the walls)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts
- Any other supporting materials, such as sticky notes or colored dots

Capturing the Information Electronically

- Laptop
- PC projector
- Blank wall or projection screen for display
- Printer and paper for printing electronic materials

Keys to Success

- DON'T use marker colors that aren't easy to read from a distance, such as yellow, pink, light blue, and orange.
- DON'T put flip chart pages that haven't been transcribed into your luggage when traveling. The information you've captured on those charts represents the shared time, knowledge, and energy of the team, and it may be confidential. Never trust it to luggage handlers. Keep it with you until you've transcribed it in the session documentation.
- DON'T cause projection glare. When capturing electronically, make sure that you have a proper projection surface. Use a projection screen or a nonglossy light-colored surface. Projecting onto whiteboards can often cause glare, which makes reading uncomfortable.
- DON'T use flimsy flip chart stands. Check them ahead of time to make sure they can hold the flip chart pad weight and you can easily write on them.

- DO keep information flowing. When capturing information, participants can become impatient and want to move on. If you are using standard flip charts, speed things up by using two scribes and alternating which one is capturing the information. If capturing electronically, make sure the person typing is capable of keeping up with the group discussion pace.
- DO position flip chart stands where they are visible to all participants. Be aware of the room lighting, and place flip charts where they can easily be read by the group. Be sure to stand off to the side of the flip chart so everyone can see. Touch key words on the chart to give emphasis or make a point.
- DO have sufficient supplies: flip chart pads, masking tape, and markers in a variety of dark colors.
- DO write legibly and large enough for everyone to read comfortably. Use the flat edge of the marker rather than the tip so that letters have the same thickness and are readable. If capturing electronically, make sure that the font size is large enough for all to read.
- DO practice writing on a flip chart prior to the meeting if you are uncomfortable or new to using flip charts as a meeting tool. This will give you a sense of the chart space and let you figure out a writing style that works best for you and is legible from a distance.
- DO save time by preparing flip charts ahead of time whenever possible.
- DO save your work often if you are using electronic capture! Also, copy to alternate media (such as a diskette or a memory stick) on breaks so that there is backup for electronic materials. As appropriate, print the electronic information so that participants may have a copy for reference at their seats.
- DO get creative with using supporting materials to help capture information or provide emphasis on flip charts, such as sticky notes of various colors and colored dots.

Chapter 17

Brainstorming

What It Does	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generates a large volume of ideas in a short period of time• Promotes out-of-the-box thinking• Jump-starts a discussion around a specific topic• Encourages creativity• Allows for freedom of thought and expression without threat of criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To identify possible causes of a problem• To generate possible improvement suggestions or alternatives• To begin a discussion of business, system, application, or other types of requirements• To generate ideas around functions or features desired in a new tool, application, product, or service• To define all the tasks necessary to build an action plan• To collect key points from various discussions occurring in subteams• To demonstrate to members of a polarized group that there are more than just two competing alternatives

BRAINSTORMING, also known as structured brainstorming and idea listing, is a two-part activity: (1) generating ideas (the more, the better) and (2) the more important, and often neglected, step of refining those ideas through a review-and-revise activity.

Facilitating the Technique

1. Select or ask for one participant who's willing to be a scribe. Use one scribe for up to ten people and two scribes for more.
2. Clearly state the idea or problem to be brainstormed. Write it down on the whiteboard or at the top of one of the flip charts.

The Art of a Well-Formed Question

Brainstorming focuses a group's attention and energy on a specific question. So "ask and ye shall receive," but ask amiss and you'll wind up with a mess. Here are a few tips we've found helpful:

- Form your question prior to the work session, and test it on a few friends. See if the responses you get are really what you're looking for.
- Ask one question at a time. Don't ask multiple or compound questions. If you have multiple questions, finish the brainstorm around one before asking the second.
- Write the question where the group can see and refer to it.

3. Explain the basic ground rules for brainstorming:

- State your thought briefly and concisely.
- Defer judgment. Don't criticize or comment on ideas given at this point.
- No idea is too wild. Anything goes. Stay loose, and make it fun.
- Piggyback on others' ideas. Allow their comments to spark your thoughts. Quantity is the key, so more is better.
- Don't worry about duplication.
- The only limitation will be the speed at which the scribes can record your answer.

4. To start the generation of ideas, say, "Ready, set, GO!"

5. Record each idea on the flip chart.

6. Encourage participants to continue giving ideas until the well starts to run dry.

7. Congratulate the group on a job well done.

8. Now you're ready to review and revise the ideas. Post all flip charts on the wall, and number each item.

9. Ask the group to review the list and call out any duplicates they see. Ask, "Do you agree that items A and F are duplicates?" If yes, cross out the duplicate item on the flip chart. If no, discuss the items, and revise the flip chart to state each idea more clearly.

10. When duplicate identification is complete, ask, "Are there any remaining items that are unclear to you?" If yes, discuss the items, and revise the flip chart to state the idea more clearly.

11. From here, you can categorize, remove, or prioritize as needed to accomplish your objective.

When Is Enough Enough?

Often we focus on how to start the brainstorming activity and spend no time thinking about how to end it. Here are some techniques to help you gracefully end the stream of consciousness.

- Set a limit at the beginning. Let the group know you'll be shooting for 100 ideas or fifteen minutes, whichever comes first.
- Brainstorming is like cooking popcorn. As the popcorn is closer to being done, the pops tend to slow down. The same happens in brainstorming: when the ideas begin to slow down, stop and move on.
- Remind the group that the end doesn't mean it's over. They can continue to add their ideas to the list as you review and revise it.

Variations

There are alternate methods of performing this technique. Here are a few variations we've found to be both interesting and effective.

- Prime the pump by giving participants five minutes to silently write down as many of their ideas around the topic as possible before starting part 1 of the brainstorming activity. This allows everyone to gather their thoughts before starting the verbal brainstorming activity.
- When you want to ensure untainted views or don't require stimulated out-of-the-box thinking, do silent brainstorming. Give everyone ten to fifteen minutes to create as many ideas on four-by-six-inch sticky notes as possible, one idea per piece of paper. As ideas are being generated, the facilitator should gather the sticky notes and put them on the whiteboard or flip charts pages taped to the wall. As you do this, acknowledge or point out potential duplicates and ask the group about them when idea generation is over. To do the review-and-revise portion of the activity, have the group gather in front of the posted sticky notes and read what everyone has written. Questions and clarification can happen at that time.
- Capture the brainstorming ideas electronically, projecting them as you go. This allows the group to see the ideas visually and makes the review-and-revise process easier.

Materials Needed

Depending on the method used to capture the brainstorm information, you'll need different materials.

Capturing the Information on Flip Charts

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts onto the walls)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts
- Any other supporting materials, such as sticky notes

Capturing the Information Electronically



- Laptop
- PC projector
- Blank wall or projection screen for display
- Preformatted Word table or Excel spreadsheet to capture ideas (see the enclosed CD for a sample table)

Capturing the Information on Sticky Notes (by Participants)

- Paper or sticky notes for all participants
- Medium-tip dark-colored markers for all participants
- Flip charts taped to the wall (for posting the participants' responses)
- Masking tape (if needed for the flip charts)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts

Keys to Success

- DON'T begin the brainstorming exercise without presenting the ground rules. They are critical to the success of the process. Post them where they can easily be seen. If these rules are not accepted and enforced, the process will break down long before the real creativity of the group can occur.
- DON'T allow questions. Questions are just back doors into discussion and will impede progress.
- DON'T interrupt the flow of ideas.
- DON'T say, "We've already got that one."
- DON'T use any gestures or other nonverbal signs to indicate your pleasure or displeasure with any items offered by the group.
- DON'T ignore the more passive members of the group. Call them out specifically, if necessary. Make sure they notice that you're interested in their ideas too.
- DO repeat back the idea as stated by each participant in paraphrased form to ensure that you heard what was said. This also allows the work session analyst time to record it.
- DO say, "Let's see if I've got this right," if a person is difficult to understand.
- DO repeat the goal of the brainstorm, or the question to be answered, frequently during the activity to keep people focused.
- DO be certain to do the review-and-revise activity when you are done with the gathering of ideas. It clarifies the list and gives the group the opportunity to add, remove, or change wording prior to using this list in follow-up activities.

Chapter 18

Facilitated Dialogue

What It Does	How You Can Use It
Promotes the exchange and refinement of ideas through discussion within the work session team as guided by the facilitator	Throughout the work session as the normal mode for sharing information, exploring options, and making decisions

FACILITATED DIALOGUE, also known as facilitated discussion and active listening, is the primary mode of operation in all work sessions. It is focused discussion guided by the facilitator with the goal of promoting the productive involvement of all participants in achieving work session objectives.

Facilitating the Technique

To use facilitated dialogue effectively, the facilitator must listen actively, observe actively, and pose questions that are focused on the topic and stimulate group creativity and information sharing.

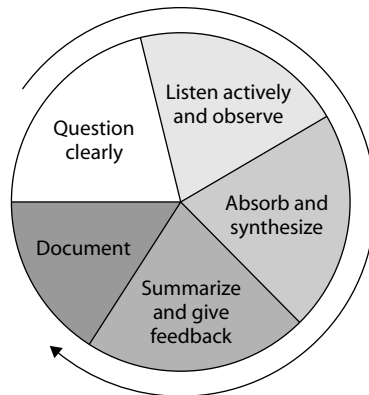
Quickly adopt the terminology of the group, and use it throughout the work session. It is a critical element in building rapport with the work session team and demonstrates respect for them.

The facilitated dialogue process consists of five major components (Figure 18.1):

1. Question clearly.
2. Listen actively and observe.
3. Absorb and synthesize.
4. Summarize and give feedback.
5. Document.

Let's look at how the facilitator uses each of these components within a work session.

FIGURE 18.1
Facilitated Dialogue Process



Question Clearly

Know the deliverable you are aiming to create. Recognize where you are in the process of creating the deliverable and choose an appropriate questioning approach that fits the situation:

- *Open-ended questions* stimulate discussion. They do not lead in any specific direction and are best used when seeking information, encouraging creative thinking, or exploring options.
- *Closed-ended questions* typically direct the group toward a concise answer, usually a word or phrase, rather than open discussion. They are most often used when looking for agreement or consensus. Avoid these early in the discussion. They are best used when finalizing a topic after the group has had ample time to discuss it or when bringing a portion of the work session to closure. Closed-ended questions are also helpful when looking for a specific element of information. For example, when assigning a date to an action item, it is customary to say, “What date will this be completed by?” Or when moving on to the next section of the agenda, ask, “Are we ready to move on?”
- *Leading questions* direct people toward a specific answer and are most often phrased as a question followed by a tag line—for example, “So we all agree to this, right?” or “Jennifer, you have that issue scheduled for resolution by tomorrow. Isn’t that correct?” or “We’re not going down that road again, are we?”
- *Compound questions* are confusing because you are asking the group two or more things at one time. Do not use them. Most people do not process compound questions effectively, and therefore you will not get the

information you are seeking. For example, do not ask questions such as, “Give me three to five steps within this process, and tell me who performs them and whether you intend to measure results.” Keep your questions simple and to the point. This would be better communicated if split up into three distinct questions. Keep your questions simple and to the point.

- *Keep questions related to and within a logical train of thought.* Do not jump around randomly within the work session topic areas. If you focus, you can help the team to focus and remain productive.

Listen Actively and Observe

Active listening means that you are listening to understand, not to mechanically take notes. This is one of the key responsibilities of a facilitator. You were not hired to take notes, but to guide the group through a set of activities that will accomplish certain objectives, while capturing relevant information to build out the deliverables. That’s hard work. It takes concentration. And when you do it right, it is guaranteed to be exhausting.

Observe both verbal and nonverbal communication. Much of the meaning is in what is not being said but is implied by nonverbal signals. (See Chapter Fifteen for more tips on verbal and nonverbal communication.)

Absorb and Synthesize

As you ask focused questions and listen to understand, you must also integrate what you are hearing with what has already been discussed, decided, and documented. Notice inconsistencies in information and direction, and call this to the attention of the group to resolve.

Summarize and Give Feedback

Sum up what you are hearing in the dialogue and feed it back to the group for clarification or further dialogue. You may need to take some clarifying notes on flip charts during the dialogue or refer to previously documented information to confirm or challenge the group discussion.

Document

Capture the results of the dialogue where it is visible to the team—either on flip charts or in the appropriate electronic template. When using flip charts, write legibly, and use dark marking pens to enhance visibility. (See Chapter Sixteen for more tips on using flip charts effectively.)

Document the results in the business language of your participants. Use their terminology and phrasing. Confirm and clarify wording to express the meaning of the dialogue effectively.

Remember that as a facilitator, you are not a note taker. Your job is to capture relevant information to document specific deliverables. This includes pertinent notes and diagrams that help to guide the team during their discussion. But if the session requires that discussion notes be taken for later reference, then assign this to the work session analyst.

Materials Needed

Depending on the method used to document the facilitated dialogue, you'll need different materials.

Capturing the Information on Flip Charts

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts onto the walls)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts

Capturing the Information Electronically

- Laptop
- PC projector
- Screen or white wall on which to project the image
- Appropriate electronic template in which to capture the discussion results.

Keys to Success

- DON'T allow tangential discussions or topics that are not aligned with work session objectives.
- DON'T let participation become unbalanced. Beware of decisions that represent the voice of only a few of the participants. Strive to engage all participants in dialogue and decision making effectively. (See Chapter Fifteen for helpful communication techniques and Chapter Six for balancing techniques.)
- DO stay focused and engaged. If you find yourself fading, take a break and regain your own focus as a facilitator, or your team will surely lose theirs.
- DO use action items, issues, and parking lots to keep the discussion moving. (See Chapter Twenty-Two for more information about these techniques.)
- DO use the five-minute rule to keep the discussion on track. The five-minute rule encourages anyone who has to step away from the work session to take

the first five minutes on returning to listen carefully and become reengaged with the current status of the dialogue before they speak.

- DO use time-boxing to limit the amount of time spent in discussion. Set a time limit on the discussion, and when the allotted time is up, ask the team to state the result of their discussion. If they cannot come up with a result, ask them if the discussion can be finalized within another limited block of time; otherwise, create an action item to allow further discussion of the topic after the work session.

Chapter 19

Nominal Group and Affinity Analysis

What It Does	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gets equal participation from all participants by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensuring everyone in a group is heardGuarding against domination by strong group members• Allows synthesis and ordering of ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To gather diverse perspectives when the membership consists of varied interest groups• To gain insight into highly controversial or political topics• To identify a variety of alternatives and their preferred rank• To identify possible causes of a problem and their comparative importance• To provide recommendations for a course of action

NOMINAL GROUP, also known as round robin, structured go-arounds, and categorizing, evolved as a technique from community action groups working in inner-city Detroit in the 1960s. Large neighborhood groups would often get together to discuss and protest actions taken by community or city officials. Because the topics were so controversial, the resulting discussion was often heated, chaotic, and unproductive.

As a result, the nominal group technique was developed to structure the discussion, thus equalizing participation and minimizing domination by more vocal members. In fact, the term *nominal* means “in name only,” thereby labeling the technique as one very effective with groups of people who have been temporarily brought together “in name only” to discuss a specific topic or achieve a particular objective.

We combine this technique with affinity analysis, which allows you to organize thoughts into categories by understanding the natural groupings

among items. Then finish it off with a form of voting to identify what is of ranked importance to the team.

Facilitating the Technique

To get the maximum benefit from this technique, we suggest you allow between thirty and forty minutes for up to twelve participants and sixty minutes for groups up to twenty.

Part 1: Formulate the Question

The most difficult part of the nominal group technique is crafting a good question. Questions should never be created on the fly, but should be thought out thoroughly ahead of time. If the wrong question is asked or the wording of the question is vague, you will not get the data you need. Here are a few steps to help you formulate a good question:

1. Determine what data you're seeking and how that data will be used. Validate your thoughts with the project sponsor or project manager.
2. Craft a question that will provide the necessary data. Work at it. A good question typically takes two or three revisions or at least ten to fifteen minutes of careful thought. Here are two examples of good questions:
 - "If the company were to invest in improved technology to aid in customer problem resolution, what features would it need?"
 - "What are the most common disconnects between the team leader and the bank examiner that have an impact on the quality of the examination?"
3. Try out the question on a couple of people to see what responses you get. If you get the information you're looking for, you've got a good question. If not, revise again.

Part 2: Voice the Ideas

Now that you've crafted a good question, you're ready to use it to elicit the desired information. So we ask the team to put a voice to their ideas by responding to the question:

1. On the flip chart, write the question you want everyone in the group to answer.
2. Ask the participants to write their answers individually on large sticky notes—one answer per sticky note.

3. When they're done, review the rules of nominal group:
 - One person will present at a time.
 - Give only answers that haven't already been stated.
 - If you have a question about one of the items mentioned, write it down, and we'll come back to it at the end.
 - We won't stop to discuss, clarify, debate, or analyze the issue until all are posted.
4. When the group is done, ask them to come up one by one and post their sticky notes on the flip chart, reading them to the group as they do (Figure 19.1).
5. When all the items are posted, review all of them with the group, clarifying and modifying as necessary to reach consensus.

Part 3: Perform Affinity Analysis

Before making decisions about what is most important to take action on, we need to analyze the team's responses to understand the broader categories or themes they represent. To do this, we use the affinity analysis technique:

1. Ask the team to come to the front, and start grouping items with similar concepts.
2. Once the team has finished grouping the items, ask them to help you label each grouping. Label the groupings with a word or phrase that answers the original question while describing the content of the ideas within the grouping (Figure 19.2). Key things to remember:
 - Each grouping should be discrete.
 - Each heading must be phrased to answer the original question.
 - Use different colors of sticky notes to record the headings.

FIGURE 19.1

Nominal Group: Posting the Ideas

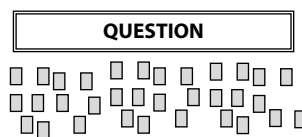
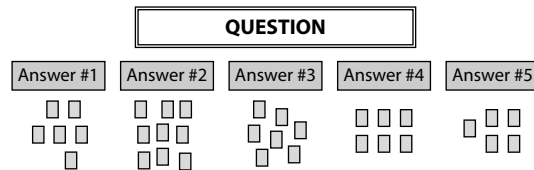


FIGURE 19.2

Affinity Analysis: Grouping the Ideas



Part 4: Formulate Recommendation

It's impossible to take action on so many ideas, so the team needs to determine which ideas are most significant to achieving their goal. To do that, we recommend a form of dot voting. Here is how the technique works:

1. Explain the basic rules for voting:
 - Each person will receive five dots or stickers to represent their votes. (If you want to show a greater differential between rankings, increase the number of dots used.)
 - They vote by placing a dot or sticker beside the individual item (not the heading or category) they're voting for on the flip chart.
 - The standard voting rule is to place one dot per item. (If there are a large number of items, consider allowing the team to show their ranked preference for items by putting as many of their dots on one item as they want.)
 - When all members of the team have posted their five dots, you're done.
2. Give the team ten minutes to cast their votes.
3. Tabulate the votes within each category to determine its relative ranking. By voting for the items within a category rather than the category itself, you get the added benefit of easily identifying which of the items (and thereby which categories) are most important to the team.
4. Discuss the findings. Confirm that the team is comfortable and supports the results.
5. Formulate recommendations based on the results.

Variations

There are alternate methods of performing this technique. Here are a few variations we've found to be both interesting and effective:

- Allow the team to use one of the following methods to share their ideas. Capture the ideas electronically, on a flip chart, or on sticky notes:
 - Talking stick.* To speak, a group member picks up the talking stick. No one else may speak until the stick has been set down.
 - Popcorn.* Everyone takes a turn when they choose, not in any particular order.
 - Ball or beanbag toss.* When a speaker is done, he or she tosses a beanbag or some other object to someone else, who speaks.
- Use color coding to allow additional meaning to be expressed. For example, a vote with a yellow dot might mean, “I think it’s important and I’m willing to work on this one,” and a vote with a red dot might mean, “I think it’s important, but it needs further blessing from management.”

Materials Needed

Depending on the method used to capture the ideas, you’ll need different materials.

Capturing the Information on Flip Charts

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts onto the walls)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts
- Any other supporting materials, such as sticky notes or colored dots

Capturing the Information Electronically

- Laptop
- PC projector
- Blank wall or projection screen for display
- Preformatted Word table or Excel spreadsheet to capture ideas

Capturing the Information on Sticky Notes (by Participants)

- Paper or large four- by six-inch sticky notes for all participants
- Medium-tip dark-colored markers for all participants
- Flip charts taped to the wall (for posting the participant responses)
- Masking tape (if needed for the flip charts)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts

Keys to Success

- DON'T allow the group to get bogged down. If you're recording the information on flip charts, consider having two scribes (especially for larger groups). This will allow you to maintain group momentum by capturing the ideas faster.
- DON'T ask compound questions. Usually one of the questions will be forgotten, and you won't get the answers you need. Keep your questions simple and to the point.
- DON'T pose questions in a manner that suggests a solution.
- DON'T assume that the highest number of votes equals the recommended solution. It's just the start of the discussion. Use the activity to identify the most viable items to explore further or the most probable causes.
- DO ask participants to keep their answers brief—ten words or fewer. This will capture their thoughts while allowing easier scribing.
- DO feel free to hand out more than five dots to each person if your situation warrants it. Using more dots will typically provide a larger set of alternatives to discuss; however, never hand out fewer than three dots per person.
- DO make sure the team knows from the start how the data gathered will be used (or not used)—as a recommendation, as a decision, or for targeted research, for example.

Chapter 20

Prioritization Techniques

What It Does	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourages decision making• Helps the group prioritize items (for example, improvement opportunities, business requirements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To perform prioritization or decision making at any point throughout the project• To provide rationale to support prioritization and decision making• To help the group focus on what's most important or relevant when faced with a number of alternatives or options• To minimize emotional choices or personal favorites in prioritizing items or making decisions

PRIORITIZATION TECHNIQUES help the group focus on what's important and build rationales that support the choices made during the work session. The outputs from these techniques do not themselves make up a final deliverable. However, they contribute to that deliverable by assisting the group in making reasonable decisions. Often the results of the prioritization exercise or the decision-making discussion are captured for representation in the appendix of the final deliverable, where they provide rationale for work session choices.

These techniques assist the group in prioritizing and choosing among a number of items. The approach is neither precise nor exact. Many of the choices made will be based on business judgment and experience rather than hard numbers. Consider these techniques a way to organize the common sense of the team.

Let's look at three techniques that help work session teams prioritize and make decisions: Force-Field Analysis, the Nine-Block Diagram, and the Impact Matrix.

Force-Field Analysis

This basic technique can be used when we need to explore two opposing things, for example, identifying the pros and cons of a solution option. It can also be used to identify opportunities for improvement by exploring what is at work within a process or business area that already supports our targets and what is happening that inhibits us from reaching the targets. This simple exercise helps a group organize its thinking and encourages thoughtful exploration prior to making decisions. Once elements within the two opposing forces are identified, the group can generate ideas for reinforcing the positive elements and eliminating (or reducing) the negative elements. Force-Field Analysis can help a group identify critical actions that must be taken to get us from where we are to where we want to be.

Facilitating Force-Field Analysis

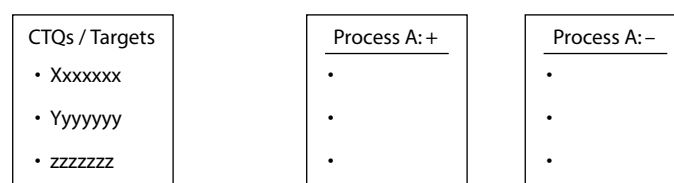
We'll use a common work session situation as an example. Imagine you are reviewing CTQs (critical-to-quality factors) and targets for the project. You have identified the business processes that are part of your project scope. So one by one, you perform a Force-Field Analysis on each process to determine what is at work within the process that is already moving us toward our goals and what is occurring that is hindering us from reaching our goals. Is this scientific? No. Does it rely on hard quantitative data? Not initially. But it does get the team discussion flowing and encourages objective analysis of the business process.

Here are the steps:

1. *Preparing for the activity.* Put the project CTQs and targets on a flip chart and post them visibly in the work session room. Place two flip charts on the wall (or work from two side-by-side flip chart stands) near the list of CTQs and targets. As shown in Figure 20.1, write the subject of analysis (in this example, a process name) and a plus sign (+) on the top of one flip chart and the subject of analysis and a minus sign (-) on the top of the second flip chart.

FIGURE 20.1

Facilitating Force-Field Analysis: Preparing for the Activity



The flip chart with the plus sign depicts positive forces (things that are already driving forces toward our goals). The flip chart with the minus sign depicts negative forces (things that are restraining us from reaching our goals).

2. *Identifying positive and negative forces.* Two facilitation techniques can be used to gather information for the analysis: brainstorming or nominal group technique. (See Chapter Seventeen for tips on conducting brainstorming with the group and Chapter Nineteen for the nominal group technique.) When performing either of these techniques, you will ask the group, “What are some things within process A that are already moving us toward these goals?” In a follow-up question, you will ask the group, “What are some things within process A that are preventing us from reaching our goals?” Whether you use brainstorming or nominal group to gather ideas, the result will be a list of items on both flip charts that represent the ideas of the group regarding the positive and negative forces.

This is not a scientific exercise. However, if the team has baseline data regarding the topic area, it can be used here to identify “what’s going right” and “what’s going wrong.” Use baseline data if it is available to support the exercise of identifying positive and negative forces.

3. *Identifying opportunities.* Now we have two lists. To move to the next step, consider an interesting concept that Peter Senge shared in his book *The Fifth Discipline* (1990). He proposed that a team will make more progress toward its goals by removing barriers than by pushing harder on what is already working well. Let’s use the example of water flowing down a stream. Gravity is already doing its work. Pushing harder on the water to force more flow or improve the consistency of the flow will not help significantly. However, if you get into the stream and remove the large rocks and old tree branches, the water will naturally pick up speed and flow more consistently.

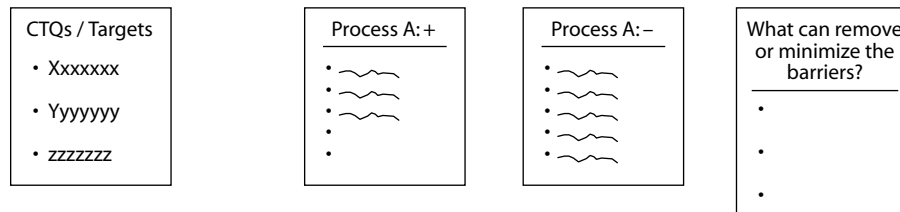
Ask the team to focus on the flip chart listing the barriers. Put up another blank flip chart next to the one representing the barriers. Title it, “What can remove or minimize the barriers?” (See Figure 20.2.)

Again, using brainstorming or nominal group technique, capture and revise a list of ideas to remove or minimize the effects of the barriers. This list becomes the foundation for further analysis of improvement opportunities.

4. *Finalizing the results.* Look at the final list of ideas to remove barriers. This is a list of items that will provide opportunities for improving process A (the topic of the exercise). If the list is longer than five to seven items, we suggest that you have the group rank or prioritize the items to encourage focus. (We provide more about this when we discuss Nine-Block Diagrams and Impact Matrices.)

FIGURE 20.2

Facilitating Force-Field Analysis: Identifying Opportunities



Force-Field Analysis is an ideal exercise to use in process analysis and design work sessions when identifying process improvements and performing process redesign.

Nine-Block Diagram

This technique is used to encourage team focus when choosing among multiple things. It provides a rationale to support decision making. Let's say that in the Force-Field Analysis example, fifteen items were identified as possible opportunities for minimizing the impact of the negative forces. It is unrealistic to try to incorporate all fifteen of these ideas into the process redesign. If we are to meet our targets, we need a rifle shot, not a shotgun approach. We need to narrow this list to a subset of items that will provide the most benefit.

As a general rule, making the selection among fifteen ideas is not easy or obvious. One technique for helping the group decide which items will provide the most benefit is the Nine-Block Diagram. This diagram allows comparison of each item in the list to two distinct decision criteria, helping the team to overcome personal biases and preferences and look at the contribution of the items in a more objective manner.

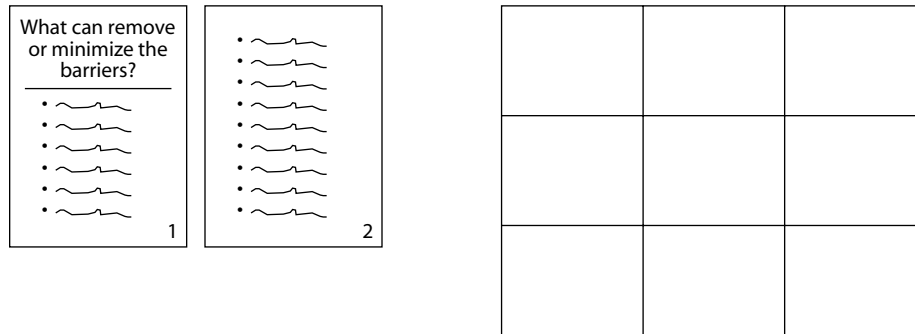
Facilitating the Nine-Block Diagram

We will continue the example used in the Force-Field Analysis. Our goal is to narrow the list of fifteen items that were generated as ideas for removing the barriers:

1. *Preparing for the activity.* Keep the CTQs and targets flip chart, along with the ideas list generated by the Force-Field Analysis, posted visibly in the work session room. Place two or more flip charts on the wall to form a large square. Keep this somewhat near the flip chart that documented the ideas for removal of the barriers. Draw a three-by-three grid (nine blocks) on the paper (Figure 20.3).

FIGURE 20.3

Facilitating the Nine-Block Diagram: Preparing for the Activity



2. *Determining decision criteria.* The goal of the Nine-Block Diagramming exercise is to narrow the list of items by determining which ones provide the most value to the project goals. We need to identify some criteria that will assist in determining value. Ask the group to identify two criteria that are critical to deciding which of the fifteen opportunities for improvement are the most beneficial—for example, “What is a factor that we need to consider in identifying which of these items will provide the most value?” or, “What criteria will help us determine which of these opportunities provides the greatest value?” The group may identify one or more than one. Continue questioning and refining until the group agrees to two factors that will enable them to identify the items that will be most beneficial. We will use the following two criteria as an example:

- Contribution to targets
- Effort to implement

Again, this exercise is not one of precision. The judgments of the group will be based more on experience and business sense than hard data or facts, and they are typically categorized by responses of high, medium, and low. It will be beneficial to the group if they are able to put some boundaries or definitions around these high, medium, and low categories. This is not always quantifiable, but when it is, be sure to note it—for example:

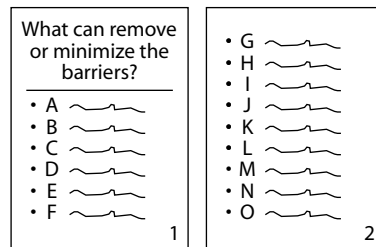
- *Contribution to targets:* In this example, high, medium, and low are not quantifiable, so we will have to rely on the judgment of the group.
- *Effort to implement:* This criterion lends itself to some clarifying definition—for example: high = more than nine months; medium = four to nine months; low = three months or less

3. *Preparing for analysis*

- Go back to the flip charts that document the fifteen ideas for removal of barriers, and put a letter beside each idea (Figure 20.4).

FIGURE 20.4

Facilitating the Nine-Block Diagram: Preparing for Analysis



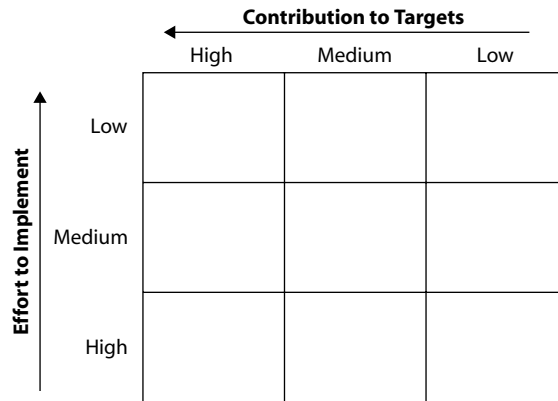
- Now we need to prepare the Nine-Block Diagram for the analysis.
 - Go to the Nine-Block Diagram chart, and put one of the criteria across the top of the block and one down the left side of the block.
 - Now draw directional arrows and the corresponding “high, medium, low” headings to indicate the preferred direction of the criteria. For example, an item that is a high contribution to targets is preferred over an item that has a low contribution to targets. However, an item that is low with respect to effort to implement is preferred over an item that has a high effort to implement. So our directional preference for contribution to targets is high, and our directional preference for effort to implement is low.

In a Nine-Block Diagram, the goal is to have the items that are the most beneficial displayed in the upper left of the diagram, so be careful to place arrows and corresponding “high, medium, low” headings appropriately. See Figure 20.5 for how to label the Nine-Block Diagram appropriately.

4. *Prioritizing the items.* We now have the original list of ideas lettered and the Nine-Block Diagram labeled with decision criteria and directional arrows. One by one, place the letter of the item into the appropriate block of the diagram that represents its positioning relative to the two decision criteria.

Start with item A from the list. Ask the group, “What is item A’s contribution to our targets? Is it a high, medium, or low contribution?” It is not uncommon for a group to start out this exercise claiming that everything is of high contribution. Generally the group will self-adjust after a few items and start to think in more relative terms. Challenge the group gently but firmly to critically assess their responses to the positioning question. Continue with item A in this way: “So item A is high in its contribution to our

FIGURE 20.5
Facilitating the Nine-Block Diagram: Drawing the Diagram



targets. What is its effort to implement?” Once you’ve positioned item A both vertically and horizontally on the Nine-Block Diagram, repeat this step for the remaining items on the list. Your resulting diagram will look something like Figure 20.6.

5. *Finalizing the results.* This visual representation of priorities intends to have the most beneficial items (according to our two decision-making criteria) displayed in the top left area of the diagram. This is not a precise tool, but it clearly demonstrates the preference for choosing items B, C, J, and L before focusing on items A, M, N, D, or E.

The team will need to consider these results and apply any known factual data to make a final decision about which of the opportunities should be chosen to be part of the project solution. The Nine-Block Diagram will not make the decision for you, but it does provide a rationale that helps to minimize emotion and personal favoritism in making business decisions.

Impact Matrix

Similar to the Nine-Block Diagram, the Impact Matrix can be used to encourage team focus when choosing among multiple things. It provides a rationale to support decision making that is more detailed than the Nine-Block Diagram. We will continue to use the same example: the output of the Force-Field example. We must choose what to focus on from the list of fifteen possible opportunities for minimizing the impact of the negative forces on process A. It is unrealistic to try to incorporate all fifteen of these ideas

FIGURE 20.6

Facilitating the Nine-Block Diagram: Prioritizing the Items

		Contribution to Targets		
		High	Medium	Low
Effort to Implement	Low	B C J L	O	G
	Medium	H K	F I	
	High	A N M	D E	

into the process redesign. If we are to meet our targets, we need a rifle shot, not a shotgun approach. We need to narrow this list to a subset of these items that will provide the most benefit.

The Impact Matrix helps to narrow a list of items through a systematic approach of comparing choices by selecting, weighting, and applying judgment against decision criteria. It is a similar but less meticulous version of the House of Quality, which is established as part of quality function deployment (QFD). The House of Quality contains a number of interrelated matrices that guide design and implementation choices to ensure that they remain linked to customer needs. The Impact Matrix is a simpler and less rigorous matrix that takes items such as improvement opportunities, design options, or proposed features of a product or service and ranks them by determining their level of contribution to weighted targets or CTQs. It ensures that improvement choices are linked to the voice of the customer.

Unlike the Nine-Block Diagram, the Impact Matrix typically looks at a single dimension of prioritization: the contribution of the items to objectives or targets. It does not include a dimension for additional factors for decision making (such as implementation costs or level of effort). If you need to consider additional criteria in your final prioritization, you will need to do this in a later discussion.

It is important to understand the basic conventions of an Impact Matrix before we discuss how to facilitate it. Figure 20.7 provides an overall image of an Impact Matrix.

The rows and columns indicate the categories of things to be related. Typically, the rows contain the anchor items—items that are givens. They provide the basis for ranking. In most cases, these will be project objectives, targets, or customer CTQs. The columns contain the list of opportunities, features, or options that are being prioritized.

FIGURE 20.7
Impact Matrix: Conventions

		COLUMNS									
		Weighing Factor	Process Improvement A	Process Improvement B	Opportunity C	Opportunity D	Opportunity E				
ROWS	CTQ 1	5		nn	nn	nn					
	CTQ 2	4				nn	nn				
	Target 3	4	nn			nn					
	Target 4	2				nn					
	Totals		nn	nn	nn	nn	nn				

The Weighting Factor column appears to the right of the column that contains the anchor items. The work session team will apply a weighting factor to each target or CTQ, allowing a more granular understanding of importance to the customer or business.

The cells of the matrix indicate whether a relationship exists between the item in the column and the anchor item on the row. Cells will be blank when no contribution or relationship exists. When a relationship exists, a value rating is determined by the team to describe the relative impact of the item in the column to the anchor item on the row. This value rating is placed within the cell (see the reference markers *nn* in the sample diagram). Although the sample shows only positive impacts, we encourage the team to look for both positive and negative impacts when evaluating the relationship of columns to rows.

Impact results are totaled in the columns of the matrix and compared for relative impact.

Facilitating the Impact Matrix

We will continue with the example used in the Force-Field Analysis. Our goal is to narrow the list of fifteen items that were generated as ideas for removing the barriers:

1. *Preparing for the activity.* Put the project CTQs and targets on a flip chart, and post them visibly in the work session room. Place two or more flip charts on the wall to form a large square. Keep this somewhat near

the flip chart that documented the ideas for removal of the barriers. Draw a matrix on this large square of paper. Put the CTQs or targets onto the rows of the matrix, and allow as many columns as necessary to accommodate the number of items under analysis for contribution to the targets. In this example, we will have fifteen columns.

Another common option is to fill out the matrix electronically while projecting it for the work session participants to see. If you use an electronic approach, you will need to prepare a matrix or spreadsheet that places the CTQs or targets onto the rows and the items to be analyzed into the columns.

2. *Selecting the weighting factors.* Assign weighting factors to the anchor items if you have not done so in earlier project activities. First, ask the group to decide on a weighting scale. A typical scale is a relative weighting of 1 to 5, with 5 indicating very high importance and 1 representing minor importance. Ask the group to look at the listed targets or CTQs and provide a weighting factor for each. This will take some discussion, but it is essential for the team to agree on the weighting of each target or CTQ prior to moving ahead. The Impact Matrix will look something like Table 20.1 at this point in the exercise.

3. *Identifying the contribution.* You are now ready to look at each of the fifteen items and determine their impact on targets and CTQs. We suggest that you start with opportunity A and ask the group, "What is opportunity A's contribution to CTQ A? Does it have an impact on CTQ A?" Let the group discuss this, and if there is no impact, move on to determining whether it has an impact on CTQ B. If there is an impact, you will need to drive a bit deeper to understand contribution.

- When the item in the column has an impact on the CTQ or target in the row, ask the team, "Is this a high, medium, or low impact?" This is not precise or scientific, of course, but let the group discuss it and settle on a specific impact rating. Assign a numerical value to high, medium, and low as follows: high impact = 9, medium impact = 3, and low impact = 1.
- Multiply the high, medium, or low value (9, 3, or 1) by the weighting factor for that row. For example, if opportunity A has a high impact on CTQ A, then multiply 9 (the assigned value for high impact) by 5 (the weighting factor for CTQ A) and arrive at the number 45 to place in the cell, which is the intersection point for column opportunity A and row CTQ A (see Table 20.2).

- Continue with opportunity A, working through the CTQs and targets looking for impacts. If there is no impact, leave the cell blank. If there is an impact, determine whether it is high, medium, or low. Then take that value multiplied by the weighting factor and place the result in the cell. As you look at impacts consider two points.
 - First, the math involved in filling in the cell values, although simple, can become tedious. This is an exercise that is excellent to do electronically, working with a spreadsheet tool that has calculations predefined in the cells of the matrix. It allows quicker populations of the cells and keeps the group discussion moving rather than slowing down to do the math.
 - Second, as you look for impacts, let the group know that you are looking for negative as well as positive impacts. It is not uncommon to find that a specific opportunity for improvement has a positive impact on several of the CTQs or targets and a negative impact on others. You can capture a negative impact simply by placing a negative number in the cell instead of a positive number. For example, the idea of increasing run sizes on the manufacturing floor may have a positive impact on the goal of maximizing machine run times and reducing cost per item produced, but if these increased run sizes cause finished goods inventory to increase, then this opportunity has a negative impact on the goal of reducing finished inventory carrying costs on the back end. Document both positive and negative impacts of an idea or opportunity to fully understand its potential effect.
- As with opportunity A, continue across all columns in the matrix, exploring the impact of each item on the CTQs and targets. You will end up with an Impact Matrix that looks something like the one in Table 20.3.

4. *Assessing the contribution.* To see the results of the contribution analysis, total the columns, keeping the positive impacts separate from the negative impacts. The resulting numbers have no precise or absolute meaning. The impact is seen in relative terms. You will have a result that looks like Table 20.4.

- Now the team needs to assess the matrix. Which opportunities are significantly higher contributors than others? Which opportunities contribute heavily to the most important targets and CTQs? Which opportunities had negative impacts? Notice that opportunities B and C

TABLE 20.3
Impact Matrix: Identifying Contribution 2

CTQs/Targets	Opportunities							
	Weighting Factor	Opp. A	Opp. B	Opp. C	Opp. D	Opp. E	...	Opp. O
CTQ A	5	45	45	15	5			15
CTQ B	3		27	27	9	27		9
CTQ C	5	5	45	45	15	15		45
Business target D	5	15	15	45	-5	15		15
Business target E	2			-6	10			-2
Business target F	4	-12	4		4	36		-4
Total (+ contribution)								
Total (- contribution)								

TABLE 20.4
Impact Matrix: Assessing the Contribution

CTQs/Targets	Opportunities							
	Weighting Factor	Opp. A	Opp. B	Opp. C	Opp. D	Opp. E	...	Opp. O
CTQ A	5	45	45	15	5			15
CTQ B	3		27	27	9	27		9
CTQ C	5	15	45	45	15	15		45
Business target D	5	15	15	45	-5	15		5
Business target E	2			-6	10			-2
Business target F	4	-12	4		4	36		-4
Total (+ contribution)		75	132	132	43	93		74
Total (- contribution)		-12	0	-6	-5	0		-6

are much higher in relative value than opportunities A, D, or O. Opportunity E is somewhat midrange in contribution relative to the other opportunities. However, opportunity A has a moderate negative impact on business target F and opportunity C has a moderate negative impact on business target E. The group should look at both positive and negative impacts in a relative sense to determine how they should proceed in prioritizing and choosing the opportunities.

5. *Finalizing the results.* Look at the Impact Matrix holistically before coming to a final decision regarding selection of opportunities.

- Look at each opportunity column to determine relevance. Does the opportunity contribute to some or all of the targets or CTQs? If not (that is, the column is blank), then this was a poorly conceived opportunity since it does not have a contribution to our project goals. Remove it from the list.
- Now look across the rows to determine sufficiency. Does each target or CTQ have some opportunities that contribute to it? If the row is blank, perhaps we have not looked closely enough to find opportunities that will help achieve that specific target. Or is the target itself not relevant for the project initiative? If we dropped that target, would the project initiative still make sense?
- Continue looking at the row. If the row has contributing opportunities, are they sufficient to achieve the target? If not, are there other opportunities that we can identify? If we do have opportunities that are sufficient for achieving the target, then let's start to pare down the list. Can we drop some of the opportunities and still sufficiently support the target?

The team should consider these results and apply any known factual data to provide a basis for choosing which of the fifteen opportunities will be part of the process redesign effort. As with the Nine-Block Diagram, the Impact Matrix will not make the decision for you, but it does provide a rationale that helps to minimize emotion and personal favoritism when attempting to narrow a large list of items to a focused few.

Materials Needed

Depending on the method used to document the prioritization techniques, you'll need different materials.

Capturing the Information Manually

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts onto the walls)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts

Capturing the Information Electronically

- Laptop
- PC projector
- Screen or white wall on which to project the image
- Appropriate electronic templates

Keys to Success

- DON'T allow endless debate over categorization of items. These prioritization techniques are not precise scientific exercises. They provide a way to organize common sense and good business judgment.
- DON'T allow discussions to continue for an inappropriate length of time without demonstrating results. As with other work session activities, use action items, issues, or the parking lot to keep the discussion moving.
- DO allow reasonable time for thinking and reflection.
- DO encourage the group to use these techniques to organize their thinking so that informed decisions can be made.
- DO document the results of prioritization analysis in the appendix of your deliverable to be retained as a rationale to support the work session decisions.

Chapter 21

Breakout Groups

What They Do	How You Can Use Them
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus the team on subject matter that is most relevant• Fully use subject matter expertise• Get the team engaged in topics of interest to them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To accelerate the amount of work possible in a limited amount of time• To wrestle in small groups with complex or sensitive issues and bring back a recommendation to the larger group• To perform activities that can be done in parallel• To infuse variety into the work session format• To enable creative discussion that may not be possible in a larger group• To create drafts that can be reviewed and updated by the team

USING BREAKOUT GROUPS can accelerate progress within large groups. It allows the team to accomplish more in the limited work session time frame than would otherwise be possible. However, the results of this technique should never be considered final. All work in breakout groups should be presented back to the core project team for review and validation.

Occasionally you'll get resistance when attempting to use this technique. The group may prefer to discuss the topic together rather than in smaller subgroups. If this is the case, agree to proceed as requested, with the understanding that agenda time frames may need to be adjusted to accommodate the change in approach.

Facilitating the Technique

In various places throughout the book, we've referred to the use of small subteams or breakout groups. These are usually groups of two to six participants who are segmented off from the larger work group to accomplish

From Real Life

During a business requirements work session, the team realized that legal decisions key to the finalization of requirements hadn't been addressed. A breakout group of four participants with the requisite knowledge and a list of team concerns went into another room and held a one-hour conference call with representatives from the legal, risk, and compliance departments to get resolution of those concerns and craft the necessary requirements. After the call, the breakout group rejoined the team. The members reported back the answers and recommended requirements to the team for confirmation.

a specific task or an organized set of activities. This small group option works well assuming you have the right set of participants: those with the knowledge and authority to address the topics at hand.

Depending on the situation, you may create a breakout group to address a specific issue while the rest of the group continues working, or you may divide the entire work session team into various subteams. As a general rule, we recommend that the breakouts last no longer than four hours, after which time everyone reconvenes to check on progress and address cross-team issues.

To understand how breakout groups allow work session teams to accomplish focused work that might not be possible in a larger group, let's use a common work session situation as an example. Imagine that your project seeks to improve customer service processes to eliminate known servicing gaps and improve customer satisfaction. You're in the midst of a process analysis and design work session in which you've redesigned four existing processes. You're now ready to identify the target process impacts (see the CD for the Process Design Impact Table Template). But rather than do another full group activity, you've decided to accelerate building the drafts by using breakout groups.



1. *Identify the topics.* Identify the subject areas to be addressed within each breakout group. In this case, each process could be a separate breakout group. In other situations, you may need to brainstorm relevant topics and group them into related categories. (See Chapters Seventeen and Nineteen for more information about brainstorming and grouping ideas using affinity analysis.)

2. *Determine the groups.* Once the breakout group topics have been identified, you're ready to determine which team members should be assigned to which topics. There are various methods of accomplishing this, the most common being self-selection. To do this effectively:

- List the topics or, in our scenario, processes to be addressed by each breakout group on flip charts and post them on the wall, one topic per flip chart page.

- Tell the team that they must each select one breakout group that best uses their area of expertise.
- Ask each to put their name on the flip chart page under their desired breakout topic.

3. *Adjust the groups as needed.* After everyone has signed up for a breakout topic, evaluate the proposed groupings.

- Too many people in a breakout group: If more than six people have signed up for a topic, ask if the topic can be subdivided.
- Too few people in a breakout group: If there are two or fewer signed up for a topic, see if this topic can be combined with another related topic. If it is truly a stand-alone topic, determine if you have the right people in the room to address this topic. If not, assign an action item to get the right people involved outside the work session.
- People who need to be in multiple breakouts: Occasionally subject matter expertise is required in multiple breakout groups. When this occurs, ask the person to attend the breakout that is most relevant. The other groups should feel free to touch base with this person throughout the breakout time frame to ask questions and get the information they need. Remind everyone that the output from each breakout group will be reviewed by the entire team, so additional input can be gleaned then.

4. *Monitor the breakouts.* Assign a team leader and a scribe for each group. The team leader is responsible for keeping the group on track and facilitating group discussion and decision making. The scribe is responsible for capturing the output of the group so that the results can be shared with the larger group. Capture can occur electronically or using flip charts. But if flip charts are used, we strongly recommend transcribing the results into an electronic format before attempting to review and revise them with the entire team. The work session analyst and facilitator should float between the breakouts, answering questions and facilitating discussion as needed to ensure each group is making the necessary progress. In our example, this would be the point at which each breakout group would complete the process design impact table for the specific process they're addressing.

If there are multiple topics to be addressed within each breakout group, assist each team in building an agenda with specific time frames to ensure they're able to address all the topics within the specified amount of time.

5. *Reconvene for reporting out.* After the time limit has expired, reconvene the breakout groups to review and refine the drafted tables in the larger group setting. Ask for a volunteer from each group to summarize its progress and discuss any specific concerns or issues the team encountered.

Then review the drafted information line by line, clarifying and revising as you go.

6. *Update the deliverable.* Insert the revised tables or information into the appropriate work session deliverable.

Materials Needed

To form the breakout teams as described above, you'll need the following materials:

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts onto the walls)
- A separate breakout room for each team that will accommodate everyone on the team

During the breakout session, the team may decide to capture information either on flip charts or electronically. You'll need different materials depending on the method of capture chosen.

Capturing the Information on Flip Charts

- One flip chart stand per breakout group, paper, and markers
- Masking tape to post flip charts on the walls
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts
- Any other supporting materials, such as sticky notes or colored dots

Capturing the Information Electronically

- Laptop
- PC projector
- Blank wall or projection screen for display
- Appropriate electronic templates
- Printer and paper for printing electronic materials (optional)

Keys to Success

- DON'T use this technique if the team is resistant. If the team prefers to discuss the topic together rather than in breakout groups, don't force the issue.
- DON'T send the subgroup or individuals off without clear guidance.
- DON'T use breakout groups to address tasks that require the attention of the whole team.

- DON'T include unvalidated results from breakout groups in the final deliverable.
- DO give specific instructions and a time limit to the breakout groups. Post this information so all can see it and reference it as needed.
- DO assign a team leader and scribe to each breakout group to ensure that the team will stay on track and that their decisions and team work will be documented.
- DO monitor progress within the breakout groups to ensure that all topics will get addressed within the designated time frame.
- DO review the results from breakout groups with the larger team so that it can be incorporated into the final work session deliverable, even if that means reviewing it by conference call after the work session.

Chapter 22

Staying On Track

Agendas, Action Items, and Other Focusing Techniques

What They Do	How You Can Use Them
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help the work session participants stay focused and on track toward their objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To refocus tangent discussions• To capture actions to be done outside the work session to complete the deliverable• To document issues pertinent to completion of the deliverable• To set aside topics that may be addressed later in the project• To remind the group of progress made and work yet to be done

IT'S EASY FOR CONVERSATIONS to get sidetracked when two people are talking. Now multiply that by fifteen or twenty. Keeping large groups of people focused without dampening their enthusiasm or losing valuable comments requires consistent application of some key focusing techniques. These techniques help the work session team stay on track to meeting their objectives.

To keep groups focused on the goal, you'll want to understand how to use the following techniques:

- Agendas
- Objectives lists
- Scope tables
- Action item lists
- Issues lists
- Parking lot

These techniques may seem somewhat simple and obvious, yet they can be quite powerful in keeping dialogue on track and breaking through deadlocked discussion.

The Agenda

This is the foundational guide to work session activities and serves as a handy tool for maintaining focus. Have the work session agenda visibly posted on one of the walls of the work session room or have handouts so that each participant has a copy. Review the agenda with the group at the start of the work session, and use it throughout to bring the group back to their goal.

How to Use It

Use the agenda to help the group:

- Recognize the progress that they have made.
- Understand what work remains to be done.
- Keep the conversation focused to the topic at hand.

An Example

Let's say it's 9:15 A.M., and you're in the middle of validating the scope table. One of the participants states a requirement that relates to the topic you're discussing. You listen and recognize that this is a requirement rather than a confirmation of or change to scope. Acknowledge the contribution for what it is by saying, "I think I'm hearing a requirement. Joe, is that a requirement for processing an online order?" If Joe agrees, then capture the requirement on a flip chart, confirm that you've captured it correctly, and use the agenda to remind the group that they will be addressing requirements later in the morning.

Acknowledge that it's common to think of requirements when validating scope. Ask the participants to jot down their thoughts if any other requirements come to mind as they continue discussion. They'll be able to refer to these notes when you reach the requirements gathering point in the agenda. Refocus them back to the work at hand and return to validating the scope of the effort.

Chapters Ten through Fourteen contain sample work session agendas and supporting descriptions. A partial agenda with time assignments appears in Exhibit 22.1.

EXHIBIT 22.1**Sample Agenda**

8:00–8:15 A.M.	Welcome & Introductions Welcome Introductions Overview of why we're here
8:15–8:30 A.M.	Meeting Overview Review objectives Review roles Walk through the agenda Confirm ground rules
8:30–9:00 A.M.	Review Action Item List Review completed actions and their results Review open items
9:00–10:30 A.M.	Validate Scope and Processes Validate in-scope and out-of-scope items Walk through target process map(s) to level-set the team. Highlight the steps that are changing as a result of this project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process order • Ship order • Invoice customer • Process payment Confirm or adjust as necessary
10:30–10:45 A.M.	Break
10:45–noon	Define Supporting Process-Related Business Requirements Process-related requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process order • Ship order • Invoice customer • Process payment
... (continue agenda as appropriate)	

Objectives

Objectives represent goals for the work session. They are clear, concise statements of what the group is trying to accomplish. Always write the work session objectives on a flip chart, and post them where they are visible to the team.

How to Use Them

Refer to the objectives when you need to help the group:

- Recognize the progress that they have made.
- Understand what work remains to be done.
- Keep the discussion focused to meet the objectives.

An Example

You are reviewing the four core business processes with the team. As you walk through these processes, two of the participants continue jumping ahead to suggest how these processes might be implemented at their main plant location and how training might occur for customer service representatives. Respectfully remind the team of the objectives for this work session (see Exhibit 22.2 for a sample set of work session objectives). Acknowledge the need to discuss these topics later in the project lifecycle, but not now, since implementation and training logistics do not contribute to the objectives of this work session. Refocus the group to the activity at hand, and continue.

Scope Table

This table exists in a number of work session deliverable templates. Keep one handy for use in the work session. It may also be helpful to have a printed copy for each participant to refer to throughout the work session.

How to Use It

Use the scope table to help the group:

- Determine if an item being discussed (process, requirement, or impact, for example) is within the scope.
- Confirm that the deliverable is sufficient and comprehensive.
- Refocus tangential discussions.

EXHIBIT 22.2

Sample Work Session Objectives

Work Session Objectives

- Validate scope items still outstanding.
- Develop a common understanding of the four core business processes within scope.
- Capture business requirements for the order fulfillment project.

An Example

You are capturing business requirements for “Allocate Inventory,” and your team starts to discuss problems with forecasting sales effectively. Listen for a few moments to see if there is a relevant point being made that contributes to understanding the dialogue regarding “Allocate Inventory” requirements. If not, refer the team to the scope table and remind them that the process of “Forecast Sales” was documented as outside your project scope. Ask them if this is still the case. Unless there is a substantive change in business direction or sponsorship that has now caused “Forecast Sales” to move into scope, the discussion is not relevant to the task at hand. Refocus the team, and continue defining requirements for “Allocate Inventory.”

Table 22.1 shows a sample scope table.

TABLE 22.1		
Sample Scope Table		
Order Fulfillment Project		
Category	In Scope	Out of Scope
Customer Type	Consumer	Commercial Wholesale
Channel	Retail Online	Distributor network
Product Types	Product type A Product type B	Product type C Product type D
Business Processes	Create order Confirm order Allocate inventory Ship order Deliver order Bill shipment Process payment Process returns	Manage warranties Obtain quote Purchase product Manufacture product Market product Forecast sales
Geographical Region	Domestic United States Mexico Canada	All other geographical regions

Action Item List

This is a simple yet effective tool for keeping the group on track and providing them with an excellent “takeaway” from the work session to guide their immediate next steps. Action items are most often captured when the group recognizes that they need a piece of information that is not available to them at that time (for example, the company vacation schedule for the upcoming year). An action item may also be documented when the team needs a decision that cannot be made by those in the work session (for example, which customer types will be offered a 10 percent discount in the new pricing table and which will be offered a 5 percent discount).

How to Use It

Capture an action item as a specific assignment when you need to help the group:

- Break out of a deadlocked discussion.
- Identify and take ownership of assignments that must be done to complete the deliverable.
- Recognize that the result of the discussion or debate is not critical to accomplishing the objectives of the work session. The work may still be necessary to the project, but to achieve the work session objectives, the team can make a working assumption or decision and continue forward.
- Gather data or get the results of research or analysis to support work session decisions or direction.

An Example

The need for an action item may be evident to the facilitator before it becomes evident to the participants. Typically the need arises when group discussion has gone beyond a reasonable amount of time without generating any substantive result. If this situation occurs, consider the use of time-boxing to limit the amount of time spent in discussion. Set a time limit on the discussion, and when the allotted time is up, ask the team to state the result of their discussion. If they cannot, ask them if the discussion can be finalized within another limited block of time, or create an action item to allow continued discussion of the topic after the work session. Capturing an action item allows the group to see a concrete assignment being made, so that their concern is not lost and they can move forward with the deliverable pending action item resolution.



Table 22.2 shows a sample action item table. (See the accompanying CD for a template.) As with any of the recommended tables, adjust the columns according to what makes sense to your project team. We recommend that you aid the team by using a visual notation for closed items that distinguishes them from the open items. In the example, we use gray shading to denote closed items.

Let's take a look at each column in the action item table to understand the information that will be captured:

- *Action Item #*. This first column contains an identifying number for the action item. Once numbers are assigned, do not renumber. The numbers will be used to identify the action items when they are cross-referenced in other documents such as the project charter or business requirements document.

- *Action Item Description*. This is the clear definition of the required action. Always confirm the wording of the action item description with the team, and make sure it is clearly understood. Don't use cryptic abbreviations or phrases here because they are hard to decipher outside the work session.

- *Responsible*. This is the name of the person responsible to get the action item completed. It must be someone who is in the work session. Keep in mind that placement of a name here does not mean that this person does all the work. It simply means that this person is responsible for ensuring that the work gets done and results reported back to the project team. Do not assign action items to someone not present in the room because this person won't understand the purpose or context of the action item. Instead, assign someone in the room to take ownership of getting the action item resolved, even if it means delegating.

- *Deliverable (Optional)*. This column is primarily for the benefit of the project manager or person who will be updating the deliverable with the results of the action item. It references the section of the deliverable to which this action item relates. During a work session, you may discuss the scope, purpose, background, requirements, impacts, or assumptions related to the project. And action items may be generated from any of these discussions. It is helpful for the project manager to know which section of the deliverable needs to be updated once the action item is closed. If the action item relates to the ongoing functioning of the project or the project plan rather than the deliverable, simply indicate "Project" in the cell.

- *Open Date*. This is the date that the action item was created.
- *Due Date*. This is the date that the action item is due.
- *Closed Date*. This is the date that the action item is completed.

TABLE 22.2

Sample Action Item Table

#	Action Item Description	Responsible	Deliverable	Open Date	Due Date	Closed Date	Status	Comments/Outcome
1	Provide monthly sales figures from 2003.	Karly Simon	Current Environment	3/4/04	3/11/04		Open	Need to contact Gail, who is on vacation this week.
2	Need to know when the contract is going to be finalized.	Tim Toolman	Project	3/4/04	3/11/04		Open	
3	Has a decision been made regarding sales forecasting? Will it have its own project next year or be folded into this one?	Tom Dooley	Scope	3/4/04	3/5/04	3/4/04	Closed	Received decision from Sponsor that there will be another project formed to address sales forecasting next year. It will not be in our scope.
4	Need to get a representative from the tax compliance area involved in the project team.	Karly Simon	Project	3/4/04	3/4/04		Open	
5	When is the year-end cutoff for sales booking?	Kris Kringle	Requirements	3/4/04	3/4/04		Open	

- *Status*. This displays the current status of the action item. “Open” and “Closed” are the two critical status notations. You may add others if they are relevant to your team in tracking progress.
- *Comments/Outcome*. This column is used for descriptive comments, capturing the outcome, describing the rationale to support the outcome, or whatever else is useful information for the team may be captured here.

Issues List

An issue is a point or matter of concern, debate, or dispute. Do not confuse issues with action items. Action items are assignments around which there is not significant concern or dispute. An issue is something of concern. Issues are captured to highlight areas of team concern that may become roadblocks to project progress if they are not resolved in the time allotted. These are usually substantive matters that require review and decisions by management or sponsoring executives.

How to Use It

Capture an issue when you need to help the group:

- Cease a debate that cannot be resolved by the participants in the room
- Highlight areas of significant concern that must be addressed outside of the work session arena

An Example

As with action items, the need for documenting an issue may be evident to the facilitator before it becomes evident to the participants. Consider the situation where a debate occurs regarding customer satisfaction with a recalled product. A dispute arises as to whether corporate customer service policy will allow the team to choose Option A or Option B as a solution to ensure customer satisfaction. Do not prolong the debate if no one in the room can adequately describe the details of corporate policy. Capture an issue, allowing the group to see a concrete assignment being made. It confirms that their concern is not lost and allows them to move forward with other components of the work session deliverable pending issue resolution.

Table 22.3 shows a sample issues table. (See the accompanying CD for a template.) As with any of the recommended tables, adjust the columns according to what makes sense to your project team. We recommend that you aid the team by using a visual notation for closed items that distinguishes them from the open items. In the exhibit, we use a gray shading to denote closed items.



TABLE 22.3**Sample Issues Table**

#	Issue Description	Responsible	Who Needs to be Involved in Resolution?	Open Date	Due Date	Closed Date	Priority	Status	Issue Resolution
1	Pending government legislation may have an impact on our sales in the international arena. Shall we move ahead with current direction, or adjust scope so that we can implement generation-1 in a domestic market?	Elmer Edwards	Project Sponsor, Division President, Compliance, Legal, CFO	3-20-04	3-31-04		1	Open	
2	Should we reconsider rollout date for the southeast region in the light of recent hurricane damage?	Tim Tulip	Project Sponsor, Project Manager, Regional Executive	3-20-04	4-15-04		2	Open	
3	No one has yet been assigned to the team from the customer service area. We need a representative by month end, or the project will miss the business requirements turnover deadline.	Carl Sing	Project Sponsor, Customer Service Manager, Project Manager	3-20-04	3-31-04	3-25-04	1	Closed	Tom Thumb will represent customer service on the project effort effective 3-26-04.

Let's take a look at each column in the issues table to understand the information that will be captured:

- *Issue #.* This first column contains an identifying number for the issue. Once numbers are assigned, do not renumber. These numbers will be used to identify the issues when they are cross-referenced in other documents, such as the project charter or business requirements document.
- *Issue Description.* This is the clear definition of the issue. Always confirm the wording of the issue description with the team, and make sure it is clearly understood. Don't use cryptic abbreviations or phrases here, because they are hard to decipher outside the work session.
- *Responsible.* This is the name of the person responsible to ensure that the issue is resolved. It must be someone who is in the work session. Keep in mind that placement of a name here does not mean that this person comes up with the resolution. It simply means that this person is responsible to make sure that the issue gets resolved and communicated back to the project team. Do not assign issue items to someone not present in the room. That person won't understand the purpose or context of the issue item. Instead, assign someone in the room to take ownership of getting the item resolved, even if it means delegating the actual work.
- *Who Needs to Be Involved in Resolution?* This column lists the roles or actual names of the people who are critical to resolving the issue. The person listed must make contact with those listed here to describe the concern or issue and obtain resolution.
- *Open Date.* This shows the date that the issue was created.
- *Due Date.* This shows the date that the issue is due.
- *Closed Date.* This shows the date that the issue is resolved.
- *Priority.* This column allows a priority rating to be assigned to the issue. Have the team choose a priority rating to appropriately reflect the criticality of the issue.
- *Status.* This displays the current status of the issue. Open and Closed are the two standard status notations. You may add others if they are relevant to your team in tracking progress.
- *Issue Resolution.* This column is used to capture how the issue was resolved and any other comments related to the issue.

Parking Lot

Parking Lot is a label ascribed to a list of items that were not pertinent for discussion in the work session but may be relevant to future team meetings or work sessions. The parking lot offers a place to capture ideas whose time have not yet come. These are ideas generated or discussed by the group that are substantive to some aspect of project scope or activity, but do not align with the purpose of our work session.

How to Use It

Use the parking lot when you need to help the group:

- Refocus from a tangential discussion.
- Set aside topics of interest that are not part of this work session's purpose but will be addressed later in the project.

An Example

As with both action items and issues, the need for documenting an item in the parking lot may be evident to the facilitator before it becomes evident to the participants. The need arises when a participant starts down a path that is off the work session topic. It may be relevant later in the work session agenda, or it may not be relevant to the objectives of this work session whatsoever. Capturing a parking lot item allows the group to see that the information will not be lost and they can move forward with the deliverable for this work session. As with other work session deliverables, the parking lot should be given to the project manager for future reference.

See Exhibit 22.3 for a sample list of items assigned to the parking lot during a business requirements work session.

Materials Needed

Depending on the method used to document the focusing techniques, you'll need different materials.

Capturing the Information Manually

- Two flip chart stands, paper, and markers
- Masking tape (if needed to post flip charts onto the walls)
- A room with plenty of useable wall space for posting the flip charts

We recommend that you post blank flip chart pages on the walls in advance of each work session day. Put labels on them to designate action items, issues, and the parking lot. You will also want to post the agenda and objectives for the work session at some visible place in the room.

EXHIBIT 22.3

Sample Parking Lot

Parking Lot for Business Requirements Work Session

- We should explore the use of an outside vendor for telemarketing support in peak seasons.
- Do we have capacity on the existing servers to support the expected volumes?

Capturing the Information Electronically

- Laptop
- PC projector
- Screen or white wall on which to project the image
- Appropriate electronic template in which to capture action items, issues, and parking lot items
- Electronic files that have the agenda, objectives, and scope table available for projection (with hard copies available for each participant)

Keys to Success

- DON'T allow discussions to go on that are not relevant to the agenda, relevant to achieving the objectives, and within the agreed-on project scope.
- DON'T allow discussions to continue for an inappropriate length of time without demonstrating results. Consider using the time-boxing technique to limit the amount of time spent in discussion. Set a time limit on the discussion, and when the allotted time is up, ask the team to state the result of their discussion. If they cannot, ask them if the discussion can be finalized within another limited block of time; if not, create an action item to allow further discussion of the topic after the work session.
- DO stay focused and engaged with the dialogue. If you find yourself fading, take a break and regain your own focus as a facilitator, or your team will surely lose theirs.
- DO use action items, issues, and parking lots to keep the discussion moving.
- DO use the agenda, objectives, and scope table to keep the discussion focused.

Section Six

Specialized Facilitation Techniques

Building the Deliverables

CHAPTERS TWENTY-THREE TO THIRTY-FOUR address techniques that are specific to building work session deliverables. You won't find these modeling and documenting techniques referenced in most books about facilitation. These are not general facilitation techniques that manage the group interaction; rather, they are techniques applied to provide a specific output for the project. These specialized facilitation techniques are used to build specific deliverables in conjunction with the general facilitation techniques described in the prior section. By using both, you manage the group dynamics and interactions while successfully documenting the deliverables. You'll find these specialized techniques referenced throughout Section Four, as they are critical to the successful delivery of a work session.

As with any other technique, it is important to understand the nature of the problem or challenge before trying to apply a technique. In determining the right specialized facilitation technique to address your specific situation, you'll want to:

- Know the purpose and capabilities of the technique.
- Know the conventions of the technique.
- Understand how the technique contributes to objectives.
- Understand the output of the technique and how it will be used.
- Choose an appropriate level of detail to accomplish the objectives at hand.
- Use draft models or seed materials whenever appropriate rather than starting with a blank sheet of paper.
- Use color, shapes, and symbols effectively.
- Develop your own expertise in using the technique, so that the technique does not distract you from your role as facilitator. The techniques you use need to be second nature to you.

Chapter 23

Creating a Purpose Statement

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A concise definition of project intention that can be annotated with descriptive information regarding:<ul style="list-style-type: none">What we'll doWhy we're doing itWho it benefitsWhen it will be implementedWhere it applies geographicallyHow it will be accomplished	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To concisely describe the project effort in newsletters or other communication vehiclesTo provide a short "elevator speech" that each project team member can easily remember and use to consistently describe the project effortTo keep the message consistent when giving information to those outside the projectTo help the team retain its focus regarding what the project is about throughout the effort

HAVE YOU EVER walked up to someone and asked, "So, Tom, I heard you were on a new project. What is it?" only to receive a somewhat rambling explanation of the project initiative, which leaves you uncertain about what Tom is working on? Chances are that if you ask another person (let's say Jane) on the same project, you'll get a different version of the rambling explanation, but one that still leaves you guessing and a little uncertain that Tom and Jane are working on the same project.

Creating a purpose statement for the project is a critical yet often overlooked step. This concise statement of intention, along with clarifying talking points regarding the what, why, who, when, where, and how of the project, can provide an essential tool for the project team and solidify a common message vital to project communication. This is typically done within the context of a project charter work session (see Chapter Ten) and included as part of the project charter document (see the template supplied on the CD).



The Conventions

You can present the purpose statement and supporting talking points in either a bulleted list or a table format.

Using a Bulleted List for the Purpose Statement

- Capture the purpose definition at the top of the page.
- Include further annotation regarding what, why, who, when, where, and how below the statement of purpose.
- Keep phrases concise and specific.

Using a Table for the Purpose Statement

- Capture the purpose definition at the top of the page (Exhibit 23.1).
- Build a small two-column table, with one row each for the what, why, who, when, where, how questions. Put these on separate rows in the left column. In the right column, provide the responses to that question.
- Keep phrases concise and specific.

Facilitating the Technique

Definition of the purpose statement and talking points typically occurs early in the project charter work session (see Chapter Ten). The recommended facilitation technique used is facilitated dialogue and can be supplemented

EXHIBIT 23.1

Purpose Statement Table

Purpose Statement

[Type purpose statement here. Strive for 15 words or less.]

Talking Points

[You may augment the purpose statement with talking points. If any of these is not relevant to your project, delete it.]

What	<i>What we will do to achieve this project</i>
Why	<i>Brief summary of our objectives—why we are doing this project</i>
Who	<i>Who will primarily benefit from the project (customers, business, employees). This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.</i>
When	<i>Targeted implementation of date—quarter or year</i>
Where	<i>Geographical locations affected by the project</i>
How	<i>What approach we will use to achieve this project</i>

with the nominal group technique to get the group up and moving. (See Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen for further insight into using these techniques with the group.)

Define a Brief Statement of Purpose

1. Have the group review the project objectives (if they've already been developed) and project initiative background materials. Ask them to give you a starting phrase or sentence to summarize the intent of the project effort.

- Capture the phrase or sentence on a flip chart. Leave plenty of vertical space when writing to allow modifications.
- Don't belabor this. Your goal is to get a starting phrase or sentence captured. It's typically much easier for a group to refine what is written than to work from a blank sheet of paper.

2. As the facilitator, repeat the phrase or sentence to the group. Ask them if it captures the essence of what the project intends to accomplish. Encourage dialogue to refine the statement of purpose.

- Remind the group that the purpose statement will provide them with the thirty-second elevator speech, that is, the "quick answer" when someone stops them to ask about the project.

3. When you have a statement that the group is reasonably comfortable with, move into the talking points. Sometimes getting into the details of the talking points can help the group refine the overall statement of purpose.

Capture the Talking Points

Talking points are the refinements to the purpose statement that can provide additional information when speaking with someone who wants to know more:

1. Review the purpose statement with the team. Start with one of the talking points, and ask the team what phrases they recommend be captured to respond to the specific talking point. For example, if you are detailing the talking point for "Who," then ask, "Who will primarily benefit from the project?" (See Exhibit 23.1 for definitions of the talking points.) Capture the team responses, refine the list, and finalize the talking points.

2. Repeat this for as many of the talking points that the team believes are applicable. Your team may not use all of the "what, why, who, when, where, and how" categories, or they may define other categories of talking points that are more relevant to their project's subject matter.

Capture the Talking Points: An Alternative Approach

Your goal as a facilitator is still the same: capture relevant talking points that give substance to the purpose statement. But rather than using facilitated dialogue, you can facilitate a nominal group technique exercise.

1. Post flip charts onto the wall, putting a category heading on each flip chart. Use the categories suggested or create categories that make sense for this project situation (Figure 23.1).

2. Hand out five to eight large sticky notes and a fine-point marker to each participant.

3. Explain that you will be asking each of them to write five to eight things to clarify the purpose statement. Ask them to envision that someone has stopped them in the hallway to ask about the project. They have responded with the purpose statement and the person requests more information. For example, the person says, "That's interesting. Tell me how your team intends to accomplish that." This opens the door for the speaker to offer more information regarding the project.

- Ask the team to think of points of information that would help to clarify or add substance to the purpose statement.
- Have the participants write one phrase per sticky note.

4. Give the participants ten minutes to write their talking points.

5. When the group is done, ask them to come up one by one and post their sticky notes on the appropriate flip chart, reading them to the group and clarifying as they go.

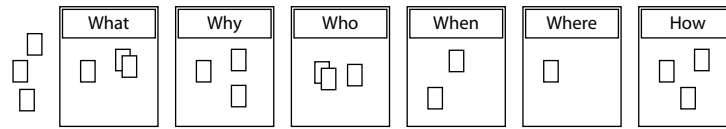
- If someone has a talking point that does not easily fit into one of the flip chart categories, post it off to the side, so that categories can be revisited at the end of the exercise (Figure 23.2).
- If one of the talking points is a duplicate of one that already exists, ask the person to place the sticky note on top of the one that is a duplicate.

FIGURE 23.1

Purpose Statement Talking Points: Posting the Ideas

What	Why	Who	When	Where	How

FIGURE 23.2

Purpose Statement Talking Points: Grouping the Ideas

6. When all sticky notes are posted on the flip charts, review them all with the group, clarifying and modifying as necessary to reach consensus.

- If new categories need to be added, do so.
- If any category is blank, ask the group if it is relevant. If it is, use facilitated dialogue to generate talking points for that category.



7. Post the results into the purpose and talking points section of the Project Charter Template (see the accompanying CD).

Keys to Success

- DON'T let the purpose statement become too long. We recommend fifteen words or less. It's okay to go beyond this, but keep it to a concise definition of project intent.
- DON'T list too many talking points. Keep to the key messages that the project team wants to communicate. The purpose and talking points give the team concise information to share with appropriate persons outside the project team. Keep it simple and meaningful.
- DON'T spend too much time on this activity. Thirty minutes should be sufficient in most situations.
- DO keep the purpose and talking points updated throughout the project. If anything changes, update the list, and distribute it to the team. The purpose and talking points make a useful one-page extract for each team member to keep handy for reference.
- DO share the purpose and talking points with those who will be responsible for communicating project progress. This keeps the overall message consistent.

Chapter 24

Defining Objectives and Targets

What They Are	How You Can Use Them
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A method for establishing the goals for what the project is trying to accomplish.<ul style="list-style-type: none">They are specific with respect to timing.They satisfy specific internal or external customer needs.• They set the tone for change, depending on how mild or aggressive the goal:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Taking next stepsStretchingBreakthrough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To establish the direction and goals for the initiative• To set the tone for the initiative and expectations regarding the magnitude of change• To tie customer needs to specific measurable outcomes• To identify what needs to be measured• To help the team retain focus throughout the effort

OBJECTIVES GIVE FOCUS to the project: they reframe the business needs or opportunities that spawned the project into the attainable goals that it is intended to accomplish. Typically objectives are set early in the project effort because they are necessary to building the business case. Once the business case is approved and we begin to set the project charter and project scope, the objectives need to be validated or refined, and specific targets should be set. This is typically done within the context of a project charter work session (see Chapter Ten) and included as part of the Project Charter Document (see the template supplied on the CD).



Setting the Context

Let's start with defining *objective* and *target* to set the context for understanding this chapter. These words may seem to imply the same thing: something we are working toward and trying to accomplish. But are they

The best benefit I perceive in facilitated work sessions is the ability to get everyone on the same page in terms of setting realistic goals for a project and developing an agreed-on approach to achieving those goals.

William M. Ulrich,
president, Tactical
Strategy Group

really the same thing? The definitions that follow are based on common industry descriptions but have been expanded to apply specifically to projects. You may need to adjust them to fit your culture and methodology as you apply this technique in your organization:

- *Objective.* An objective is something worked toward, a goal. Objectives are derived from the external customer needs, internal business needs, or regulatory requirements that created the project. Although often broad in scope, an objective must be stated specifically enough that its alignment to corporate strategy and departmental direction is clear. From it, we must be able to understand clearly whether we have successfully achieved the results we were shooting for.

Usually you'll see objectives phrased as follows:

- "Improve net revenue"
- "Reduce operating costs"
- "Increase customer satisfaction"

These are a good start, but they don't provide a very clear understanding of what you're trying to achieve. We suggest you make them more substantial and measurable by being as specific as possible, for example:

- "Improve net revenue by 20 percent"
- "Reduce operating costs by 15 percent"
- "Increase customer satisfaction in the online channel by 50 percent"

- *Critical to quality (CTQ) factors.* In Six Sigma efforts, CTQs are defined as characteristics of a product or service that meet a specific customer need. They represent the factors that are of most concern to the customer and must be taken into consideration throughout the design of the end product or service. CTQs are typically identified early in the project effort and should be based on market analysis and customer information (the voice of the customer) gathered prior to building the business case. The characteristics of the product or service that are represented as CTQs must be *within the team's control* (that is, the team can affect them) and *indicate a desired direction* (increase, stay the same, or decrease).

Every project is the result of a customer or business need, desire, or problem. CTQs align project efforts with those needs, desires, or problems and are supported by measurable targets that enable us to monitor the performance of the solution effectively. Examples of CTQs are:

- "Predictable delivery" (an external customer CTQ)
- "Ship the right product" (an external customer CTQ)
- "Process more shipments per hour" (an internal business CTQ)

- *Target.* A target is a specific end that we are aiming for. It is unambiguous and measurable. It typically supports one or more of the objectives or CTQs. In our definition, a target is typically smaller in scope and more precise than an objective—for example:

- “Deliver product within forty-eight hours of order confirmation”
- “Zero shipping errors” (the type and quantity of product shipped equal the type and quantity of product expected to ship 100 percent of the time)
- “Increase the number of orders picked [or packed or staged] for shipment per hour by 25 percent”

Table 24.1 shows the interrelationship of objectives, customer needs (external customer or internal business needs), CTQs, and targets. Every target should be measurable, specifically enabling us to understand how well we are doing in meeting customer needs and objectives.

When we set the objectives and targets, we do not yet know how they will be met. We do not know what process or organizational changes will be needed or how the solution will be implemented technologically. In our shipping example, we don’t yet know if barcoding and scanning technology might be part of the solution that will enable the business to improve its distribution operations and reduce costs. Those decisions will come later in the project lifecycle. And that’s okay.

TABLE 24.1

CTQ and Targets Table

Project Objective	Customer Need (External or Internal)	CTQ	Target
Improved customer satisfaction in the online channel by 20%	“I want to know when I’m going to receive my product.”	Predictable delivery	Deliver product within 48 hours of order confirmation
Improved customer satisfaction in the online channel by 20%	“I want to get the product I ordered.”	Ship the right product	Zero shipping errors
Reduce operating costs by 15%	Reduce distribution costs	Pick and pack the right product Process more shipments per hour	Zero shipping errors Increase number of orders picked, packed, or staged per hour by 25 percent

Yet setting the objectives and measurable targets sets the tone for the entire project effort. Easy objectives and targets set the stage for a process improvement effort with minor change and most likely small wins for the company and customer. Tough, aggressive objectives and targets mean we'll be stretching, innovating, and introducing more risk while also introducing potentially bigger wins for the company and customer.

One critical point to keep in mind when setting objectives and targets is this: *do not limit the setting of a goal by concern regarding your current ability to reach that goal.* Current capability should never dictate future objectives and targets. If it's the right thing to do from the customer and company perspective, then set the goal. If it's a major stretch, then assign target dates to progressive generations of the solution that will help meet an aggressive target in several stages of implementation.

The Conventions

The conventions for representing objectives, CTQs, and targets are quite simple. Use either a bulleted list or a table as shown in Table 24.1. The table has the added benefit of showing the interrelationships of the objectives, CTQs, and targets.

Using a Bulleted List

- Be as specific as possible.
- Include time frames and target values when appropriate.
- Include the connection to the element that the objective, CTQ, or target is supporting (for example, reference the element of business strategy or the customer need that is being supported).

Using a Table

- Be as specific as possible.
- Include time frames and target values when appropriate.
- Build the table left-to-right, with the broader elements of business strategy or objectives on the left and the more precise targets on the right side of the table. Put items that are interconnected on the same row.

Facilitating the Technique

Now that we understand the information required for objectives and targets, let's discuss keys to facilitating its development.

Capturing Objectives

Objectives should be initially set within the business case, at least at a high level. These then serve as the foundation for your discussion with the work session participants:

1. Review the project purpose and objectives as outlined in the business case. Ask the team to confirm the items as they are read.
2. Ask if the objectives can be stated in a more specific manner. Strive to get the objectives as specific as possible.
3. Look at the number of objectives. Are there more than three to five listed? If so, challenge the group to rethink the project purpose and potential scope. Too many objectives may indicate that the effort is too big and may become unfocused and unimplementable. To quote an old Chinese proverb, “He who chases two rabbits catches none.”
4. Strive to get the group to confirm three to five core objectives that are specific and clearly stated. If they can define the project direction in one or two clearly stated objectives, even better.

Capturing CTQs

CTQs are based on understanding external customer needs and internal customer needs (business management goals or requirements). It is important that the voice of the customer has been captured prior to driving the CTQ definition. Without this, CTQs cannot be reliably defined.

The CTQs that are relevant to this project effort are those that fit within the scope and purpose of the project. Not all customer needs will be satisfied in any one project. In fact, one project may meet several customer needs but may not solve any one need in its entirety. To define CTQs, follow these steps:

1. Review the project purpose and objectives.
2. Review the work done to capture voice of the customer—both external and internal customer needs.
3. If customers have been identified by categories or types, bring this to the attention of the participants. Identify which customer groups are pertinent to the project objectives and scope. Which customer groups fit into the business case?
4. Look for common themes among the customer voices within and across the relevant customer groups. Determine which of these common themes fit into the intent of this project effort.
5. What are the characteristics of the product or service (within the scope of this project effort) that will fulfill these customer needs? Capture these characteristics as the baseline for the CTQ definition.

6. Refine the CTQ definition to ensure that:

- The characteristic being described is within our control.
- The CTQ is directional (indicates increasing, decreasing, or staying the same).
- The CTQ is specifically stated, with upper or lower specification limits if applicable.
- The CTQ is linked to one or more specific customer needs and that the customer need is connected to the objectives of this specific project effort.

Capturing Targets

Targets are the specific ends that we are aiming for, typically supporting one or more of the CTQs, objectives, or regulatory requirements:

1. Review the project purpose, objectives, and CTQs.

2. Engage the group in discussion to identify specific measurable targets that will best indicate achievement of the objectives or CTQs. (Remember, just because something *can* be measured doesn't mean it *should* be measured.) Ask these questions over the course of this discussion:

- “Is the target a reliable indicator that we have successfully achieved the objective or CTQ?”
- “Are there other targets that also contribute to the successful attainment of this objective or CTQ?”
- “Is the target measurable?”
- “Can we obtain the data necessary to perform the required measurement?”
- “Is the benefit of the resulting measurement worth the cost of acquiring the data to support it?”

3. If the choice of targets is somewhat unclear or several options exist for a particular objective or CTQ, use the prioritization techniques discussed in Chapter Twenty to assist in choosing which targets will be applied to the project effort.

4. If the group has identified specific measures that are to be applied, capture them along with the target. They will be used later in the project to identify points in business processes where measurement data will need to be captured. See Table 24.2 and the accompanying CD for a helpful table to start your analysis of measurements: the Measurement Framework Template.



TABLE 24.2

Measurement Framework Table

Objective/CTQ (What are we trying to accomplish?)	Target (What will be measured?)	Lower Specification Limit (Tolerance)	Upper Specification Limit (Tolerance)	Measure	What Is Success?	Responsible Party
Increase Customer Satisfaction	Zero shipping errors	NA	NA	Product SKU and quantity picked/packed/staged for shipment = Product SKU and quantity on the customer order for this shipment	Exact match	Warehouse Manager
Reduce Operational Costs Improve Warehouse Productivity	Increase number of orders picked/packed/staged per hour by 25%	20% increase	NA (anything above 25% is a win)	Number of orders picked/packed/staged for shipment per hour compared with baseline date	25% improvement Tolerance is -5% from target	Warehouse Manager

The Measurement Framework Template describes how the objectives or CTQs will be met. Start this template as you identify objectives, CTQs, and relevant targets. As ideas regarding measures are discussed and accepted, log them here, and refine them as you move into later phases of the project. This must be completed during design of the solution, since you must be able to confirm that the data required to support the measures is available.

Here are the core elements in the table. Update them as you deem appropriate to better fit your methodology and project circumstances:

- *Objective/CTQ (What Are We Trying to Accomplish?)*: A measurable outcome that is expected to be achieved by the project. (See the definitions provided earlier in the chapter.)
- *Target (What Will Be Measured?)*: What is the target or indicator that will help us track to performance for the objective or CTQ? (See the definition provided earlier in the chapter.)
- *Lower Specification Limit (Tolerance)*: Is there a tolerance range around the target? If so, what is the lower limit? How low can we go before we raise the red flag that something is wrong?
- *Upper Specification Limit (Tolerance)*: Is there a tolerance range around the target? If so, what is the upper limit? How high can we go before we raise the red flag that something is wrong?
- *Measure*: What is the specific measure or calculation that will be used to monitor performance?
- *What Is Success?* What is the exact outcome that we are expecting? What value or outcome is successful?
- *Responsible Party*: What role is responsible for tracking the performance and making adjustments if targets are not being met?

Keys to Success

- DON'T proceed beyond project chartering without defining objectives, CTQs, and targets. These may have to be refined later, but get a foundation set early on.
- DON'T limit your definition of objectives or targets based on current capabilities. Just because we can't reach a certain performance level today does not mean it is not the right objective for the future.
- DON'T list too many objectives or targets. Three to five objectives are typically fine. Try to keep CTQs and targets to a controllable few as well. Too many objectives or targets may cause the project to be unfocused or may indicate that it is just too big.

- DON'T churn over how to measure a target before defining *what is appropriate as a target*. Once a target or objective is set, we can discuss alternatives regarding how to measure it.
- DO document objectives, CTQs, and targets early in the project. Objectives should be set at the time of developing the business case. Work to further define objectives, CTQs, and targets as part of the project charter work session. Remember that they may continue to be refined as the project moves forward.
- DO get external and internal customer input prior to defining objectives, CTQs, and targets. Don't guess about it during the work session. This voice of the customer provides the foundation for what we are trying to accomplish.
- DO push for clarity and specificity when defining objectives and targets.
- DO ensure that the business owns the objectives, CTQs, and targets. If there is no ownership, there will be no accountability in the implemented solution.
- DO recognize that just because something *can* be measured doesn't mean that it *should* be measured. Targets must be relevant to achieving internal or external customer needs or regulatory requirements. Measures must enable monitoring of the targets, and the overall benefit provided must exceed the cost to put the measure in place.

Chapter 25

Scope Framing

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A diagram or table that clearly depicts what is in scope and what is out of scope for the project effort• A way of anchoring the boundaries for the project effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To clearly communicate the scope of a project• To depict what is in and out of scope for various phases of implementation• To address boundary issues throughout the project• To manage project resources wisely by addressing only relevant topics of work• To determine stakeholders needed for project involvement• To confirm team member representation• To help the team retain focus throughout the effort

SETTING AND CONTROLLING scope is one of the greatest challenges facing project teams. Inability to understand or manage scope is a leading contributor to project delay or failure. A clear definition of scope is essential to success, and it should be addressed at the outset of the project. It becomes the anchor point for all subsequent project deliverables and activities.

In setting scope, one principle is often overlooked: the importance of stating clearly not only what is *in scope* but what is *out of scope*. It's funny how the mind works. We see words on a page, but we interpret them according to our own set of biases and filters. Time and time again, we've seen project teams and their extended stakeholder community misinterpret scope. What one person thought it meant was different from its intended meaning or what others thought it meant. Stating both what is in scope and what is not in scope clarifies the boundaries in a way that stating only what is in scope cannot do.

Initially the technique of scope framing is used during the project charter work session to define the project scope. However, the scope table itself



will be revisited for validation and may be refined in other follow-on work sessions. If scope is refined, the team will need to apply appropriate scope change controls. The table that we will use for framing project scope is found within the Project Charter Template on the accompanying CD.

The Conventions

There are several recommended options for representing project scope and some to avoid. Let's examine what to avoid first. Do not attempt to describe project scope by writing a monolithic set of paragraphs regarding the boundaries of the project. A long textual description of scope is what typically gets projects in trouble. There is a direct correlation between the length of the narrative and the potential to misunderstand it! Leave the paragraphs of text behind, and try one of the following options for clearly representing project scope: a bulleted list, a frame diagram (Figure 25.1), or a table (Table 25.1). The table depiction is the version we've included in the project charter and other work session deliverables since it has the added benefit of easy categorization.

Option 1: The Bulleted List

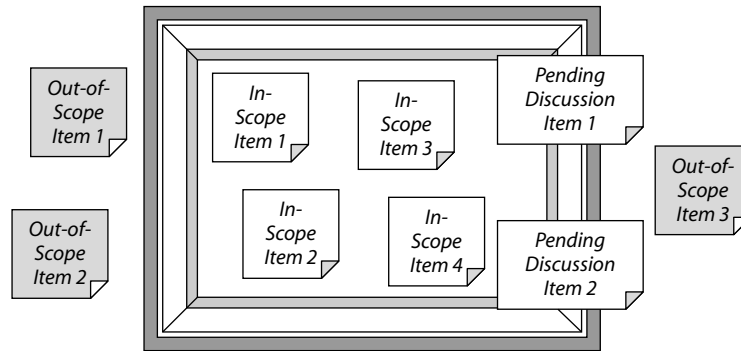
- Make three headings: In Scope, Out of Scope, and Pending Further Discussion.
- Within each of the heading sections, created a bulleted list of items that correspond to the heading.
- Keep phrases concise and specific.

Option 2: The Frame Diagram

This is a highly visual depiction of scope using the symbol of a picture frame (see Figure 25.1):

- The area inside the picture frame designates the area of project scope.
- Items placed within the picture frame are in scope.
- Items placed outside the frame are out of scope.
- Items placed on the frame itself indicate that further discussion or research is required in order to decide whether these will be in scope or out of scope.
- Keep phrases concise and specific.

FIGURE 25.1
Scope Frame Diagram



Option 3: The Scope Table

The scope table is also a more visual depiction of scope than simply using a bulleted list. It perhaps provides the most specific definition of scope by allowing items to be designated in or out of scope by categories or topics that are meaningful to the business (Table 25.1):

- Build a table with columns for Category, In Scope, Out of Scope, and Pending Discussion.
- Place meaningful categories or business topics in the rows of the table.
- As you fill in the in- and out-of-scope items, keep phrases concise and specific.

Facilitating the Technique

Defining the project scope typically occurs in the early portion of the project charter work session (see Chapter Ten). We will look at two approaches for facilitating scope: option 2 (the frame diagram) and option 3 (the scope table). (Refer to Figure 25.1 for option 2 and Table 25.1 for option 3.)

Facilitating the Frame Diagram

1. Have the group review the project purpose, objectives, and initiative background.
2. Post flip chart paper on a wall, and draw a large “picture frame” or rectangle that will represent the frame.
3. Ask the group if there are specific categories that will help to guide the scope discussion, such as customer type, product type or family, or

TABLE 25.1
Scope Table

Order Fulfillment Project			
Category	In Scope	Out of Scope	Pending Discussion
Customer Type	Consumer	Commercial Wholesale	
Channel	Retail Online	Distributor network	
Product Types	Product type A Product type B	Product type C Product type D	Product type E (Pending Action Item #12)
Business Processes	Create order Confirm order Allocate inventory Ship order Deliver order Bill shipment Process payment Process returns	Manage warranties Obtain quote Purchase product Manufacture product Market product Forecast sales	Manage inventory (Pending Action Item #14)
Geographical Region	Domestic United States Mexico Canada	All other geographical regions	

geography. List these categories on a separate flip chart, and refer to them to drive the discussion of scope.

4. Start by choosing a category or topic that is well understood by the participants (for example, customer type or product type). It will be easy to get the discussion of scope rolling if they are talking about a topic with which they are comfortable.

5. Ask the group a starting question, such as, “Given the project purpose and objectives we just reviewed, which customer types are in scope?”

- Capture their responses on large sticky notes, and post the items that are in scope inside the picture frame.
- As with a brainstorming exercise, you are likely to get a lot of ideas quickly, and then it will start to slow down.
- As the conversation slows, review the items that were noted as in scope, and clarify or revise them as needed.

6. Ask the group what is out of scope for this same category, and document their responses on large sticky notes, placing these outside the frame.

- It can be helpful to use different colors of sticky notes—one color for in-scope items and another for out-of-scope items. Color can help participants easily distinguish what is in scope and what is out of scope.

7. Once the in-scope and out-of-scope items have been documented for a specific category, move on to the next category and repeat steps 5 and 6.

8. When all categories have been completed, ask if there are any other clarifications to scope. Review the entire table and revise as appropriate with the group.

9. Pending discussion items are likely to pop out while trying to isolate what is in and out of scope. We don't go searching for these items; they appear out of unresolved discussion or debate. Try to resolve the indecision if at all possible. But if it cannot be resolved, post the "pending discussion" items directly on the frame itself, not inside or outside the frame. Leave an item as "pending discussion" only if it truly cannot be decided among the participants in the work session.

We have found the following suggestions helpful here:

- Be as specific as possible when capturing an item that is pending further discussion or research.
- Always link this item to an action item, and assign it for resolution.
- Remember that scope is not finalized until items marked as pending discussion have been resolved.



The project scope is defined within the context of a project charter work session (refer to Chapter Ten). The corresponding Project Charter Template that appears in the accompanying CD depicts scope in the table format rather than the frame diagram. If you choose to use a frame diagram rather than a table format, just delete the table from the Project Charter Template and replace with a scope frame diagram that was created by the work session team.

Facilitating the Scope Table

1. Have the group review the project purpose, objectives, and initiative background.
2. Talk through the default categories listed on the scope table in the Project Charter Template. Confirm or modify the categories as necessary to make them more applicable to the project being discussed.
3. Place flip charts on the walls using one flip chart per scope category, or electronically display the scope table in the Project Charter Template and capture the information while projecting this table onto a wall or a projection screen.

4. Start by choosing a category or topic that is well understood by the participants (for example, customer type or product type). It will be easy to get the discussion of scope rolling if they are talking about a topic with which they are comfortable.

5. Ask the group a starting question, such as, “Given the project purpose and objectives we just reviewed, which customer types are in scope?”

- Capture their responses on the appropriate flip chart or in the table electronically on the row corresponding to that topic.
- As with a brainstorming exercise, you are likely to get a lot of ideas quickly, and then they will start to slow down.
- As the conversation slows, review the items that were noted as in scope, and clarify or revise them as needed.

6. Ask the group what is out of scope for this same category, and document their responses.

7. Once the in-scope and out-of-scope items have been documented for a specific category, move on to the next category, and repeat steps 5 and 6 above.

8. When all categories have been completed, review the entire table and revise as appropriate with the group:

- Items that are pending further discussion are likely to pop out while trying to isolate what is in and out of scope. We don’t go searching for these items; they appear out of unresolved discussion or debate. Try to resolve the indecision if at all possible. Leave an item in the Pending Discussion column only if it truly cannot be decided among the participants in the work session. Be as specific as possible when capturing an item in this column.
- Always link this item to an action item, and assign it for resolution.
- Remember that scope is not finalized until items marked as pending discussion have been resolved.

9. Post the resulting scope table into the project scope section of the Project Charter Template (see the accompanying CD).



Variations

Get creative with the use of scope diagrams or tables. They can be very helpful when there are project scope options or solutions that may require multiple generations.

Representing Project Scope Options

One variation on the use of scope frames or tables is for teams faced with more than one option for scoping the project initiative. Have the team complete a scope frame or table for their first option. Accompany this with a T-bar that demonstrates the pros and cons of this option. Do the same for other options for scope. Present the scope options along with their accompanying rationale to sponsoring executives (Table 25.2).

TABLE 25.2			
Representing Project Scope Options			
Order Fulfillment Project: Scope Option A			
Category	In Scope	Out of Scope	Pending Discussion
Customer Type	Consumer	Commercial Wholesale	
Channel	Retail Online	Wholesale	
Product Types	Product type A Product type B	Product type C Product type D	Product type E (Pending Action Item #12)
Business Processes	Create order Confirm order Allocate inventory Ship order Deliver order Bill shipment Process payment Process returns	Manage warranties Obtain quote Purchase product Manufacture product Market product Forecast sales	Manage inventory (Pending Action Item #14)
Geographical Region	Domestic United States Mexico Canada	All other geographical regions	
Scope Option A: Rationale			
Pros		Cons	
Xxxxxx xxx xxxxxxxxxx		Yyyyyy yyyyy yyyyyy	
Xxxx xxx xxxxxxxx		Yyyy yyyyyyyyyy yy	
XXXXXXXX xxx xxxxxx		Yyyyyyy yyy yy	

Representing Multiple Generations

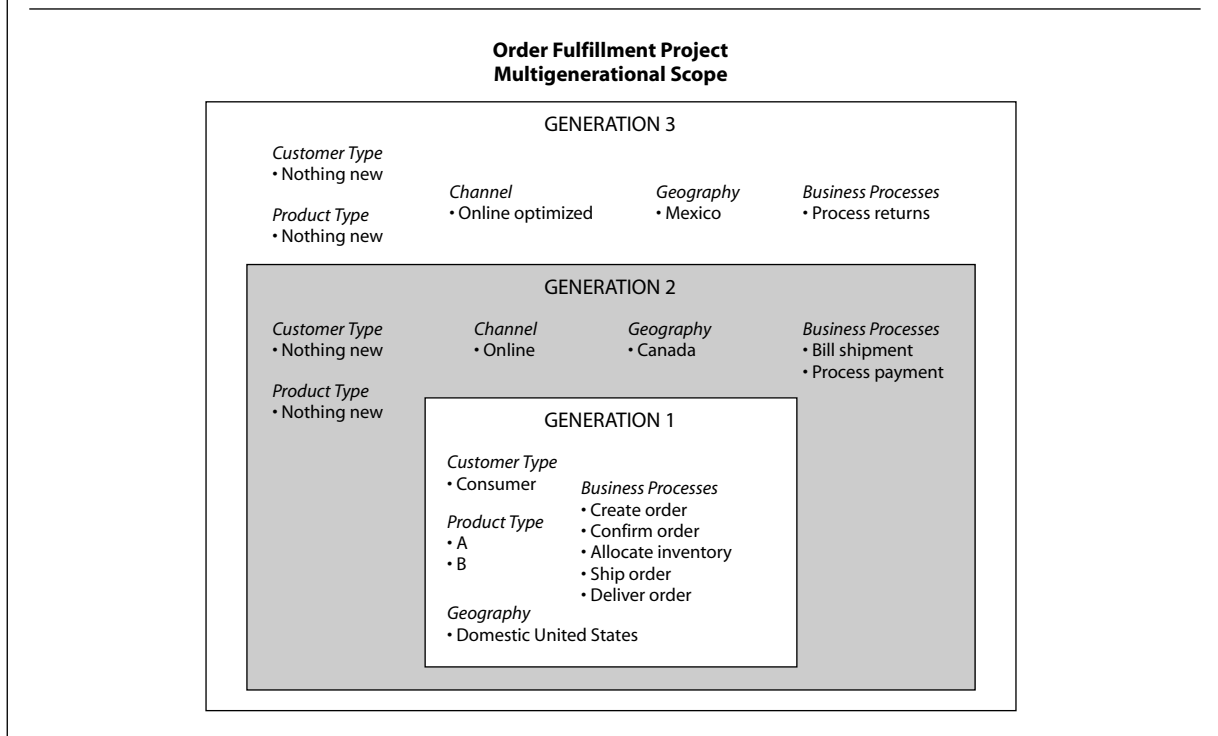
Another variation on the use of scope frames or tables is for teams facing a multigenerational solution or implementation. Discussing or representing only the scope of the first generation may appear incomplete or disjointed when taken in context with the overall business problem. A multigenerational scope frame or scope table can help the team visually communicate that the business problem has been comprehensively addressed. The generations have a cumulative effect. Each successive generation adds additional items to the scope addressed by the prior generation, unless an item is noted as an interim or throw-away element. Table 25.3 and Figure 25.2 show two alternatives for depicting multigenerational scope.

TABLE 25.3
Representing Multigenerational Scope: Option 1

In Scope				
Category	Generation 1	Generation 2	Generation 3	Out of Scope
Customer Type	Consumer	(Consumer)	(Consumer)	Commercial Wholesale
Channel	Retail	Online	Online optimized	Distributors
Product Types	Product type A Product type B	(Product type A) (Product type B)	(Product type A) (Product type B)	Product type C Product type D Product type E
Business Processes	Create order Confirm order Allocate inventory Ship order Deliver order	Bill shipment Process payment	Process returns	Manage warranties Obtain quote Purchase product Manufacture product Market product Forecast sales
Geographical Region	Domestic United States	Canada	Mexico	All other geographical regions

FIGURE 25.2

Representing Multigenerational Scope: Option 2



Keys to Success

- DON'T neglect scope setting. It becomes the anchor point for all remaining project deliverables and activities.
- DON'T allow items that are pending further discussion or research to get lost. Always assign these as action items to ensure that follow-up occurs.
- DO capture what is in scope as well as what is out of scope. It clarifies the boundaries in a way that stating only what is in scope cannot do.
- DO review the scope to determine if the project team has the representation needed to cover all the topic areas identified as in scope.
- DO review scope to identify the key stakeholders with whom the team must communicate throughout the project effort.

Chapter 26

Guiding Factors

Assumptions, Constraints, Dependencies, and Touch Points

What They Are	How You Can Use Them
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tools for clarifying the deliverable and understanding its relationships with other projects and processes• A method for helping to understand the factors that affect and influence the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To document factors relating to the project that are beyond the control of the project team yet have an impact on the project's success• To confirm strategic direction or unmovable dates that may influence project decisions• To further clarify the scope of the project—what is assumed to be handled elsewhere

WHETHER YOU'RE conducting a project charter, process analysis and design, or business requirements work session, you will encounter the need to capture the constraints, assumptions, dependencies, and touch points associated with the project. By capturing these items, you will ensure a common understanding of all the factors affecting and influencing the project. Thus, we've called them *guiding factors*. These tables initially get built during the project charter work session, but they will be reviewed, revised, and updated throughout the life of the project.

The Conventions

In order to use tables to guide your discussion, you must first understand what information you are trying to gather. The following sections describe and illustrate the type of information you're looking for when capturing assumptions, constraints, dependencies, and touch points.

Assumptions

Assumptions are statements for which you have no immediate proof or demonstration, but on which you are basing your project planning or project approach. They allow you to move forward in the project work based on the supposition that these items are being handled, addressed, or made available by some means outside the project itself.

For this reason, assumptions need confirmation. If an assumption is found to be invalid, the team needs to determine if it's necessary for the project to succeed and, if so, determine what needs to be adjusted in project scope, process design, and requirements to address it. Then remove it from the assumptions list, and include it as appropriate within the project deliverables.

Because of the lack of control implied by the existence of an assumption, each assumption suggests a certain level of possible risk and should be reviewed again when performing risk analysis. (See the sample assumptions table shown in Table 26.1.)

The following information is gathered in this table:

- *Assumption Number*: Each assumption listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.
- *Assumption*: An assumption is a statement without immediate proof or demonstration, but on which you are basing your project planning or project approach. This column is titled "We assume that . . ." To assist in the phrasing of assumptions, each item should complete the sentence.

TABLE 26.1

Sample Assumptions Table

#	We assume that . . .	Confirmed by . . .
1	The necessary vendor relationships will be in place to support rollout of the project.	Joe Boxer, Vendor Mgmt.
2	No additional Web development is necessary.	Kris Kringle, Web Development
3	The standard internal communication vehicles for delivering project- and training-related messages will be used.	Betty Midler, Communication
4	Standard training on the new product will be sufficient to ensure it is properly serviced. No specialized process or procedural training is necessary.	Andy Feinstein, Customer Service Training & Development
5	Eligibility for the product will be determined by Marketing outside this project effort.	Wiley Coyote, Marketing

- *Confirmed by:* Every assumption must be confirmed by someone within the organizational unit referenced or implied by the assumption. Insert the person’s name and organization in this column. This confirmation validates that what is assumed is truly being handled, addressed, or made available through means outside the project.

Constraints

Every project has to deal with unchangeable realities. They can come in a variety of forms—for example, contract deadlines, legal requirements, system availability, and third-party service-level agreements. These are considered constraints to the project; they represent immovable objects or facts within which the project must operate or fit. Typically these items are outside the control of the project and therefore must be worked around or incorporated into the project plan. (See the sample constraints table shown in Table 26.2.)

The following information is gathered in this table:

- *Constraint Number:* Each constraint listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.
- *Constraint:* A constraint is an immovable object within which the project must operate or fit. This column is titled “We are constrained by . . .” To assist in the phrasing of constraints, each item should complete the sentence.
- *Confirmed by:* Every constraint must be confirmed by someone within the organizational unit responsible for the constraint. Insert the person’s name and organization in this column. This confirmation validates that the project must truly be limited by those restrictions.

TABLE 26.2
Sample Constraints Table

#	We are constrained by . . .	Confirmed by . . .
1	A freeze on system testing during end-of-year 12/19/2005–1/13/2006.	Kris Kringle, Web Development
2	A contractual agreement to implement no later than 9/2005.	Joe Boxer, Vendor Mgmt.
3	The need to align all new development with the enterprise architecture standards for data retention and retrieval.	Henry Munster, IT Director
4	The retail store rollout schedule.	Henry Munster, IT Director Karla Karis, Retail VP

Dependencies

This table allows the project team to identify other projects on which they are dependent for functionality or strategic direction. Alterations in the timeline or implementation of dependent projects usually have a direct effect on the implementation date of the project under discussion. This is not intended to be an inclusive list of known projects. Focus on dependencies that are unique to this project. For each, identify specifically what you are dependent on: a certain milestone, project deliverable, or final implementation. (See the sample dependency table shown in Table 26.3.)

The following information is gathered in this table:

- *Dependency Number*: Each dependency listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.
- *Dependency*: A dependency is another project on which this project is dependent for functionality or strategic direction. List both the project name and what you're dependent on: implementation of the project, a specific milestone or decision within the project, or a deliverable from the project. Be as specific as possible. This will aid the project manager in making sure these interdependencies are communicated and tracked. This column is titled "We are dependent on the following projects or deliverables . . ." To assist in the phrasing of the dependencies, each item should complete the sentence.
- *Project Manager*: List the name of the project manager responsible for the interdependent project in this column, if known.
- *Implementation Date*: The column allows capture of the implementation or completion date for the project, milestone, or deliverable.

Touch Points

In addition to dependencies, there are projects you will want to keep in touch with regarding key decisions, scope changes, or other relevant information. These are known as touch points: you just need to keep in "touch"

TABLE 26.3

Sample Dependency Table

#	We are dependent on the following projects or deliverables . . .	Project Manager	Implementation Date
1	Implementation of Alpha Project	George Jetson	2/15/05
2	Implementation of Gamma Project	Jim Kirk	5/20/05
3	Conversion of customer data—Zippy Project	Al Williams	7/10/05 (data converted)

with them to understand what is happening and make sure there are no downstream impacts to your project. (See Table 26.4.)

The following information is gathered in this table:

- *Touch Point Number*: Each touch point listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.
- *Touch Points*: A touch point is a project you need to remain aware of. You'll want to know if changes are made that have an impact on your project. In this column, list both the project name and the information you're interested in monitoring: scope changes, schedule changes, systems involved, or something else. Be as specific as possible. This column is titled, "We rely on interproject communication from the following projects . . ." To assist in the phrasing of the touch point, each item should complete the sentence.
- *Project Manager*: List the name of the project manager responsible for the touch point project in this column, if known.

Facilitating the Technique

Typically the identification of assumptions, constraints, dependencies, and touch points naturally results from discussions throughout the work session. As they occur, capture them on a flip chart. Always read them back to the team as they are captured to validate wording. Then, as one of the last work session activities, review and revise the accumulated information. (See the agendas listed in Chapters Ten through Twelve for the appropriate timing of this review.)

To facilitate the review of these tables with the team, follow these steps:

1. *Transcribe the flip charts*. We recommend that you transcribe the flip charts into the tables provided in the work session deliverable prior to reviewing them with the team. Display this deliverable electronically using a PC projector so the participants can see the tables as you discuss them. If possible, have printed copies available.

TABLE 26.4

Sample Touch Points Table

#	We rely on interproject communication from the following projects . . .	Project Manager or Contact
1	Gonzo Project—Need to be aware of schedule changes since it may influence who is eligible for the product	George Bailey
2	Web-Based Training Project—Need to make sure there are no scope changes that will have an impact on this project	Don DeFrancisco

2. *Review each item.* Walk through each item listed in the table one by one. As you do, have the work session analyst check off the item from the transcribed flip chart. This provides visual confirmation of the team's work. For each item:

- Ask if it's still valid. Direction may have changed during the work session, so it's appropriate to confirm that the assumptions, constraints, dependencies, and touch points gathered are still legitimate.
- Gather the additional information required in each table. If the information is unknown, capture an action item to follow up outside the work session.

3. *Ask for additions.* Once the review of existing items is complete, ask if there are additions to the list. Update the list as appropriate.

4. *Repeat steps 2 and 3 for each table.*

5. *Insert the completed assumptions, constraints, dependency, and touch point tables into the appropriate work session deliverable.* You'll find these tables in the Project Charter, Process Analysis and Design, and Business Requirements Templates provided on the CD.



Keys to Success

- DON'T attempt to review the assumptions, constraints, dependency, and touch point tables early in the work session. These items will naturally result from discussions throughout the work session. So capture them on flip charts as you go, and review them at the end of the work session.
- DON'T assume that the items captured throughout the work session and in previous work sessions are valid. Project direction and scope may have changed, so always review and confirm.
- DO carry assumptions, constraints, dependencies, and touch points forward from deliverable to deliverable. These are intended to grow and develop as you learn more about the project.
- DO listen for assumptions, constraints, dependencies, and touch points as you're going through each activity on the work session agenda. They often surface as part of the normal work session discussion.

Chapter 27

Discovering Impacts

What They Are	How You Can Use Them
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A method for understanding the effects the project will have on internal and external people, processes, and technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To identify the stakeholders and team members needed for ongoing project involvementTo provide a foundation for implementation planningTo validate the completeness of business requirements, ensuring that they address all identified impactsTo assess the development, testing, and implementation costs, effort, and resources required

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACTS of a project assists in the assessment of the overall cost, effort, and resources required to implement the project successfully. Identifying these impacts helps the team visualize the ramifications this project will have on the customers, business, and supporting technology. It helps them truly wrap their arms around the size of the effort.

This process begins during definition of the project charter and continues through the development of business requirements. Full comprehension of the impacts to customers, organizational units, business processes, and supporting technology is impossible without a complete understanding of the requirements. And the reverse is also true: by focusing on an activity to identify the impacts of the project, you can confirm the completeness of your requirements by validating that you have addressed all of the affected areas in some manner.

The Conventions

In order to use a table to guide your discussion, you must first understand what you're looking for in each column. So let's take a look at the impact table in Table 27.1 to get a good grasp on how to elicit the information needed:

TABLE 27.1
Sample Impact Table

#	Impacted Area	Impact
Organizational Units		
1	Customer service call center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be trained to know how to service new product • Significant increase in call volume
2	Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new fraud strategies
Processes		
1	Reporting process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of rejects on the report due to mismatch situations
2	Settlement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased complexity due to separation of previously comingled files
Technology		
1	Customer information servicing systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update knowledge databases with new product and servicing information

- *Impacted Areas.* This column allows the identification of impacts to be narrowed to specific subcategories. These subcategories may be derived from the in-scope section of the scope table or defined independently. (See Table 27.2 for some common examples of affected areas for each category.)
- *Impact.* The impact should reflect how the specific customer segment, business unit, process, or technology component will be affected. It's important to remember that these impacts can be both positive and negative. Here are some key things to remember when denoting impacts:
 - All impacts associated with a single affected area should be captured within the same cell.
 - Each impact should be bulleted.
 - Keep phrases concise and specific.

Facilitating the Technique

Project impacts will initially be defined as part of the project charter work session (see Chapter Ten); however, revision of and addition to those impacts will continue until you've completed your business requirements document. We will look at two approaches for facilitating impacts: interactive capture and electronic capture.

TABLE 27.2**Standard Impact Categories and Impacted Areas**

Sample Impact Table		
Category	Impacted Areas (Examples)	Impacts
Customers	Existing customers New customers Retail customers Small business customers	This category allows you to capture the impacts the project will have on internal or external customers or users of the product, process, or service being designed. Understanding these impacts may influence customer notification and communication plans.
Organizational Units	Customer Service Security Vendor Mgmt. Fraud	This category allows identification of the specific departments or organizational units that will be affected as a result of this project. Feel free to divide these into functional areas if the impacts are different or only one area is affected (for example, the call center versus the online support area within customer service). This information will assist in the development of internal training and communication plans.
Processes	Order process Inventory process Shipping process Billing process Reporting process Settlement process	This category reflects the impacts to existing processes and reflects how they'll be changing. This information can be copied from the Process Analysis and Design Templates.
Technology	Specific system or application names or Business description of system or application	This category allows the identification of impacts related to specific systems, applications, and interfaces. This will not be an exhaustive list, but will reflect the business's understanding of these impacts. This information will assist in identification of the technology groups needed to participate in design of the solution.
Vendor (optional)	Vendor 1 Vendor 2 or Processes Technology	As an additional option, you can segment the impacts to external vendors so they can size their efforts better.

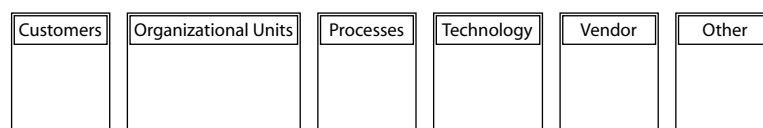
Interactive Capture

This is an interactive approach that gets the team up and moving. It allows you to use the nominal group technique (see Chapter Nineteen) to gather and group the impacts into categories. Here are the steps:

1. Post flip charts on the wall, putting a category heading on each chart (Figure 27.1). Use the categories suggested, or create categories that make sense for this project.
2. As a team, identify the areas most likely to be affected within each category. List those down the left side of the flip chart page.
3. Hand out a pad of sticky notes and a fine-point marker to each participant.
4. For each impacted area listed, ask the participants to fill in the blank of the following statement on their sticky notes: "This Impacted Area will experience _____ or will have to _____ as a result of this project."
5. Explain the rules:
 - Each person should focus on his or her area of expertise. There is no need for a participant to try to identify impacts for every item on the flip chart if it's something unfamiliar.
 - Each person should write down as many impacts as he or she can think of.
 - Write one impact on each sticky note (so they can be grouped and rearranged easily).
 - Quantify the impact as much as possible. Using words like *increase* and *decrease* and specifying how much (even if it's with generic terms like *greatly* or *minimally*) will help.
6. Give the participants ten minutes to write out their impacts.
7. When the group is done, ask them to come up one by one and post their sticky notes on the appropriate flip chart beside the listed area, reading them to the group as they go.

FIGURE 27.1

Impacts: Posting the Ideas



- If someone has identified an impact that does not easily fit into one of the categories, put it on the page labeled “Other.” These must be revisited at the end of the exercise.
- If one of the impacts is a duplicate of one that already exists, ask the person to place his or her sticky note on top of the one that is a duplicate. (See Figure 27.2.)

8. When all sticky notes have been posted on the flip charts, review them all with the group, clarifying and modifying as necessary to reach consensus. If new categories need to be added, do so. If any category is blank, ask the group if it is relevant. If it is, use facilitated dialogue to generate impacts for that category.

9. Group the items into subcategories. (See Chapter Nineteen for more information on how to use affinity analysis for group results.)

10. Document the flip chart results into the impacts table provided on the CD or the version already built into the impacts section of the appropriate work session deliverable.

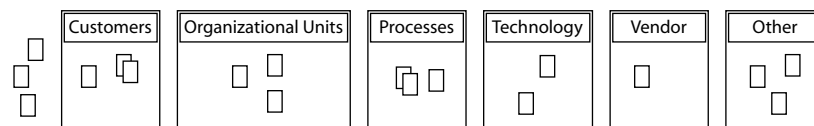


Electronic Capture

As with many of the techniques described, you can choose to capture input electronically. Simply display the electronic table provided on the CD, and capture the input provided by the team directly into the document. This method allows the team to easily see and revise the information as they go and gives them confidence that the final deliverable will represent their views. However, it doesn't give the physical break and interaction provided in interactive capture, so determine which your team needs more when you get to this point on the agenda.



FIGURE 27.2
Impact: Grouping the Ideas



Keys to Success

- DON'T attempt to force impacts into categories that don't fit. We've provided a generic starting point, but revise them if needed to be more relevant to the project.
- DO continue to stress that you're trying to identify and quantify, if possible, the effects the project will have. Getting participants to differentiate impacts from other information is the most difficult part of facilitating this activity. You'll find that they want to list impacts in their scope table or dependencies in their impact table. So keep them on track by reminding them of the question they're trying to answer.
- DO use the impacts section as a final validation of requirements completeness. When you think your business requirements are complete, check the impacts section to ensure that you have a business requirement that either causes or relates to each impact listed.
- DO use the impacts table to prepare your business and technical implementation plans:

The Customer section can guide your plans for customer notification and communication.

The Organizational Unit and Process sections will assist in the development of internal training and communication plans.

The Technology section will assist in identification of the technology groups needed to participate in design of the solution.

The Vendor section can assist your external partners in better sizing their efforts.

Chapter 28

Risk Analysis Matrices

What They Are	How You Can Use Them
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A matrix with various columns for capturing risks and their associated effects, causes, mitigations, and, as necessary, contingency plans• A quality tool that allows the assessment and prioritization of each risk based on its:<ul style="list-style-type: none">SeverityProbability of occurrenceVisibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To encourage early identification of all risks resulting from a project• To provide increased executive and management awareness of the level of risk surrounding the project• To understand the relative prioritization of risks so you know what must be mitigated versus what can be considered acceptable• To determine whether contingency plans are needed to ensure successful implementation of the project

A RISK MATRIX provides a helpful structure for capturing and assessing events or issues that might cause a project to fail to meet its intended objectives or might cause a detrimental customer or business impact. These may be project-related issues such as missing key milestones or struggling with unavailable resources. Or they may be issues resulting from the outcomes of the project—for example, customer confusion resulting from the introduction of a change to the automated customer service telephone options (customer risk) or introducing a new product that the customer will not use (financial risk).

As we noted in Chapter Thirteen, there are three types of risk assessments you can perform—standard, failure modes and effects analysis (FMEA), and a hybrid version and each associated matrix is slightly different. The risk matrix is initially created, using the standard version, as part of the business requirements work session. This initial version can be used as a starting point for the risk assessment work session regardless of the type of assessment you’re performing.

A detailed risk matrix is developed during the risk assessment work session. (See Chapter Thirteen for a description of this work session type.) The risk matrix can be inserted into the risk assessment deliverable or used as a stand-alone document for identifying risks. (See the templates shown on the accompanying CD.)



The Conventions

In order to use a matrix to guide the discussion, you must first understand what information you're trying to gather. Let's take a look at the standard risk analysis matrix to get a good grasp of the information needed. After that, we'll look at both the FMEA and hybrid versions to understand the similarities and differences between them.

Standard Risk Matrix

This version of risk assessment is best used early in the project lifecycle, typically part of the early definition and requirements stages of a project effort. It allows assessment of high-level risks that may affect or result from the project. This is the version typically included in the business requirements document (see Table 28.1).

- *Risk Categories:* There is no column titled "Categories" on the Standard Risk Matrix; however, categories can provide a helpful structure for thinking about risks. So when facilitating a risk discussion, use the standard categories described in Table 28.2 to guide discussion or generate a list of topics that better fits your project needs. Walking through the relevant categories will give you some insight into what, if anything, you may have overlooked and ensure that your list of risks is complete and comprehensive.
- *Risk Number:* Each potential risk listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.
- *Potential Risk:* This column allows identification of potential risks that may result from this project. These risks may be events that might cause a project to fail to meet its intended objectives, or they might be issues that will cause a detrimental customer or business impact—for example:
 - Customers may not get the merchandise they ordered.
 - Fees and finance charges may not be assessed appropriately.
 - Customer statements may not be formatted properly.

TABLE 28.1

Sample Standard Risk Matrix

#	Potential Risk	Severity	Probability	Visibility	Planned Mitigation Strategy

TABLE 28.2**Standard Risk Categories**

Customer	Events or issues that may disrupt the customer experience or may not meet customer acceptance
Financial	Events that may affect the company's profitability or growth goals
Market	Events that may affect the company's competitiveness in the marketplace or damage brand reputation
Operational	Issues that may disrupt the company's operations, lowering efficiency or effectiveness
Process	Potential issues or error conditions associated with the business process changes or design
Product	Potential issues related to the product or service being designed and its features
Project	Issues that may cause the project to miss key milestones or not reach successful implementation

- The company's image or credibility may be damaged.
- There may be unplanned system or network failures during the conversion window.

- *Severity, Probability, and Visibility:* These columns allow the comparative scoring of risk. The results of these scorings allow you to identify which risks are more credible than others. Note that in this risk matrix, we define *visibility* to mean how visible the effects of the risk would be to the customer. In other risk matrices (such as the FMEA risk matrix common to Six Sigma risk analysis), visibility is often defined as "detection": how detectable the effects of the risk are and how easily we can identify the problem when it occurs. See Table 28.3 for the scores possible within each column.

- *Planned Mitigation Strategy:* For all high-priority risks, identify the steps that will be taken to minimize or eliminate this risk. Use the project objectives (listed in the project charter) as a check point to validate the mitigation strategy. If the mitigations contribute to or are in line with the goals, they make sense. But beware of mitigations that are contrary to the goals, such as when the objectives state, "Increase customer satisfaction by providing online catalogue shopping for Christmas," but the additional mitigation would result in implementation being pushed to Valentine's Day.

FMEA Risk Matrix

FMEA is a standard part of the Six Sigma methodology quality toolbox. The FMEA uses the target process maps and product design specifications identified in the process analysis and design and business requirements work sessions to identify potential process or product failures (see Table 28.4). Since these processes and specifications can be quite detailed and

TABLE 28.3
Standard Risk Scoring Definitions

	Definition	Scale
Severity of risk	How much of an impact will this situation cause if it occurs?	High = Very severe Medium = Moderate impact Low = Small impact
Probability of risk	How likely is it that this situation will occur?	High = Very likely Medium = Somewhat likely Low = Not likely
Visibility of risk	How visible would this situation be to customers if it occurred?	High = Very visible Medium = Somewhat visible Low = Not likely

TABLE 28.4
Sample FMEA Risk Matrix

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
#	Process Function (Step)	Potential Failure Modes (Defects)	Potential Failure Effects (Y's)	SEV	Potential Causes of Failure (X's)	OCC	Current Process Controls	DET	RPN	Recommended Actions	Responsible Person & Target Date
1											
2											
3											

complex, it is recommended that only the areas of most concern be the focus of this assessment.

- *Failure Mode Number*: Each defect listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.
- *Process Function (Step)*: This is an abbreviated version of the process step name or function within the process, product, or service that is being assessed.
- *Potential Failure Modes (Defects)*: Describe the ways in which the product, service, or process might fail within this process step or this function. Describe the defect in technical or physical terms (for example, jams, sputters, freezes or slows up, is unreadable), not as a symptom or result experienced by the customer or user (for example, get wrong information, experience delays). There may be multiple failure modes for each process function or step identified in column B. List each separately.

- *Potential Failure Effects (Y's)*: This column represents the potential consequences, results, or effects of each failure (for example, defective product, wrong information, delays). There may be multiple effects for each failure mode described in column C. List each separately.
- *Severity of Effect (SEV)*: This section allows the team to describe how severe each of the failure effects would be if it occurred. Rate the severity of each effect separately. Use the industry standard scale of 1 to 10 shown in Table 28.5.
- *Potential Causes of Failure (X's)*: This column describes the actions or events that would cause the potential failure mode listed in column C. There may be multiple causes for each failure mode. List each separately.
- *Occurrence of Cause (OCC)*: Use this column to indicate how often the cause of failure (shown in column F) occurs. Use the industry standard scale of 1 to 10 shown in Table 28.5.
- *Current Process Controls*: List the controls or procedures that are currently in place to detect each potential cause of the failure shown in column F.
- *Detection of Cause (DET)*: This column should indicate how effectively the current controls can detect the cause of the failure. Use the industry standard scale of 1 to 10 shown in Table 28.5.
- *Risk Priority Number (RPN)*: Multiply the scores in the severity (column E), occurrence (column G), and detection (column I) columns, and put the result here. The highest possible RPN is 1,000 and the lowest is 1. This is the number that will be used to identify the highest- versus lowest-priority risks.
- *Recommended Actions*: For failure modes with high RPNs, identify actions that will be taken to minimize the risk to the customer.
- *Responsible Person & Target Date*: Identify the person responsible for completing each recommended action and their anticipated completion date.

Hybrid Risk Matrix

This version of the risk matrix combines the category approach suggested in the standard risk analysis matrix with the root cause investigation of the FMEA. And it adds a feature not addressed in the previous versions: the identification of contingencies (see Table 28.6). It is best used when more detail around risk is desired but the statistical rigor associated with the FMEA isn't necessary or process maps are not available or applicable.

TABLE 28.5
FMEA Risk Scoring Definitions

Rating	Severity of Effect	Likelihood of Occurrence	Ability to Detect
10	Failure could injure a customer or employee.	More than once per day, or more than 3 per 10 events	Absolute uncertainty. The product is not inspected or the defect caused by failure is not detectable.
9	Failure would create noncompliance with federal regulations.	Once every 3 to 4 days, or 3 per 10 events	Very remote. Occasional units are checked for defects.
8	Failure renders the product or service unfit for use.	Once per week or 5 per 100 events	Remote. Units are systematically sampled and inspected.
7	Failure causes extreme customer dissatisfaction.	Once per month or once in 100 events	Very low. All units are 100% manually inspected.
6	Failure results in partial malfunction.	Once every 3 months or 3 per 1,000 events	Low. 100% manual inspection with go/no go or mistake-proofing gauges.
5	Failure causes a loss of performance likely to result in a customer complaint.	Once every 6 months or once in 10,000 events	Moderate. Some statistical process control (SPC) is used in the process, and the product is final inspected off-line manually.
4	Failure causes minor performance loss, but can be overcome with modifications to process or product.	Once per year or 6 per 100,000 events	Moderately high. SPC used with an immediate reaction to out-of-control conditions.
3	Failure causes a minor nuisance to the customer, but can be overcome with no performance loss.	Once every 1 to 3 years or 6 per 10 million events	High. SPC as above with 100% inspection surrounding out-of-control conditions.
2	Failure may be unnoticed by customer but has minor effects on process or product performance.	Once every 3 to 5 years or 2 per 1 billion events	Very high. All units are 100% automatically inspected.
1	Failure would be unnoticeable to the customer and would not affect the process or product performance.	Once every 6 to 100 years or fewer than 2 per billion events	Almost certain. Defect is obvious and can be kept from affecting customer.

Note: A score of 10 is the worst possible, and a score of 1 is the best possible.

TABLE 28.6
Sample Hybrid Risk Matrix

#	Topic/ Category	Potential Risk	Impacts	SEV	Risk Causes	DET	Mitigation Steps	PROB	Contingency Plans
1									
2									
3									

- *Risk Number:* Each risk listed should have a unique number to allow the team to easily refer to specific items on the list.

- *Topic/Category:* Categories can provide a helpful structure for thinking about risks. Use the standard categories described in Table 28.2 to guide discussion or generate a list of topics that better fit your project needs. Walking through the relevant categories will give you some insight into what, if anything, you may have overlooked and ensure that your list of risks is complete and comprehensive.

- *Potential Risk:* This column allows identification of potential risks that may result from this project. These risks may be events that might cause a project to fail to meet its intended objectives. Or they might be issues that will cause a detrimental customer or business impact.

- *Impacts:* For each risk identified, use this column to identify the people, processes, or technology that would be affected.

- *Severity of Risk (SEV):* This section allows the team to describe how severe each of the potential risks and their corresponding impacts would be if it occurred. Use the Severity of Risk column in Table 28.7 to score the severity.

- *Risk Causes:* This column describes the factors that would cause the risk to occur. There may be multiple causes for each failure mode. List each factor separately only if they alone would cause the risk.

- *Detection of Cause (DET):* This column should indicate how effectively the current processes and procedures can detect the risk cause. Use the Ability to Detect column in Table 28.7 to score the detectability.

- *Mitigation Steps:* What are the steps already built into the task plan to prevent this cause from occurring? Additional mitigation steps not already in the plan can be added in red.

- *Probability of Cause (PROB):* Use this column to indicate the likelihood of this cause occurring. Use the Probability of Occurrence column in Table 28.7 to score the probability.

TABLE 28.7

Hybrid Risk Matrix Scoring Definitions

Rating	Severity of Risk	Probability of Occurrence	Ability to Detect
High	High dollar impact and/or affects entire portfolio and/or affects key clients	Very likely to occur in spite of planned mitigation	Very easy to detect without input from the customer
Medium	Some dollar impact and/or affects significant percentage of customers	Possible but not likely	Can be detected without input from the customer but requires effort
Low	Minimal dollar impact and/or impact to a few customers	Very unlikely	Not easily detectable; may require customer identification of problem before it's seen
None	No dollar impact and no customer impact	Will not occur (consider removing this outcome from the risk assessment)	NA

- *Contingency Plans:* Mitigation actions are put in place to prevent the issue or risk from occurring. Contingencies are actions that will be taken if the risk actually occurs. So for high-severity/high-probability risks, you may want to discuss the steps to take should this event occur in spite of best efforts to prevent it.

Facilitating the Technique

Completing a risk analysis matrix can be tedious, so we always recommend working with a small core team of three to five people to create a draft version prior to working with a larger group. The following steps will help you in both situations: small group development of the draft and larger team completion of the risk assessment:

1. *Brainstorm possible risks.* Depending on the type of risk analysis you're performing, you may choose to use the categories listed in Table 28.2, a process map, product specification, or some form of root cause analysis to focus the brainstorming activity. Capture as many potential risks (failure modes) as possible before attempting to complete the remaining columns of the matrix. When facilitating this brainstorm, remember to:

- Remind the team that this is not a witch hunt. You want to identify the risks that are most probable rather than the extremes.
- When there is a lull in the brainstorming, prompt the team with questions such as, "How might the product, service, or process fail, break,

or not work right?” “What are the problems that might occur in this category?” or “What might go wrong with this section of the project plan?” (For more information about the brainstorming technique, see Chapter Seventeen.)

2. *Capture additional risk information.* For each risk identified, use the following questions to fill in the remaining columns:

For the Standard Assessment

- How severe would it be if it happened?
- How obvious would it be to the customer that this occurred?
- How likely is it that this will occur?

For the FMEA Assessment

- What would be the effect or result if it happened? (Failure Effects column)
- How severe would it be if it happened?
- Repeat the following questions until all root causes are identified:
 - “What would cause it to occur?” (Causes of Failure column)
 - “How likely is it that this cause will occur?”
 - “What controls are in place to prevent this currently?”
 - “How obvious would it be that this cause occurred?” (Detection column)

For Hybrid Assessments

- Who would it affect if it happened?
- How severe would it be if it happened?
- Repeat the following questions until all root causes are identified:
 - “What would cause it to occur?” (Risk Causes column)
 - “How obvious would it be that this cause occurred?” (Detection column)
 - “How likely is it that this cause will occur?”

3. *Repeat step 2 for each risk identified.*

4. *Confirm high-priority risks.* High-priority risks are those that scored highest on probability, severity, and detectability. For the FMEA, that equates to a high RPN score. Review the high-priority risks with the team to confirm their scoring.

5. *Identify mitigations and contingencies.* For those risks identified as high priority, identify the necessary mitigations and, if needed, contingencies by asking the following questions:

- “What are we planning to do to minimize or prevent this from occurring?”

- “Are there other things currently not planned that we need to do?” If so, highlight these in red to indicate that they are not currently in the project plan.
- “Who will take these actions and by when?” The FMEA version is the only one that has a column for this, but we recommend you identify these actions and include them on your action item list for all types of risk assessment.
- “What will we do if this outcome does occur? What are our contingencies?” (Hybrid version only)



6. Insert the completed risk analysis matrix into the Risk Assessment Template provided on the CD.

Keys to Success

- DON'T wait until you're in the work session to determine what the definitions for the scoring scales should be. Discuss that with the project manager and project sponsor, and have draft definitions created prior to walking into the work session.
- DON'T be frustrated when the activity becomes tedious. Keep plugging away, even if you need to take breaks to keep the group at their peak.
- DON'T allow every risk to be a high priority. Keep pointing the team back to the scoring guidelines to help them evaluate against the stated criteria.
- DON'T get caught up in spending excess time formatting the risk matrix during the work session. You can make it “look pretty” after the work session is over.
- DO try to populate the risk analysis matrix prior to the work session. Gathering information in advance will help accelerate the building of the final matrix.
- DO either post or hand out the scoring scales and category definitions so you can refer to them as needed.
- DO consider using small group breakouts to alter group dynamics and keep people focused and engaged. Divide the risk categories among the subteams and let them review, revise, and add to the draft matrix before reviewing it with the larger team.
- DO recognize that this can be tedious. Some people who are not inclined to details may disconnect during this exercise. Choose the appropriate participants, and observe the group dynamics carefully to keep the team productively engaged.

Chapter 29

Process Decomposition

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A structural model that represents the components of a process area in a hierarchical, nonredundant, leveled manner. It does not indicate how, when, or where the components occur or interact.• Depicts the area of scope in a digestible way• Assists in segmenting anything of a broad or complex nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To clearly communicate scope• To provide a road map for addressing segments of large or complex initiatives• To assist in determining the stakeholder involvement required in the project• To assist in confirming team member representation on the project• To give structure to what can be mentally overwhelming• To help the team retain focus throughout the effort

SOMETIMES WE CAN'T see the forest for the trees. Process decomposition helps us see both the forest *and* the trees. When faced with a project scope that is broad or complex in nature, this technique can be used to represent the business process areas in a manageable manner. It helps the team view and digest pieces of the pie rather than getting indigestion in their attempt to consume the whole thing at once. Capturing a process decomposition that reflects the scope of the effort provides an excellent road map from which to:

- Guide further process analysis activities (such as process mapping).
- Guide requirements definition activities.
- Confirm that we have the right representatives on the team.
- Confirm that we have the right stakeholders involved.
- Communicate the breadth of scope.
- Maintain team focus on the topic at hand.

The goal is to create a depiction of process scope so that the breadth and complexity of the project are easily understood. A foundational piece of

work regarding human ability to digest large or complex things was included in an article published by George A. Miller in 1956: “The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two.” He proposes that there are “limitations on the amount of information that we are able to receive, process, and remember.” By breaking a complex thing into smaller components, we manage to overcome (or at least stretch) this informational restriction. The “magic number” is somewhere between five and nine; the brain can best perceive and retain in short-term memory five and nine distinct pieces of information. Too few items will cause perception to be disjointed. Too many items will cause understanding and retention to elude us. The goal of all business modeling is to promote understanding and clear communication. Although many advances have been made since 1956 in the area of human perception and memory, the “7-plus-or-minus-2 rule” continues to provide a reasonable guideline as we strive to communicate unambiguously.

As with other process models, decomposition of processes can be accomplished to reflect what currently exists or to describe the processes as they will exist in the future environment. Just be certain to indicate clearly which you are attempting to depict: the way things are or the way things will be.

The technique of process decomposition is used as part of the process analysis and design work session. (See Chapter Eleven for a description of this work session type.) The process decomposition diagram can be inserted with the other current or target process models within the Process Analysis and Design Document Template as shown on the accompanying CD.



The Conventions

Process decomposition is typically represented by diagrams that depict hierarchy. Picture a classic organization chart. This tree-diagram structure is ideal for breaking processes into their subprocesses, adding detail at each successive level. Here are the guidelines:

- Use a tree structure, either vertical or horizontal, to depict the breakdown of the process into successive levels of detail.
- Stay within the project scope.
- At each decomposition level, try to stay consistent in the level of detail presented.
- Keep the 7-plus-or-minus-2 rule in mind. As you separate each process into its component pieces level by level, create no more than five to nine components per level. Three to four components are okay; more than nine defeats the purpose of decomposition.
- The whole is the sum of its parts. No more. No less. When you decompose a process into its subprocesses, the sum of those subprocesses must

completely describe the parent process. The decomposition must be sufficient and comprehensive.

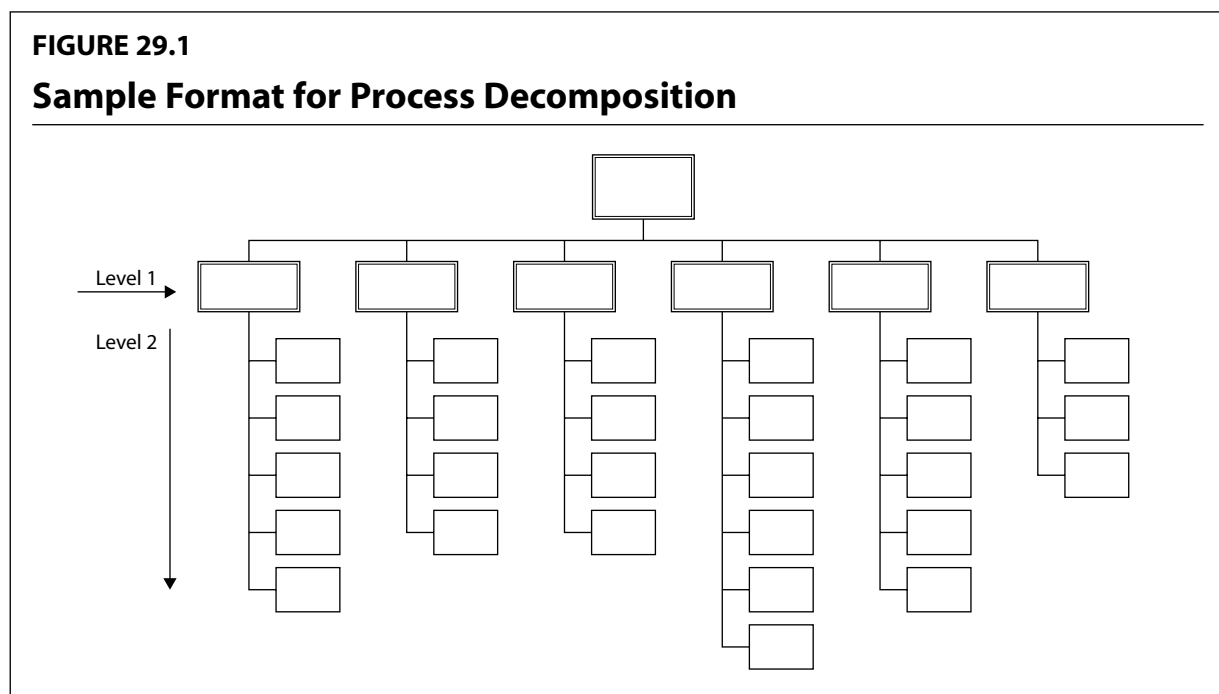
- Ensure that components are nonredundant. Components should appear in the hierarchy only once. If you find you are repeating components across the legs of the hierarchy, rethink your partitioning choices.
- Keep process component names in the form of a verb-object phrase.

Figure 29.1 shows a sample formatting style for a process decomposition. This takes the process to two levels of decomposition and shows the decomposition by combining a horizontal structure for level-1 with a vertical tree structure for level-2. Combining horizontal and vertical structures can help you keep your diagram on a printable page or viewable screen for display.

Facilitating the Technique

Process decomposition typically occurs after project scope has been set and we understand which business processes will be part of the scope. Most often, the process decomposition is done within the context of a process analysis and design work session (see Chapter Eleven).

Some choices exist for choosing the subject of the decomposition. Some teams prefer to break down each process that is part of the scope on a decomposition structure of its own. Therefore, if there are six business processes within the scope of the effort, each would have its own process decomposition. Others prefer to make the project itself the subject of the decomposition and use a single diagram to depict the complexity of the



entire scope. If six business processes are part of the scope, then these six become Level 1 in the breakdown structure. We prefer the second approach, as it speaks more clearly to the breadth and complexity of overall scope and lays out a road map for the project on a single diagram.

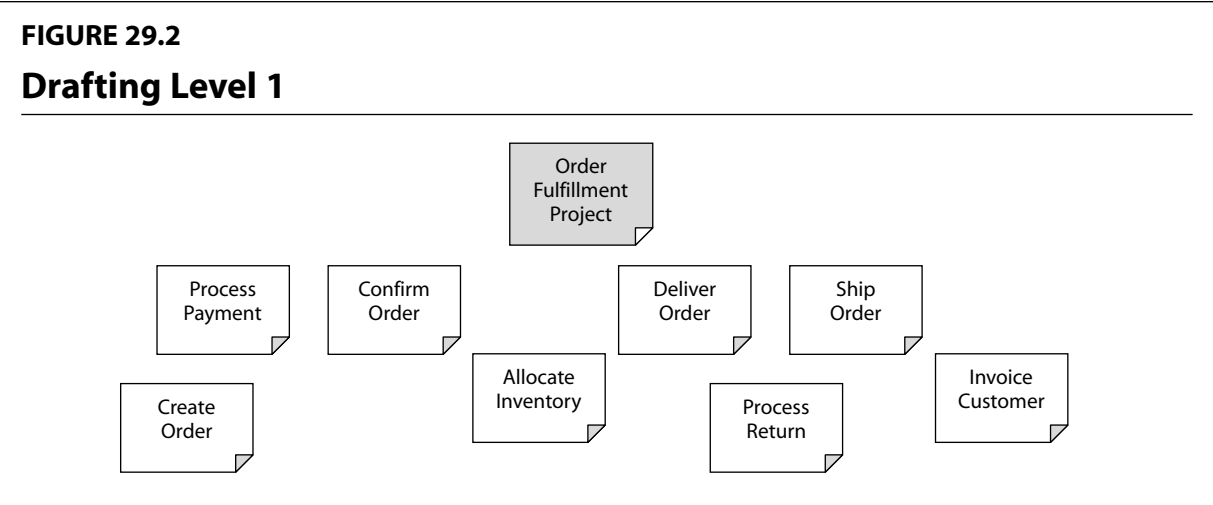
As you facilitate a team through the process decomposition, make sure you have plenty of wall space, flip charts, markers, and sticky notes. And since process decomposition is a valuable tool for understanding existing as well as future processes, be certain to make it clear to the team which you will be modeling: current or target.

Drafting Level 1

Process decomposition can be an iterative exercise. As you finish one or two legs of the diagram, someone may recognize a missing item or an inconsistency and you circle back to update what you thought was complete. That’s the nature of the beast. Our recommendation is that you start with Level 1, and when you are comfortable that it is complete and sufficient, work through decomposing each of the Level 1 processes into their Level 2 sub-processes. For most project situations, decomposing processes to Level 2 or Level 3 is sufficient to provide a comprehensive, digestible process road map for the team.

Here are the steps:

1. Have the group review the project scope and confirm the business processes that are part of it. Write the names of each business processes on a large sticky note—one business process name per sticky note.
2. As shown in Figure 29.2, post flip chart paper on a wall, and place a single large sticky note at the top and center with the name of the project on it. Below that project header, place the sticky notes that have the names of the business processes identified in step 1.



3. Ask the group if these processes are comprehensive enough to describe the scope of the effort. Confirm or adjust as appropriate.

4. Ask the group if these processes represent independent process units or if any process listed is a component of one of the other processes. If they are not independent, then adjust the processes to create the set of core business processes that fully encompass the scope of the project.

Look again at the example shown in Figure 29.2. Let's suppose the group realizes that Create Order and Confirm Order are really subprocesses under a larger business process called Process Order. They move Create Order and Confirm Order lower on the flip chart and place a new sticky note, labeled Process Order, above them, as shown in Figure 29.3.

5. Now that we have confirmed that we are representing independent processes that together fully encompass the business process scope of the project, let's look at how to arrange these items so they represent Level 1 of the process decomposition.

Process decomposition simply shows structure; it does not imply precedence or show how, when, or where the processes are performed, so there is no requirement to put the components in any order. However, the goal of any model is to enhance understanding and communicate effectively. And in Western cultures, most groups respond better to a hierarchy of processes if they are placed left-to-right in time (or if working vertically, top-to-bottom in time). Figure 29.4 provides an example.

The bottom line is that there is no strict convention on the order of the processes within the hierarchy. The connecting structure is what is of critical importance. If the group finds it easier to place the processes left-to-right or top-to-bottom in time, then do so. Do what makes the model most easily understood by the group.

Drafting Level 2

Now that we have a solid draft of Level 1, we're ready to begin work on Level 2 of the decomposition. To enhance the use of flip chart space and keep the diagram readable, we typically work the subprocesses for Level 2 vertically below the Level 1 processes:

1. Select one of the Level 1 processes, and ask the group to provide a one-sentence description of what that process is. What is its purpose? Write it down on a flip chart that is visible to the group.

2. Given this description of the process, ask the team to identify three to five subprocesses that exist within that Level 1 process. (Suggesting three to five is simply a guideline to help them focus. They may come up with more or fewer.) Remind them that the subprocesses must provide a complete description of the Level 1 parent process. Give them five minutes to

FIGURE 29.3
Create Order and Confirm Order Become Subprocesses of Process Order

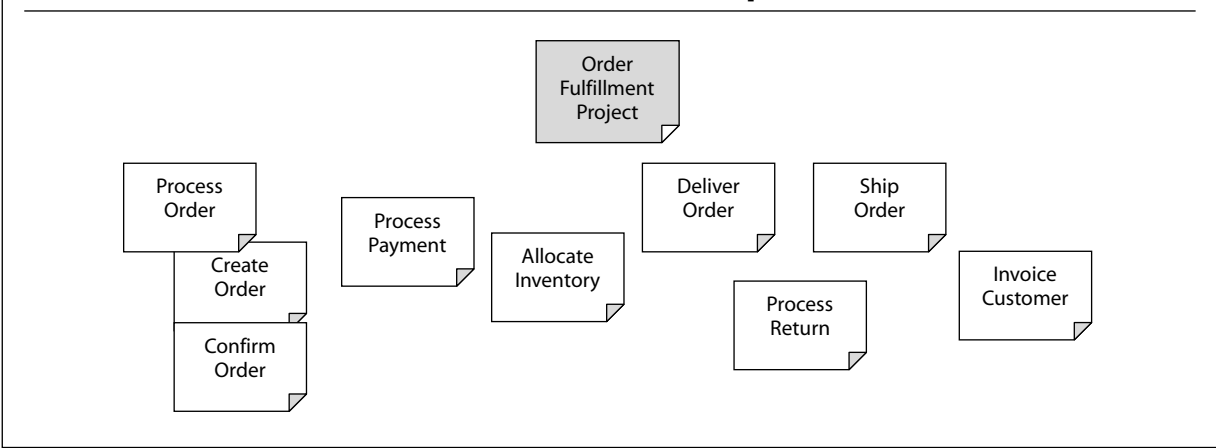
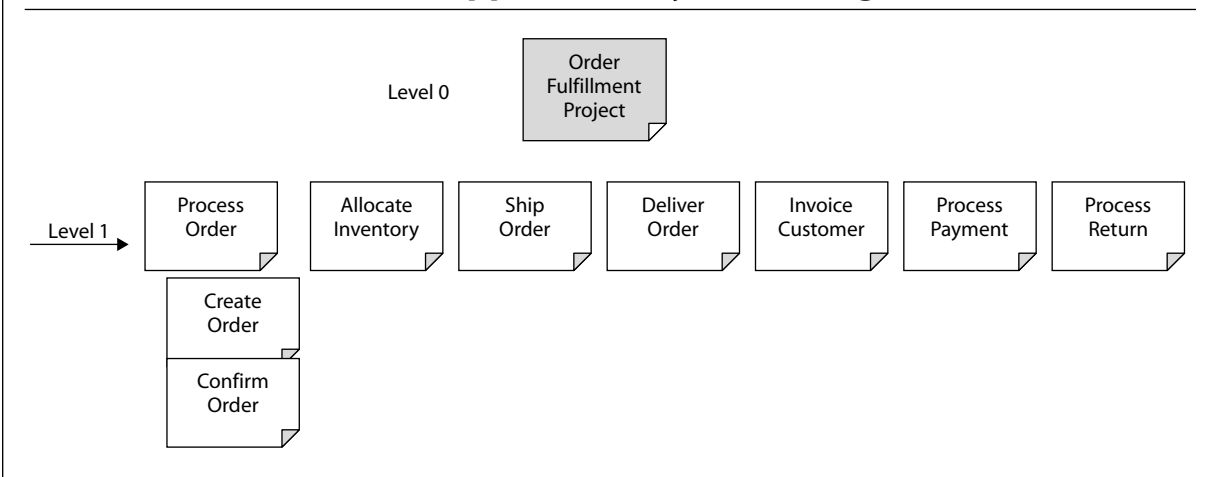


FIGURE 29.4
Process at Level 1 Placed Approximately Left-to-Right in Time



write these down, working alone or in pairs. Discussing the process segments with another person can help solidify the partitioning.

3. After five minutes, go around the room or ask for volunteers to share their ideas regarding Level 2 subprocesses. Write these down on large sticky notes, and place them under the appropriate Level 1 process.

4. Discuss the proposed subprocesses, and ask other participants to offer their ideas. Keep posting sticky notes and refining the subprocess names. Strive to have a draft set of Level 2 process names within fifteen minutes.

5. Now it's time to refine the Level 2 subprocesses. For each one, ask the team to develop a one-sentence definition of the purpose of the subprocess. What does it do? Write these down on a flip chart below the Level 1 process definition captured in step 1.

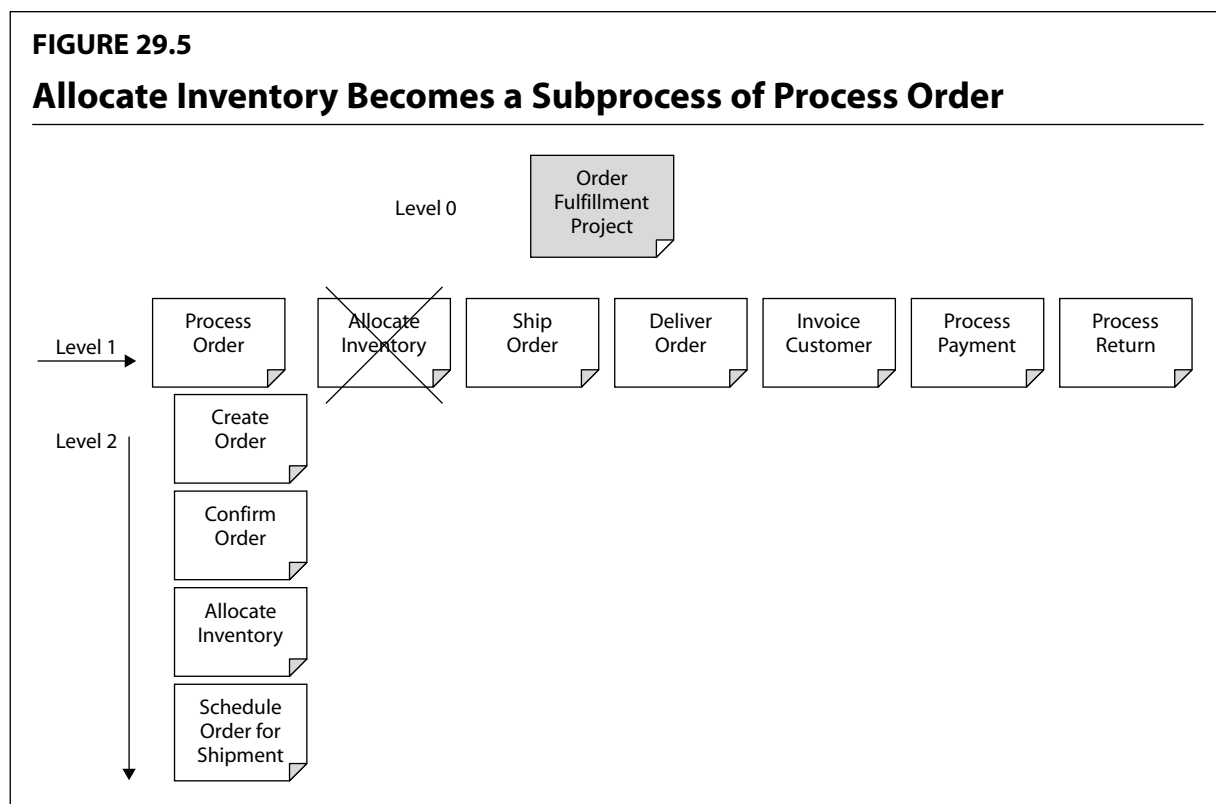
6. Ask the group if these processes are sufficient and comprehensive enough to describe the Level 1 parent process. Look at the definitions captured on the flip chart, and confirm or adjust them as needed.

7. Ask the group if these processes represent independent process units or if any process listed is actually a component of one of the other processes. If they are not independent, then adjust the processes accordingly to create the set of subprocesses that fully encompass the parent Level 1 process.

The example shown in Figure 29.5 demonstrates how to handle this situation. Let's suppose the group realizes during their discussion of Process Order that the Allocate Inventory process doesn't belong at Level 1, but is really a subprocess of Process Order. If the group agrees, move Allocate Inventory out of a Level 1 position and reposition it under Process Order.

8. Now that we have confirmed that we are representing independent subprocesses that together fully encompass the Level 1 parent business process, let's look at how to arrange these items so they represent Level 2 of the process decomposition. Remember that although there is no requirement to put the components in any order, most groups respond better to a hierarchy of processes if they are placed in some representation of "time." Since the example uses vertical positioning for Level 2 subprocesses, place the subprocesses top-to-bottom to represent the relative sequence of processing. Refer to Figure 29.5 as an example of ordering the subprocesses.

9. Repeat Steps 1 through 8 to identify the Level 2 subprocesses for all of the Level 1 processes.



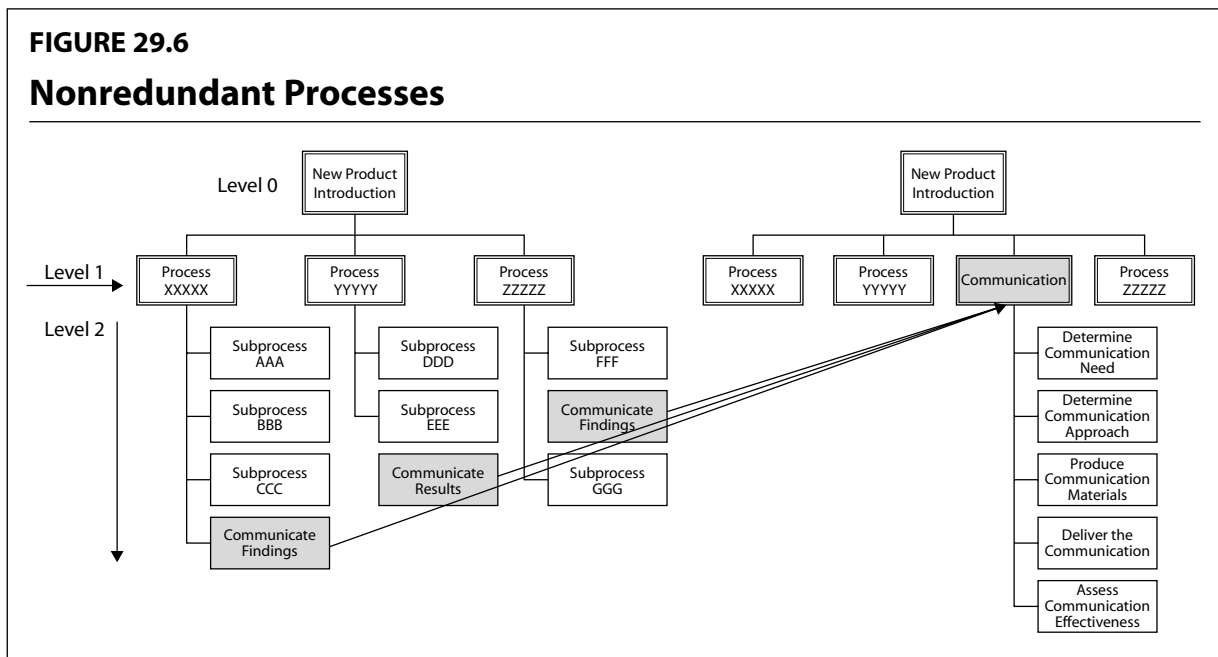
Completing the Process Decomposition

Now that we have a good draft of the processes and their components, here are a few reminders regarding final clean-up and stabilization of the model:

- Process segments within the process decomposition model must be nonredundant. If you find that there are process segments repeating across various sections of the chart, you may want to rethink your partitioning choices. For example, we recently encountered a team responsible for introducing a new product that started to list subprocesses for Communicate Findings or Communicate Results throughout their Level 2 processes. On closer inspection, it became evident that every other Level 1 process required that some type of information be communicated, such as results from market research, results of product testing, product fact sheets, or market introduction plans. Given this need for effective communication of information throughout the new product introduction cycle, a new Level 1 process called “Communication” was born. (See Figure 29.6.)

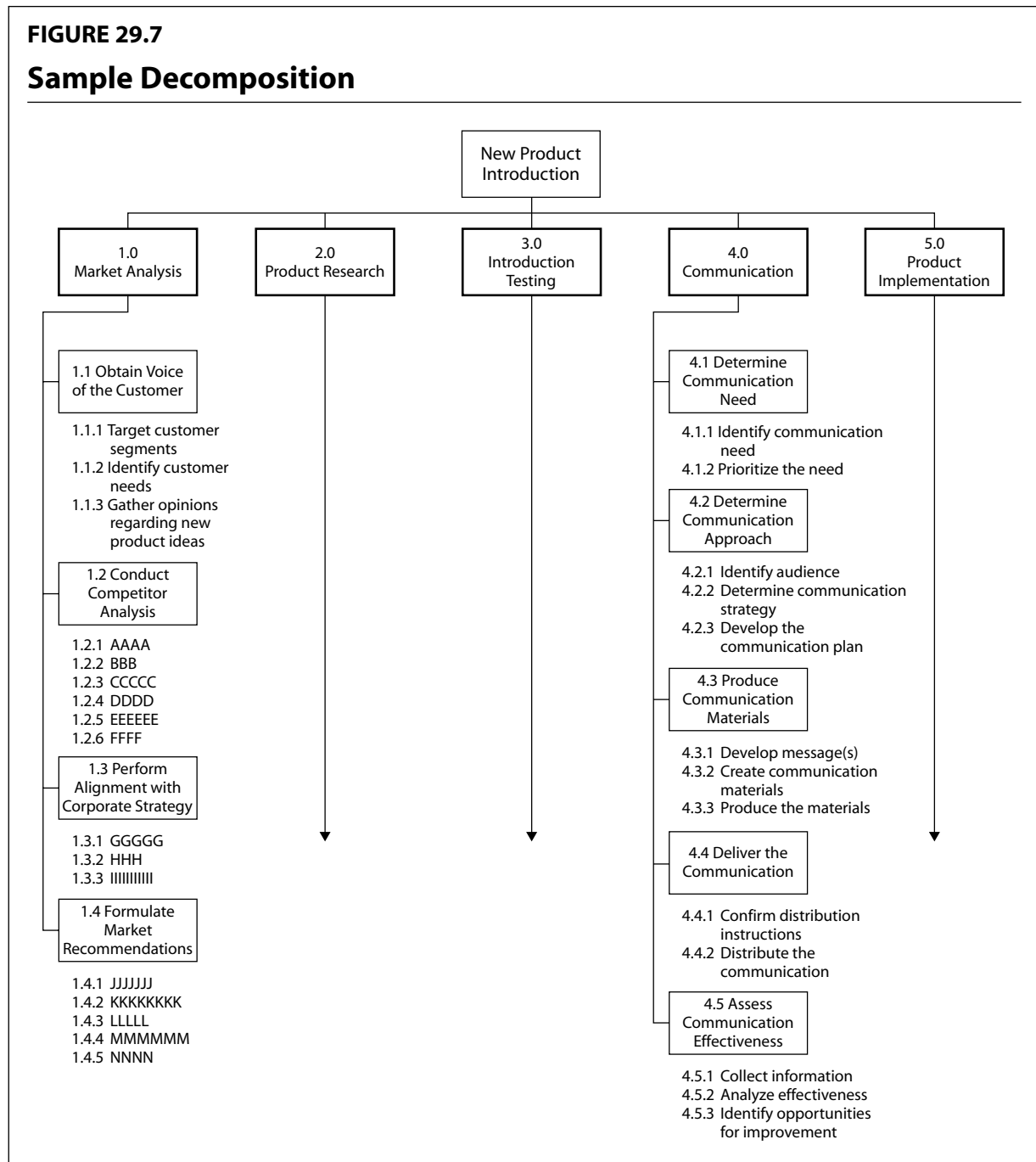
All references to communication-type activities were consolidated under this new Level 1 process. The model was now nonredundant: each process or subprocess had only one reference and one “home base” in the hierarchy. The entire process decomposition was still sufficient and comprehensive.

- Make the model useful as a road map to guide other process analysis or project activities by adding connector lines and process reference numbers. We worked with a team that used their final process decomposition diagram as a way to assign resources and schedule work sessions for process analysis and requirements definition. Work sessions were scheduled by topic (process decomposition step 1.0, 2.0, and so on), and resources appropriate to that topic were assigned as participants. The process decomposition model



also provided a high-level reference when reporting project status to stakeholders and sponsors. Figure 29.7 shows a partial sample of a completed hierarchy. You'll notice that we introduced a Level 3 to the diagram by using numbered process segments below the Level 2 subprocess boxes.

FIGURE 29.7
Sample Decomposition



Keys to Success

- DON'T assume you can identify processes and subprocesses quickly and sequentially, and be done. Process analysis is iterative: as you discuss one section of the process model, you will likely discover ways to improve the overall process decomposition by changing something that was previously documented. Let the model evolve.
- DON'T let the group get into discussions of how, when, or where the processes occur other than to clarify the hierarchy structure. This technique is about structure, not how the processes work.
- DO keep the level of detail consistent across levels of the hierarchy.
- DO keep process segments nonredundant.
- DO ensure that the subprocesses within each branch are complete and sufficient to describe the parent process of that branch within the hierarchy.
- DO validate the process when you have a solid draft decomposition by walking through it end-to-end using business scenarios to help confirm the sufficiency and completeness of the model.
- DO use the final model to communicate project scope and provide a road map to guide follow-up analysis.

Chapter 30

Process Mapping

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes how a process works• Represents the sequence of activities that occur in a process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To help team members clearly understand how the work gets done and who does it• To compare and contrast current work flow with target work flow to understand the gaps between the two• To highlight and give visibility to work complexity• To understand a blueprint or baseline for a process from which situational variations can be modeled• To comprehend the discrete or cumulative costs or time involved in the process

PROCESS MAPPING is one of the most common techniques used in process analysis. It has been used for years, but has gained interest more recently as a substantive tool within many quality-based methodologies. It is indispensable for understanding the detail of how a process works and can be easily annotated to include information regarding who does the work or where the work gets done. It can also be annotated with costs, time, or other characteristics that may be relevant to the project effort. It is a flexible and valuable tool that belongs in every facilitator's toolbox.

Process maps can provide several key benefits to the project effort:

- *They enhance communication.* As with any other high-quality deliverable, the goal is to be clear and unambiguous. Process maps provide a visual depiction of how a process works. They minimize the challenges that arise when interpreting paragraphs of narrative text and follow well-understood, familiar conventions to describe how the process works.
- *They provide an effective tool for analysis.* Because a process map is an easily understood diagram with only a handful of conventions, it enables comparative analysis in a much more effective manner than attempting to read and compare narrative text.

- *They are easily maintainable.* Using standard process mapping software and following ANSI-standard flowcharting conventions when mapping processes makes them easy to maintain. This is important because ease of maintenance has a direct correlation to the accuracy of the process maps. It affects how often process maps are updated to reflect reality. Having up-to-date process maps provides an excellent vehicle for communication and employee training.

As with other process models, mapping processes can be accomplished to reflect what currently exists or to describe the processes as they will exist in the future. Just be certain to indicate clearly which you are attempting to depict: the way things are or the way things will be.

The technique of process mapping is used within the process analysis and design work session. (See Chapter Eleven for a description of this work session type.) The process map diagram can be inserted with the other current or target process models within the Process Analysis and Design Document Template as shown on the accompanying CD.



The Conventions

We've seen a variety of conventions for process mapping over the years, but the simplest and most fundamental set of conventions parallels those used in ANSI-standard flowcharting.

Basic Mapping Conventions

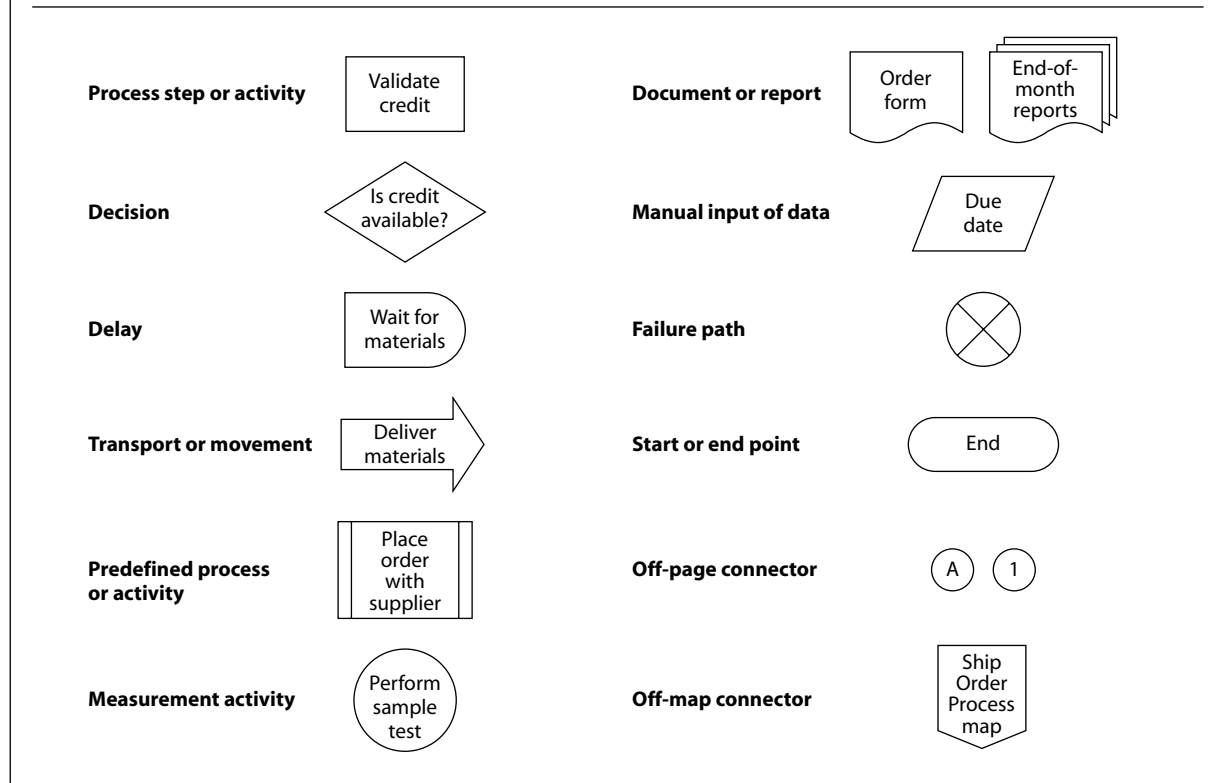
The symbols shown in Figure 30.1 represent some of the more common ones that we've used when mapping business processes.

Following is a description of each symbol. When using these symbols, remember that your goal is to depict the process accurately, so you may not need to use all of them. Use only the symbols that are most relevant to the process being described:

- *Process step or activity:* This is the most commonly used symbol within process mapping, used to define a distinct step or action within a process. The text within the process step must represent action, so represent the name of the process step in a verb-object phrase.

- *Decision:* The diamond denotes a decision point within the process. Typically the text within a decision diamond is phrased as a question. Every decision point in a process map must have at least two labeled exit flows describing the possible results of the decision. Decisions cause the process map to branch. These branches may or may not reunite later in the process. In most cases, the decision results in two distinct outcomes: yes or no. In some cases,

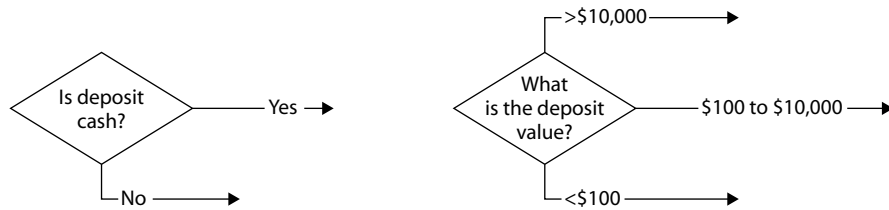
FIGURE 30.1
Common Process Mapping Symbols



the decision can be more complex and results in multiple outcomes, as shown in Figure 30.2.

- *Delay:* This symbol represents a delay in the process. It indicates that the process must wait for another task, decision, input, or specific date before continuing. The text within the symbol should specifically identify what the process is waiting for.
- *Transport or movement:* This symbol depicts physical movement of an item from one place to another.
- *Predefined process or activity:* This is used to represent a process or activity that already exists and will be executed according to existing procedures. The text within the symbol should contain the name of the process.
- *Measurement activity:* This symbol indicates where a measurement activity is being performed or where in the process data is being gathered to support a measurement.
- *Document or report:* This is used to show where documents, forms, reports, and displays of information are created or used. Although the symbol implies paper, it is used for any type of document or report: paper or electronic. Numbers can be inserted within these symbols and linked to the report matrix to allow further detailing of those reports (see Chapter Thirty-Three for more information about the reports matrix).

FIGURE 30.2
Using Decision Diamonds



- *Manual input of data:* This symbol, which is not used as frequently as others, can denote points where data is collected manually within the process. For example, in a process for a telephone support center, this symbol can be used to show manual entry of selection criteria or customer information when a customer service representative talks to a customer over the telephone and needs to access the customer's profile.

- *Failure path:* This symbol can be used to provide an end point for a branch within the process that will not be explored further. This can be used in a number of process mapping situations. Examples include process errors for which we are not going to solve and process branches that lead outside the scope of the project, as shown in Figure 30.3.

- *Start or end point:* This symbol is used to represent the starting point or ending point of a process or process branch. Commonly the words "Start" or "End" appear as the text within this symbol; however, a more descriptive version of the start or end point can also be inserted.

- *Off-page connector:* This symbol is used to connect the flow of the process across pages of the process map. It can also be useful in denoting feedback loops within a process. Standard convention is to use letters within the symbols when connecting pages (A at the end of page 1 connects to A at the beginning of page 2, for example) and numbers when denoting feedback loops. (See Figure 30.4 for an example.)

- *Off-map connector:* This symbol provides a reference to another process map. It can be very useful to indicate dovetailing of processes and is most often used at the start or end of a process map to indicate which process lies directly before or directly after the process we are currently mapping. It may also appear within the process map if our process branches out to execute a separate process. (See Figure 30.4 for an example.)

Additional Mapping Conventions

In addition to the symbols described above, we recommend some other conventions that make the process map both readable and comprehensive:

- *Map left-to-right in time.* Mapping left-to-right in time accomplishes a couple of things. First, it reflects the manner in which people typically

FIGURE 30.3
Using Failure Paths

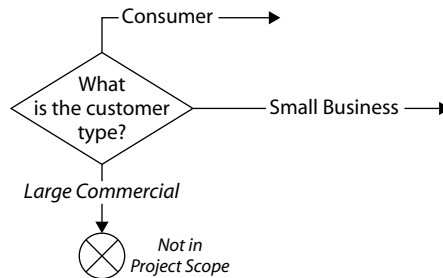
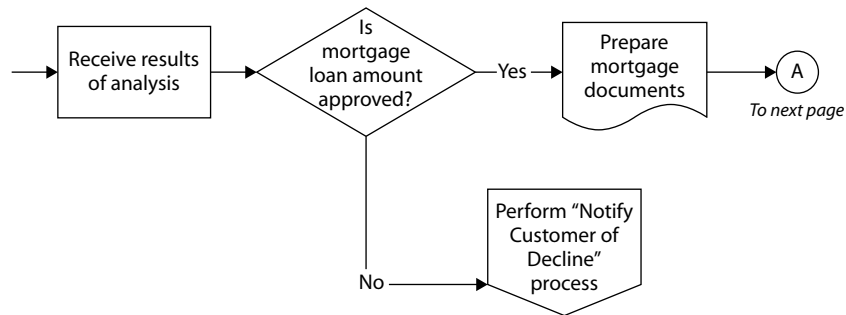


FIGURE 30.4
Using Off-Page and Off-Map Connectors

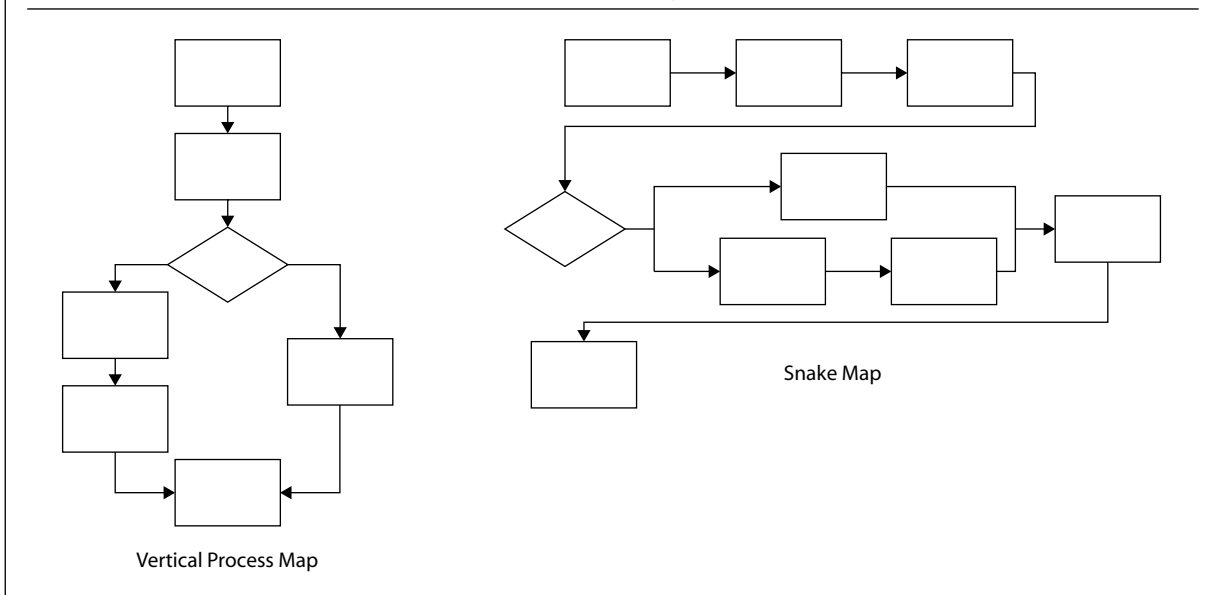


absorb information. Those of us in Western cultures read left-to-right, and mapping left-to-right provides a natural flow to perceive and process the information depicted in the map. Second, by mapping left-to-right in time, we allow other information to be annotated on the map, such as cumulative time or costs. When you reach the end of a page, use an off-page connector to continue the map on the next page. To prevent confusion, avoid doing a vertical process map that is oriented top-to-bottom on a page. Also avoid the “snake-map”: one that wraps around the page. (See Figure 30.5.)

- *Stack symbols vertically only when they occur in approximately the same period of time.* If you are mapping left-to-right in time, be careful to stack symbols vertically only if they occur within the same relative time period. This allows annotation of the process map with processing times, cycle times, or other time-related factors while still remaining true to the representation of the process steps over time.

- *Use verb-object phrases to name the process steps.* Process maps show *how* the process works, so they are active. They move through time from start to end. Naming processes and their steps with verb-object phrases reinforces

FIGURE 30.5
Examples of Confusing Process Map Layouts



the motion of the process. Use phrases such as “Survey Customers,” “Ship Product,” and “Match Invoice to Purchase Order” rather than noun phrases such as “Customer Survey,” “Shipping,” or “Invoice Matching.”

- *Annotate process maps to enhance understanding.* Process maps are a visual depiction of how work gets done. Careful use of annotations within the process map can help understanding without making the map overly complicated by including too much text around the basic symbols. Use annotations wisely (see Figure 30.6).

- *Add a second dimension to a process map to introduce “who” performs the process.* Other possibilities for the second dimension of the process map are to indicate “where” the process is performed or the technology platform or application that supports the process. Adding a second dimension to the process map is often referred to as *swimlaning* or *channeling*. We recommend some specific conventions for placing swimlanes on the process map:

- Create only those swimlanes that will actually be used in the process map. Do not include a swimlane for which there is no activity.
- Place all swimlanes on all pages of the map, even if there is no activity for it on a specific page. This enables the reader to understand the involvement of the second dimension at a glance. Looking at the first page of a five-page map, for example, enables the reader to know how many roles are involved in executing the process without reading through all five pages of the process map.

In the process map example in Figure 30.7, we show a map that does not have swimlanes, so the roles have been incorporated into the process step names. This has a couple of drawbacks. First, the process step names become more verbose and complicated. Second, without swimlanes, you are required to read throughout the entire process to understand which roles are involved. Look at Figure 30.7, and determine how many roles are involved in this process.

How many roles did you identify? There are four roles noted here: Purchasing, Vendor, Accounts Payable, and Receiving. Imagine how time-consuming, not to mention annoying, it would be to read a six-page process map end-to-end just to determine which roles are involved in the process. Swimlanes are our friends! Use them. (See Figure 30.8.)

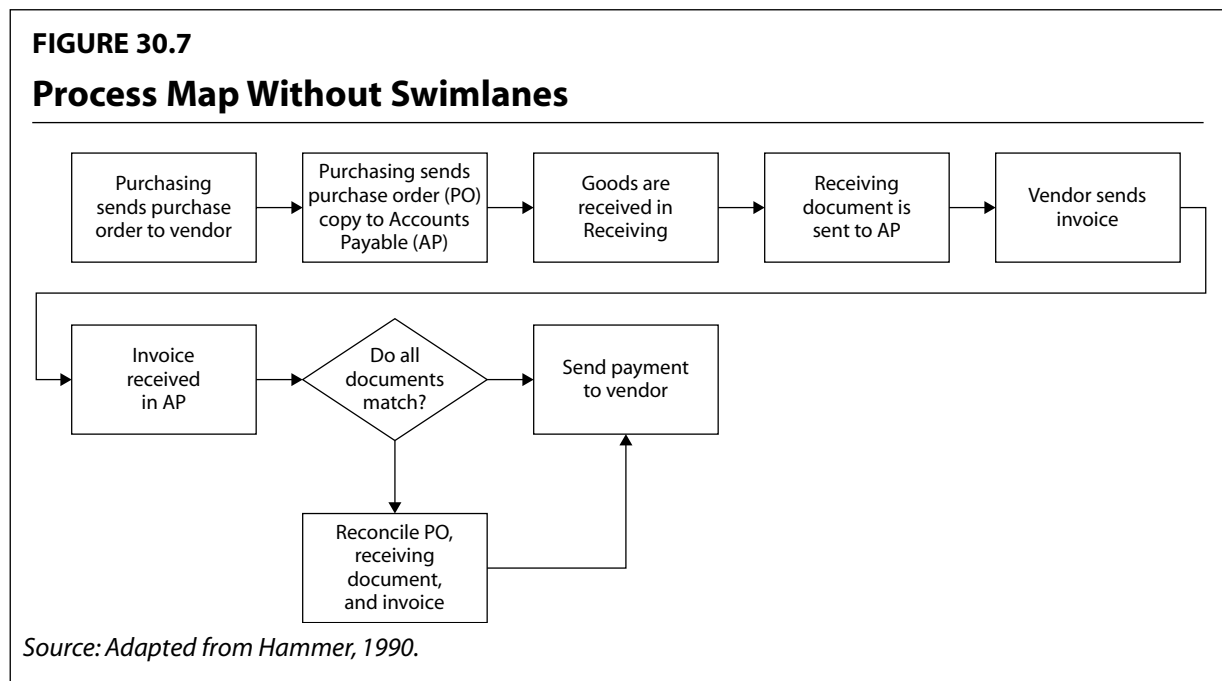
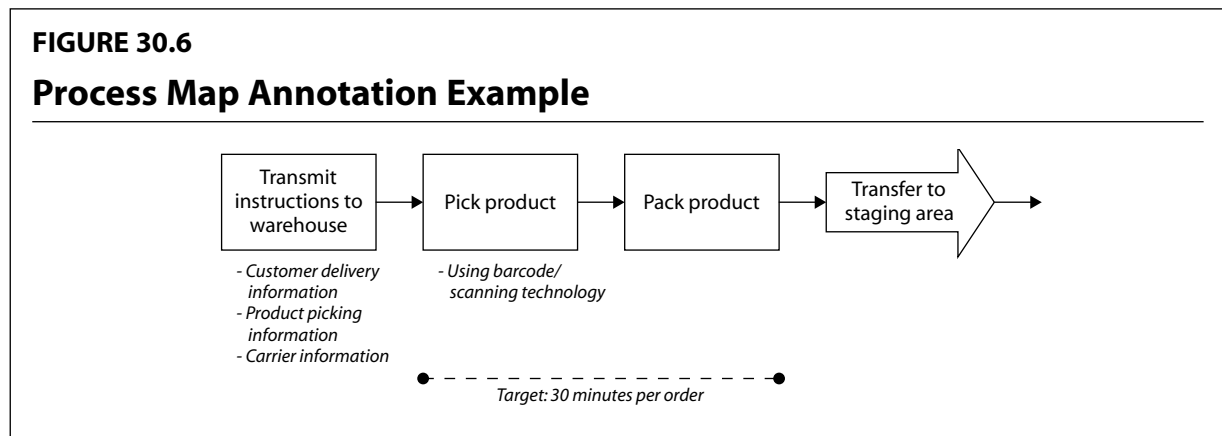
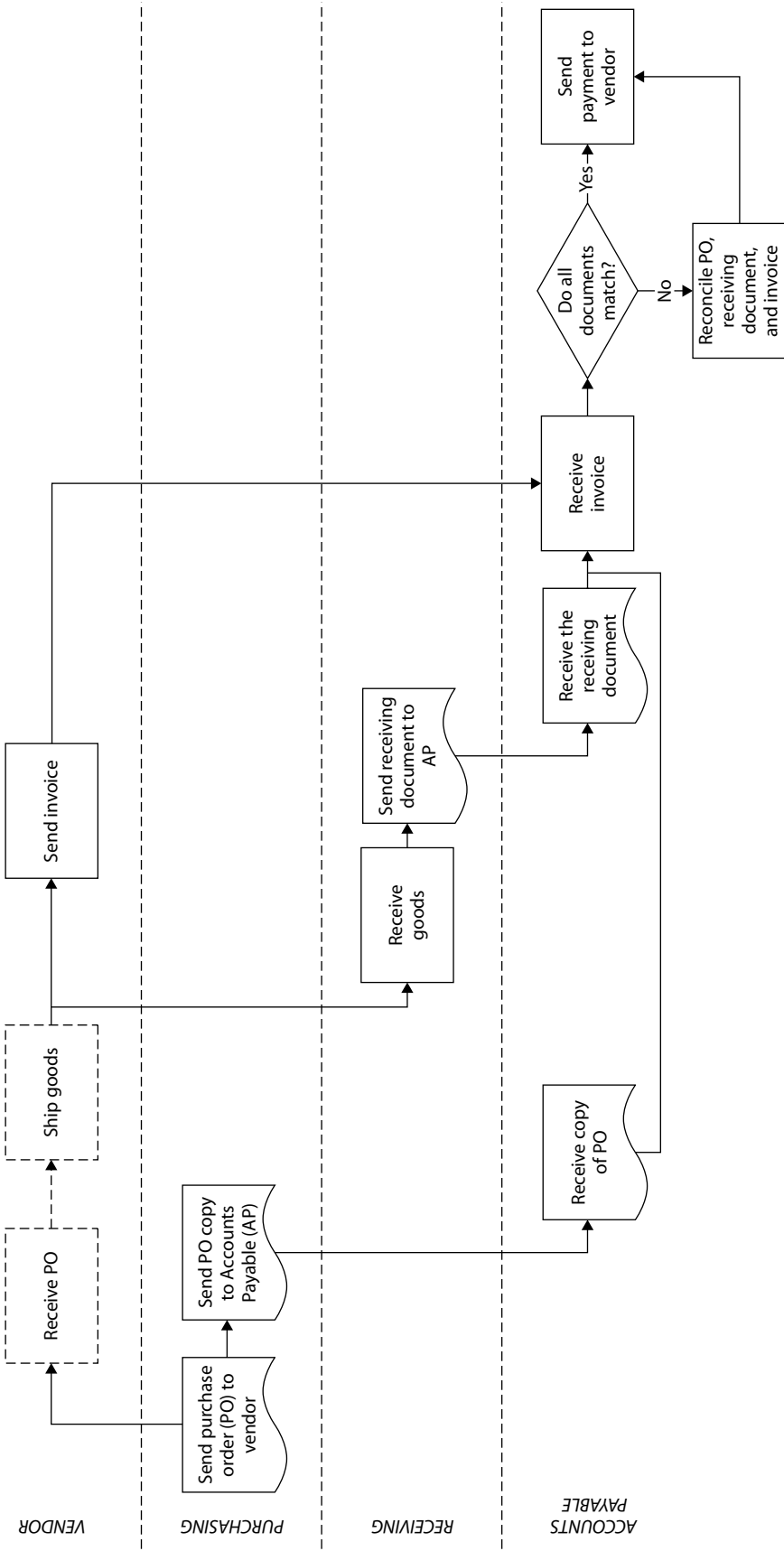


FIGURE 30.8

Process Map with Swimlanes



Note: Dotted boxes and arrow show assumed activity at the vendor.

Facilitating the Technique

Process mapping typically occurs after project scope has been set and we understand which business processes will be involved. Most often, the process maps are built within the context of a process analysis and design work session (see Chapter Eleven).

Process maps can represent how work exists in the current environment, or they can be used to redesign or define the way we want work to occur in the target environment. Often we use both, using current and future process maps to highlight where work changes and improvements are made to accommodate the objectives and targets of the project.

To provide the most robust description of how to facilitate this technique, we've listed the steps in creating a process map from scratch. Often the facilitation process will be simplified by having seed material to build on or a process map that is already drafted.

Creating the Anchor Points

Let's walk through the steps required to build a process map. You'll need to have plenty of flip chart paper posted on the walls of the work session room, along with an abundant supply of four- by six-inch sticky notes and markers:

1. Write the name of the process that will be mapped on the top of a flip chart page. Ask the team to give a one-sentence description of the purpose of the process. Capture the description, and refine the wording until the group is satisfied that the sentence adequately describes the intent of the business process.

2. Identify the boundaries of the process by asking the group, "What starts the process? What triggers the process to begin?" This will give you the starting boundary for the process. Write these starting points on the left-hand side of the flip chart. Then ask, "What do I have when the process is over? What does the process produce?" This provides the outputs of the process. Document these on sticky notes, and place them off to the right side of the wall, leaving plenty of space between the starting point and the outputs.

You have not yet captured any process steps, simply the starting point and the outputs for the process. Whatever we define as process steps will fit between these two points.

Do not be surprised if there is some substantive discussion regarding starting point and outputs. It is common for people to have varying

perceptions of processes that they work with every day. It may take some dialogue to arrive at the process purpose and boundaries.

3. You may want to capture the key inputs needed to produce the outputs that were just documented. If you do, capture these on sticky notes, and place them near the starting point along the left side of the wall. If you don't capture inputs at this point, you will have the opportunity to do so when you build the process detail table (see Chapter Thirty-One).

4. Now that the process purpose and the boundaries are defined, we can start to identify the process steps. There are a number of facilitation techniques that can be used to engage the group in this activity. Typically we use brainstorming or facilitated dialogue.

If you have a process decomposition done, use it as a springboard for discussion. If you do not have a process decomposition, start with questions that will identify five to seven key process steps that accomplish this process purpose. This will give some high-level anchor points around which to refine the process. Ask the group questions like, "What are the key steps that must be done to accomplish the process purpose?" "What are a few of the high-level activities that must be done within this process?" "Let's list some of the key steps of this process."

As the group lists the high-level process steps, capture them on large sticky notes, and post them on the flip charts between the boundary points. Do not be concerned about sequence at this point. Just start capturing the ideas. After you have several notes posted and the ideas slow a bit, start to refine the steps. Your process map will look something like Figure 30.9 at this point.

5. Start to refine the process steps that were captured on the sticky notes. Ask the group to clarify wording and provide sequence. Anchor these key high-level steps along the top of the flip charts to provide guidance for the more detailed process map, as shown in Figure 30.10.

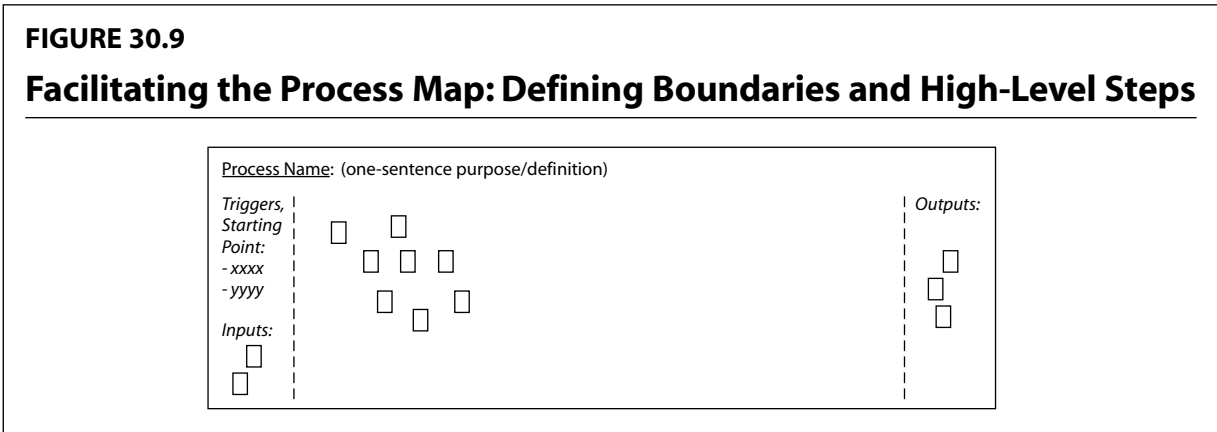


FIGURE 30.10

Facilitating the Process Map: Sequencing Process Steps

Process Name: (one-sentence purpose/definition)										
Triggers, Starting Point: - xxxx - yyyy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outputs:
Inputs: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>										<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Building the Detail

Now we can move into mapping the more detailed process. Here are a few points to keep in mind as you work the detail of the process map:

- Throughout this exercise, continue to apply the Facilitator's Law of Appropriate Level of Detail as explained in Chapter Six: the appropriate level of detail is the level at which you must control variability. Whatever your choice regarding appropriate level of detail for this deliverable, stay consistent within it. A process step called "Identify Customer" and a process step called "Hit <F3> to accept data input" are not at the same level of detail. Be consistent throughout the process map.
- Work the main flow of the process map first. Every time you have a decision step, the process map branches. Which branch do you address first? Go with the flow that would happen if everything is correct and flowing as planned. After the main flow is captured end to end, work on error branches or secondary branches of the process map.
- Work the map in segments. Document a few process steps. When a coherent set of steps has been identified, pause and review this segment of work, adjusting as necessary.

Let's get started on the details:

1. Start at the beginning of the process map, and use the anchor points to prompt discussion. Ask the group questions like, "What do we do to start the process?" "What are some of the key steps we do to start things off?" "Trigger X has occurred. What do we do to get started?"
2. As the group offers process steps, capture and discuss them. Throughout the process mapping activity, have the work session analyst capture the descriptions of the steps of the process as the work session

participants describe them. These can be inserted into the process detail table to supplement the phrase that is being placed on the sticky notes. (See Chapter Thirty-One for more information about the process detail table.)

3. Get a few steps down on the flip chart, and then pause to review. Using an example of a catalogue order process, you might recap the items captured thus far by asking something like, “Okay, so far we have identified the customer, captured the products that they need, and identified their requested delivery date. Right?” Let the group refine or confirm.

4. Continue to prompt for refinement by questioning the group. Ask, “Is this okay?” “Let’s look a little closer at Capture Product Information. Is this where we get the specific information regarding what the customer wants, such as the item number? The quantity? The color and size?” “Do I have only one product, or might I have more?” “Do we ever not have the product that the customer wants?” By pondering these probing questions, the group will refine the process map. Three process steps might grow to eight and could include decisions along the way. (See a sample in Figure 30.11.)

5. Keep working the process in segments, and review as you go. Ask probing questions, and look for consistency in detail.

6. When the group believes that the map is complete, go back and review it end to end. Do a quality check of the map as you go. Look at all decision steps to determine if all of the branches were completed. Are any branches of the process map incomplete? If so, address and complete those sections.

Adding the Second Dimension

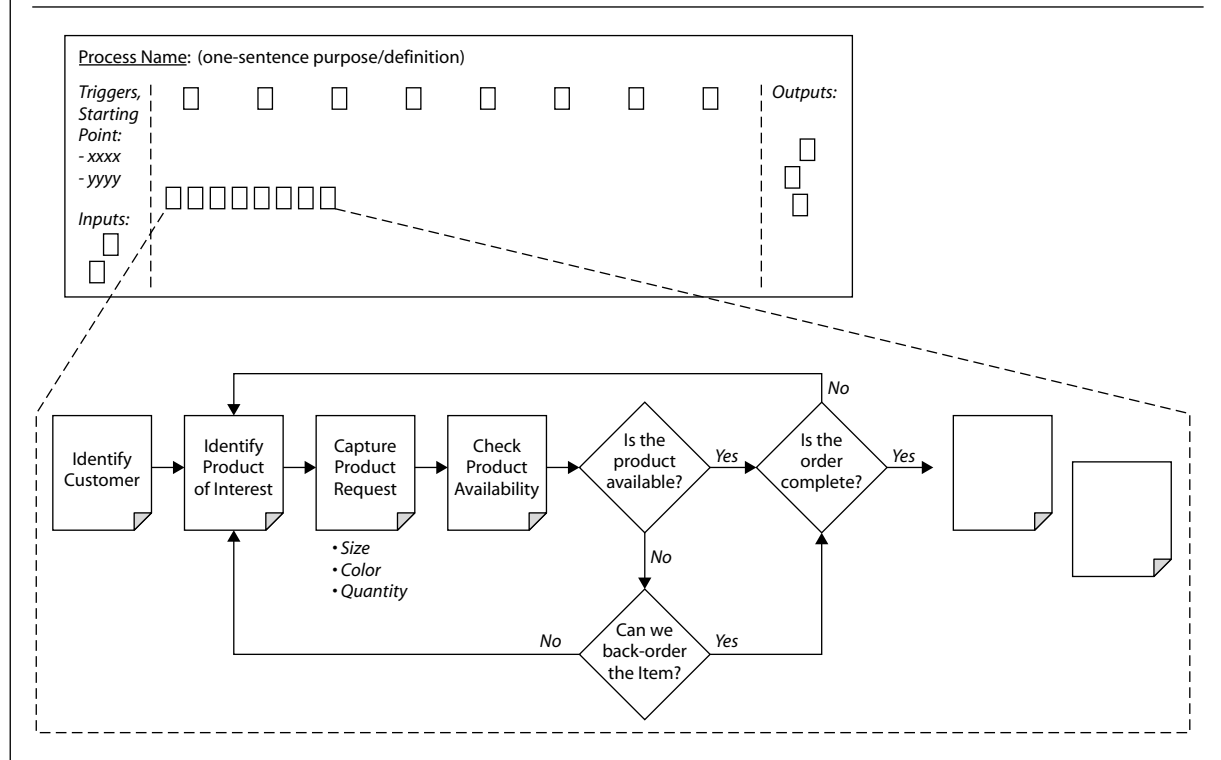
Once the map is drafted, you may want to overlay it with the roles that do the work. These will provide the second dimension to allow you to add swimlanes to it when you transfer it into electronic format. This exercise not only captures role names responsible for each process step but allows the team to walk through and validate the process one more time:

1. Ask the group to list the roles involved in the process. Capture this list on a flip chart. For each role, ask the team to provide a two- or three-character abbreviation. Now you’re ready to overlay the process map with *who does the work*.

2. Start at the beginning of the map, and walk through the steps of the process, asking the team to identify the role that does each process step.

3. Capture the abbreviation of the role name on a corner of the sticky note for the process step in a different color marker. This makes the role stand out from the process step name and makes it more visible to the team.

FIGURE 30.11
Facilitating the Process Map: Capturing the Detail



Validating the Map

Now that the process map is drafted with roles attached to the process steps, use a business scenario to validate it:

1. Ask the team to give you one or two typical business situations that would use this process.
2. Divide the team into two subteams, and give them twenty minutes to walk through the process map step by step using the scenario assigned to them. Ask them to:
 - Identify any places in the process that don't work for their scenario.
 - Continue to capture any other annotations that are relevant to the team, such as baseline measures of process time or costs if capturing a current process map, or targeted time or costs if designing a target process.
 - If designing a target process, ask them to check for contribution to targets, objectives, and CTQs. Insert measurement activities or points where measurement data is captured.
 - If capturing a current process, ask them to begin highlighting the process steps (areas of the process) that are contributing to the problem.

3. Bring the subteams back together, and have them present their findings. Make changes as necessary to the process map.

Finalizing the Deliverable

We now have a good draft of the process map and are ready to transcribe it into electronic format. As we do so, there are a few things to keep in mind regarding final clean-up and stabilization of the model:

- Number the process steps to provide a quick reference when the process map is distributed to the work session team. It will be used to guide a number of project activities subsequent to this work session (such as providing a reference for identifying business requirements). Numbered process steps will be crucial to traceability as you move through the project and make reference to the process map easier.
- If any of the process steps or segments of the process map are still unconfirmed, capture action items for follow-up so that the map can be finalized.
- When putting the process map into appropriate electronic form, translate the role names written on the sticky notes into swimlanes on the electronic version of the process map. Keep the swimlanes consistent across the process map pages, and use appropriate off-page connectors to enable easy reading of the map. If you have identified other processes that dovetail with this process (at the beginning, the end, or branching off from within the process), use the off-map connector symbol to indicate the related process map and its appropriate connecting point.

Keys to Success

- DON'T start capturing process map details until you have defined the purpose of the process, captured the starting and ending boundaries, and anchored a few high-level process activities onto the flip charts. This provides the framework for the process map.
- DON'T get hung up on error flows and what could potentially go wrong in the process. Map the main flow as it would work if there were no errors first. Then consider what might not work according to plan.
- DON'T belabor the sequence of the process steps too early. Brainstorm a number of steps, and capture them without regard for sequence. Once several steps have been identified, work from beginning to end in cohesive process segments, allowing the group to refine as you go.
- DO keep the level of detail consistent across the process map.

- DO finish the process map draft prior to overlaying with roles. Talking about roles while still designing the process map may be too distracting for the group. Also, overlaying roles after completing the first draft of the map allows the group an additional opportunity to walk through the process.
- DO ensure that the target process map supports the project objectives, CTQs, and targets. Identify points in the process at which data to support appropriate measures will be captured.
- DO number the process steps. This will provide a critical reference for traceability throughout the project.
- DO clearly label which process maps represent existing processes and which depict the target processes.

Chapter 31

Process Detail Table

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A table that describes the details of the steps within a process, including the:<ul style="list-style-type: none">InputsSuppliers of the inputsOutputsReceivers of the outputMeasures for this step (optional)Tools or technology that support this step (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To further elaborate on a process map by describing the details of each process step• To describe the process touch points with suppliers (of inputs) and customers (receivers of outputs)• To provide a foundation for the building of requirements and serve as a checkpoint for their completeness

BUILDING A process detail table can be tedious work, but the benefits are well worth the effort. Pairing the process detail table with a process map gives a comprehensive view of how the work gets done, who does the work, what inputs are used by the work (and who supplies them), and what outputs are generated at various points during the process (and who receives them). In addition, we can capture information regarding how to measure the performance of the process and what tools or supporting technology will be used throughout the process.



A process detail table is built within the process analysis and design work session and appears with other process models in the Process Analysis and Design Template (as shown on the accompanying CD).

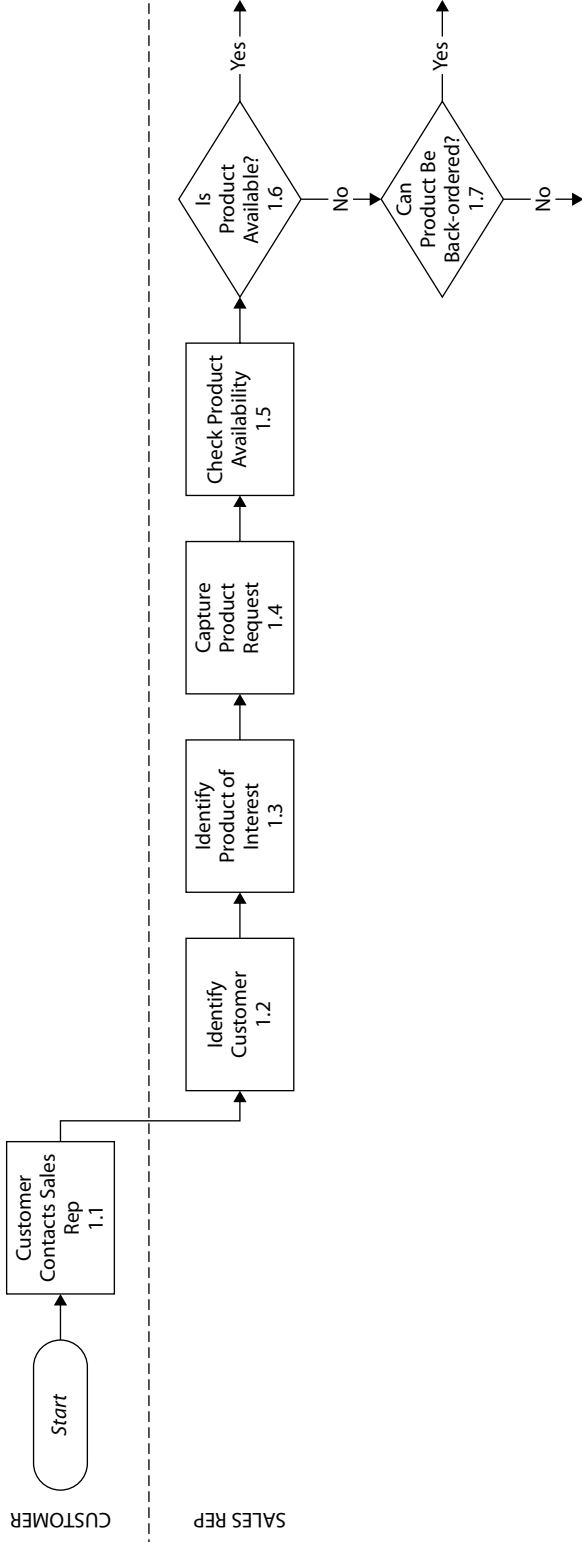
The Conventions

In order to use a table to guide your discussion, you must first understand what information you are trying to gather. The process detail table provides supporting detail for a process map. (See the example in Figure 31.1.)

FIGURE 31.1

Sample Process Detail Table

Process: 1.0 Create Customer Order (partial map shown)



Process Detail Table

Process Name: 1.0 Create Customer Order		Process Purpose: To complete the capture of a valid customer order			
Process Step	Description	Input	Supplier	Output	Receiver
1.1 Customer Contacts Sales Rep	Customer contacts a sales rep via inbound 800-number.	Customer inbound call	Customer	Call routed to available Sales Rep	Sales Rep
1.2 Identify Customer	Sales Rep identifies the calling customer.	Customer identification information (name and zip code, or phone)	Customer	Identified customer Accessed customer profile	Sales Rep
1.3 Identify Product of Interest	Sales Rep identifies the product that the customer is interested in purchasing.	Product number or product description	Customer	Identified product Accessed item profile	Sales Rep
1.4 Capture Product Request	Capture details of the product order.	Quantity, size, color, monogramming (optional)	Customer	Product order line	Sales Rep, order database

Notice that the numbering scheme for process steps within the process map is carried over into the process detail table. This enables easy cross-referencing of the process map to the table. Let's take a look at the information that is gathered in the process detail table (Figure 31.1):

- *Title Row.* We recommend that you use the title row at the top of the table to record the process map name and process purpose statement developed as part of the process mapping exercise.
- *Process Step.* The first column captures the process step number and name. Retain the numbering scheme set up in the process map to maintain a reliable cross-reference.
- *Description.* This provides a brief description of the process step. In Chapter Thirty, we discussed process mapping and mentioned that it would be helpful to have the work session analyst capture the description of each process step as the group builds the process map. If the work session analyst captured these descriptions, post them in this column of the process detail table in the appropriate row for that step.
- *Input.* List the inputs used by the process step. Inputs are defined as *what you must have in order to perform a process step*, such as the specific pieces of information and reports. There may be more than one input per process step, but be aware that some steps may not have an input other than the previous step.
- *Supplier.* List the supplier of each input identified. The supplier may be a person, organization, or system.
- *Output.* List the outputs of the process step. Outputs are defined as *the result of the step or what is produced by it*, such as a closed problem ticket or validated customer identification, new data that has been captured or created, physical products, or even reports or screens resulting from the process step. There may be more than one output per process step.
- *Receiver.* Identify the receiver of each output. The receiver is the one who uses the output and may reflect internal or external people, organizations, or systems. There may be more than one receiver or user of each individual output listed.

In addition to these standard columns of information, there are two supplementary items of information that may be helpful to gather as you're developing the process detail table:

- *Supporting Tools/Technology.* This column allows reference to any supporting tools, templates, applications, or databases that may support the process step.
- *Key Performance Measures.* This column allows capture of any performance indicators relevant to the process step. It provides the team with information necessary to set up appropriate measures that will be used to monitor the performance of the process.

Table 31.1 provides a view of an expanded process detail table.

TABLE 31.1

Expanded Process Detail Table

Process Name: 1.0 Create Customer Order				Process Purpose: To complete the capture of a valid customer order			
Process Step	Description	Input	Supplier	Output	Receiver	Supporting Tools/Technology	Key Performance Measures
1.1 Customer Contacts Sales Rep	Customer contacts a Sales Rep via inbound 800 number.	Customer inbound call	Customer	Call routed to available Sales Rep	Sales Rep	VRU Call routing	Wait time to reach an agent less than 30 seconds
1.2 Identify Customer	Sales Rep identifies the calling customer.	Customer identification information (name and zip code, or phone number)	Customer	Identified customer Accessed customer profile	Sales Rep	Caller-ID Customer profile customer database	
1.3 Identify Product of Interest	Sales Rep identifies the product that the customer is interested in purchasing.	Product number or product description	Customer	Identified product Accessed item profile	Sales Rep	Item profile database Smart-search item matching system	
1.4 Capture Product Request	Capture details of the product order.	Quantity, size, color, monogramming (optional)	Customer	Product order line	Sales Rep, Order database	Smart-order application	
1.5 Check Product Availability	Verify if requested product is available for shipment to the customer within the requested time frame.	Item number, quantity, size, color, monogramming request (optional), requested date	Product order line	Availability (Y/N); if no, then also output date available	Sales Rep, customer	Smart-order application	Return availability instantly (within 5 seconds)

Facilitating the Technique

The process detail table will be built to support a process map and is typically defined as part of the process analysis and design work session (see Chapter Eleven). We encourage you to capture the process detail table in electronic format as discussion occurs within the work session. This table contains a lot of information, and asking someone to capture it manually on flip charts is likely to slow the progress of the group.

When is the right time to capture a process detail table? Since a process detail table is irrelevant without a corresponding process map, it's fair to say that work on the process detail table can start in conjunction with or immediately after the map is available while the topic is still fresh in the minds of the participants.

There are two approaches for capturing the necessary process detail table information: one approach is to use facilitated dialogue with the team to gather the required input or, if there are several process maps completed, small breakout groups can be used to draft the associated process detail tables. This small group option works well with the right set of participants. Break the work session group into small groups of three to four participants each, giving each group one of the process maps. These small groups can draft the process detail table for their assigned process map and then reconvene with the entire team to review and refine the drafted process detail tables in the larger group setting.

To facilitate the creation of the process detail table:



1. *Prepare the process detail table draft.* Prepare a Process Detail Table Template (on the accompanying CD) in advance by populating the process steps of the corresponding process map onto each row of the table in the first column. If the work session analyst captured descriptions of the process steps as the map was being built, these descriptions should also be pre-populated into the template. Display this process detail table electronically for the participants to see and have the corresponding process map visible to the team (either on the wall of the room or in printed form for each participant).

2. *Capture the process detail table information.* Move row by row down the table as you talk through the process map. For each row (each process step):

- Confirm the description of the process step and modify as appropriate to describe the purpose of that process step clearly.
- Capture the inputs necessary to perform the work of that process step.
- Document who or what supplies the inputs.
- Capture the outputs produced by the process step.
- Document who or what receives the outputs.
- If you are using the expanded table format, you may also want to capture tools and supporting technology and key performance measures at

this point. We have found that capturing this expanded information may also be done after the core elements of the table have been drafted. Circling back to capture this information after the rest of the table has been created gives the team the opportunity to walk through the information one last time while expanding it to include supporting technology and measures.

3. *Repeat step 2 for each process step.*

4. *When the group is done, perform a quick review of the table to validate or update as appropriate.* If you are using the expanded table format and did not capture the supporting technology information or measurement information as you went row by row through the table details, then provide this information now as you facilitate a review of the drafted table.

5. *Insert the completed process detail table into the Process Analysis and Design Template provided on the CD.* We recommend that the process detail table follow immediately after the process map in sequence as shown in the template.



Keys to Success

- DON'T focus the group on building the process detail table until the corresponding process map is complete. The development of process maps is iterative, so to avoid unnecessary rework, allow the map to stabilize before attempting to define the process detail table.
- DON'T be frustrated when the activity becomes tedious. Keep plugging away, even if you need to take breaks to keep the group at their peak.
- DON'T try to do a full day of building process detail tables. Mix this with other work session activities.
- DO try to gather as much information about the process steps as possible during the process mapping exercise. Have the work session analyst capture process step descriptions and notes regarding process step inputs or outputs as the group provides them. Any information captured and populated into the process detail table in advance will help accelerate the building of the final table.
- DO consider using small group breakouts to alter group dynamics and keep people focused and engaged.
- DO recognize that this can be tedious. Those who are not inclined to details may disconnect during this exercise. Choose the appropriate participants, and observe the group dynamics carefully to keep the team productively engaged.

Chapter 32

Context Diagramming

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A model that visually portrays the project scope as it will exist within the target environment• A technique for depicting the interconnectivity of the project scope with its environment (showing inputs received and the outputs produced for the project scope as a whole)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To clearly communicate the scope of the project and how it will interact with the implementation (target) environment• To address boundary issues by clarifying inputs received and outputs produced• To provide a checklist of necessary interfaces—those bridges that must be in place in order to share information successfully with systems, people, or organizations outside the project scope• To assist in building out requirements, design, test plans, and implementation plans• To assist in confirming stakeholders and team participants• To assist in resource planning

WHAT IS “CONTEXT”? *Webster’s Dictionary* describes it as “the interrelated conditions in which something exists or occurs.” What is “context diagramming”? It is a visual depiction of the domain of our project effort, shown within the context of the environment in which it will exist.

Most process models show what is inside the project scope. We build a process decomposition hierarchy to show the breadth of processes within our scope. We build or redesign process maps for those processes that are part of our scope. The context diagram, however, provides a different view. It doesn’t look *within* the project, but rather at how the project *as a whole needs to interconnect with its environment*.

These interconnections, or interactions, are the primary focus of a context diagram. We describe how the project interacts with the business environment in which it will exist. From what or whom does it receive information or inputs? To what or whom does it send outputs? This understanding of the

interactions provides critical knowledge that is not easily obtainable from other models and is often overlooked until late in the project cycle. Understanding the bridges that must be built (or existing bridges that must be used or modified) to accommodate the flow of information is vital to designing the solution. This model allows it to be documented as part of the project effort, just like the processes, features, and functionality that live within the core of the project scope.

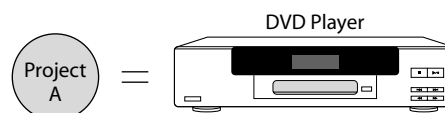
Understanding these interactions early in the project lifecycle has a number of benefits. Perhaps the most valuable one is the awareness of the complexity of the environment and the impact this may have on project people, time, and funding, and other resources. Imagine for a moment that the project is like a DVD player. The DVD player has specific features and functionality that attract us to purchasing it. Similarly, our project has specific features and functionality that are required to meet its objectives. (See Figure 32.1.)

So off you go to purchase the DVD player at the local electronics store. You're so excited about the thirty-seven fabulous features of the new DVD player that you can hardly keep the car on the road as you travel home to install it. You get home, carry the DVD player into the house, and plug it in the electrical outlet. You press the power button, and on comes the LCD display. Woo-hoo, it works! You set the date and time. Then you open the DVD tray, place a DVD in the tray, and close it. With great anticipation, you hit the Play button . . . and nothing happens. The TV screen doesn't display anything, although the LCD display looks great with its dazzling lights, numbers, and digital display of today's date and time. What happened to those thirty-seven fabulous features? Why isn't it working?

After a little investigation, you come to the unhappy realization that you didn't have the complete picture about what was needed to make a DVD player work. You need to connect it to your TV. It also must connect to the sound system. And no one at the store mentioned anything about cables. Did you know there are different types of cables? Analog or optical cables? S-video or component-video cables? How on earth do you know which ones you need? So back to the store you go to spend more money and time to get what you already thought you had purchased.

FIGURE 32.1

DVD Player Example



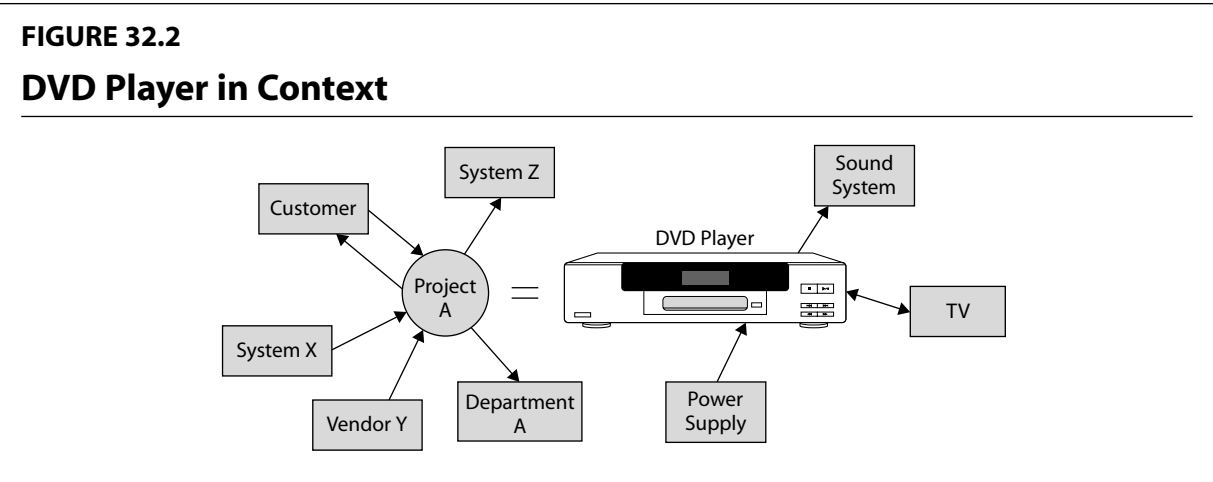
Sound familiar? It’s an oversimplified example, of course, but one to which many of us can relate. We buy a product only to find out that we have very little knowledge about how to make that product work in the environment for which it was intended. And then there’s all that extra time and cost for everything necessary to plug it in. We hadn’t planned on that!

So it is with projects. We often do a great job at defining the features and functionality of the product or service, but we don’t pay attention to everything it takes to plug the product or service into its business environment (Figure 32.2).

Only when we see the full context of the solution can we understand the complexity of the environment. We need to determine what bridges need to be in place to provide pathways for inputs to successfully arrive from suppliers and for outputs to successfully leave the project boundary and arrive at their intended destination. Without this understanding of interaction, projects are often funded and resourced around the definition of features and functionality alone. Only later in the project lifecycle, when design and implementation are addressed in detail, do we discover the complex nature of the environment and realize that plugging in our solution does not come for free.

Although details specific to implementation are not known or defined early in the project lifecycle, we do recommend that a logical version of the project context diagram be built soon after scope is set. This diagram is a powerful tool in communicating the scope of the project. It also provides an effective conceptual blueprint to validate requirements and guide physical design and implementation later in the project.

As with other process models, the context diagram can be drawn to reflect what currently exists or to describe the context that will exist in the future environment. Just be certain to indicate clearly which you are attempting to depict: the way things are or the way things will be.





The technique of context diagramming is typically used during the business requirements work session. (See Chapter Twelve for a description of this work session type.) The context diagram may be started prior to this work session, from information gathered in the project charter work session regarding project scope and from information gathered regarding process inputs and outputs during the process analysis and design work session. We recommend that you gather relevant information and use it to create a draft context diagram that can be updated within the business requirements work session. The resulting context diagram can be inserted within the Business Requirements Document Template as shown on the accompanying CD.

The Conventions

Context diagramming conventions are quite simple. A few basic symbols, and you're on your way. We use the symbology popularized by Tom DeMarco and Edward Yourdon in the 1970s and 1980s during their work in using data flow diagramming for analyzing and designing information systems. Although we take some liberties with the conventions presented in data flow diagramming texts, the concepts are transferable; it's all about understanding interaction.

Basic Context Diagramming Conventions

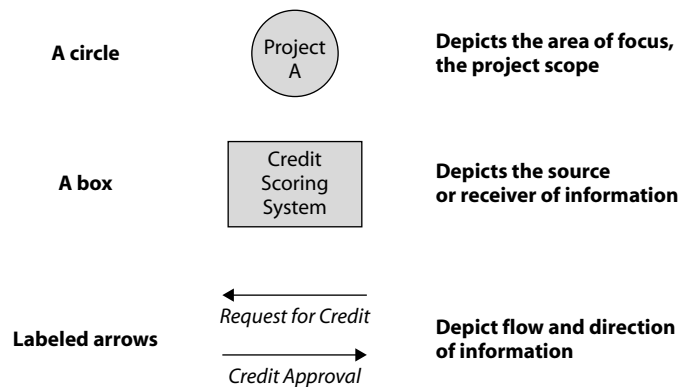
The symbols shown in Figure 32.3 represent the basics that are needed to build a context diagram.

Below we've listed a description of each symbol:

- *Circle: Project scope.* This is the focal point of the context diagram. It represents project scope and is labeled with the name of the project. The circle is usually placed in the center of the context diagram.
- *Box: Sources or receivers of information.* The boxes are typically used to show people, systems, or organizations that are sources of information flowing into the project scope or are receivers of information flowing out of the project scope. These are also referred to as external agents. These are the things in the environment with which we must interact—the things with which we must share information to fully engage the features and functionality of our solution.
- *The arrows: Labeled, directional flows of information.* Labeled arrows are used to show information flow and direction. They may be straight or curved to fit the readability of the diagram. Each information flow is labeled to provide insight into the interaction. Information is a *thing*, not a *process*, so use a noun or noun phrase when labeling information flow lines.

FIGURE 32.3

Common Context Diagramming Symbols



Additional Context Diagramming Conventions

The symbols we have described are deceptively simple. But many teams have lost their way along the path to creating a clear context diagram. To prevent missteps and unforeseen trip ups, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- *Be clear about what is inside the scope of your project.* Don't turn this diagram into a description of work flow for processes within the scope. There are several other process models for that type of analysis. This diagram is intended to show interactions with people, systems, or organizations outside the chartered area of scope but with whom we need to interact to be successful. Sometimes it can help the team to list the features, processes, or key functionality as text phrases inside the main circle in the center of the diagram. This provides a visual reminder that we are not talking about what's in the circle right now; rather, we are talking about what we need to connect to. (See Figure 32.4.)

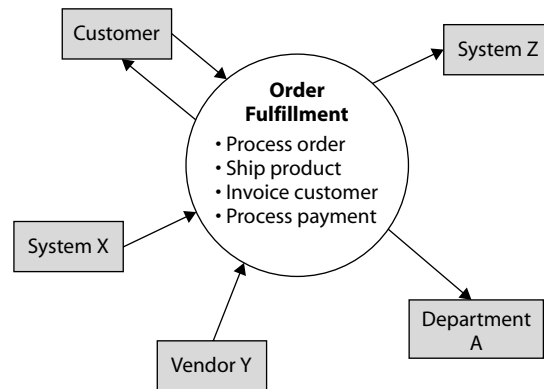
- *Flows are pathways for information sharing, not processes.* It is a common occurrence for people to make the error of placing process names on the labeled arrows instead of information flow names. The arrows do not indicate process activities; they represent what needs to flow in or out of the project scope from external sources or receivers of information. Processes are activities that use or generate information; they are not the information itself.

Use nouns or noun phrases to name the information flows. Processes are activities represented by verb-object phrases. Simply by using noun or noun phrases as labels for the information flows, you will naturally avoid placing process names on the connecting arrows.

- *Context diagrams get complicated and cluttered.* It is common for a team to assume that their environment is relatively simple or straightforward

FIGURE 32.4

Annotating What Is in Project Scope



until they develop a context diagram. It becomes apparent rather quickly that the interactions can be quite complex. The visual impact can be powerful. It immediately gives the viewer a sense of the intricacy of the business environment. So don't be surprised when the context diagram gets complex. But a diagram that becomes too cluttered or messy to serve as a good tool for communication defeats the purpose. Try to minimize clutter and present a readable yet comprehensive depiction of context:

- If there are a number of inputs or outputs connecting with a specific external agent, the diagram can get cluttered trying to connect all of the flow lines into that one box. Consider duplicating the external agent on the diagram. Indicate that the external agent is a duplicate by placing a "hash mark" in the upper right corner of the box. (See Figure 32.5.)
- If the diagram still seems too complicated to support effective communication, consider combining multiple flow lines into a single input line or single output line. Capture all of the flow names on that single line. (See Figure 32.6.)
 - *Consider using indirect information flows if it enhances communication and understanding.* An indirect information flow is a flow of information, services, or materials that exists between one external agent and another external agent. Normally what occurs between external agents is not within our area of interest or control, so information flows between external agents are typically ignored. However, this is another situation where we digress from using the standard data flow diagramming conventions that we borrowed from structured systems analysis.

In certain situations, interactions among external agents can be of interest to the business. For example, an external agent may act as a handler of information, materials, or services. Let's assume that our project scope passes an output to an external agent, who then processes it and routes it to another

FIGURE 32.5

Simplifying the Diagram: Duplicating External Agents

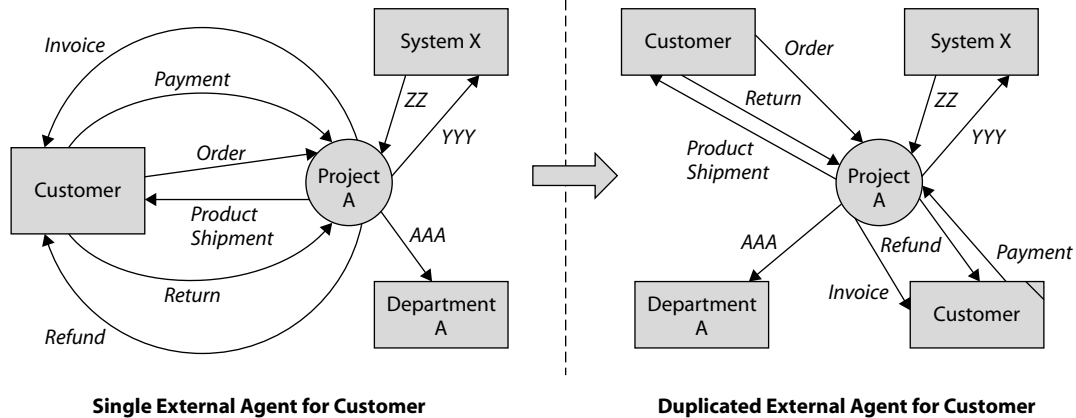
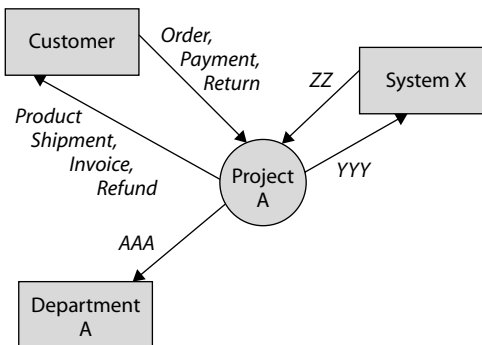


FIGURE 32.6

Simplifying the Diagram: Inputs and Outputs Combined



one of our external agents. If this interaction is of significant interest to the business, then document it. It can enhance understanding of overall interactions and may provide a more comprehensive view of interactions to support test plans and implementation plans in later project phases.

Typically these indirect interactions between external agents are not evident during the first iteration of the diagram. They often appear as the diagram takes shape and may require updating of previously documented information flows.

Document indirect interactions with *dotted labeled arrows* to distinguish them visually from other flows on the diagram. In the example in Figure 32.7, the project team realized that they did not have the same interaction with the customer flow of products as they did with the flow of invoices. The “product” outbound flow was processed through a handler—the freight forwarder. Note the five changes that were made to the context

FIGURE 32.7
Documenting Indirect Interactions

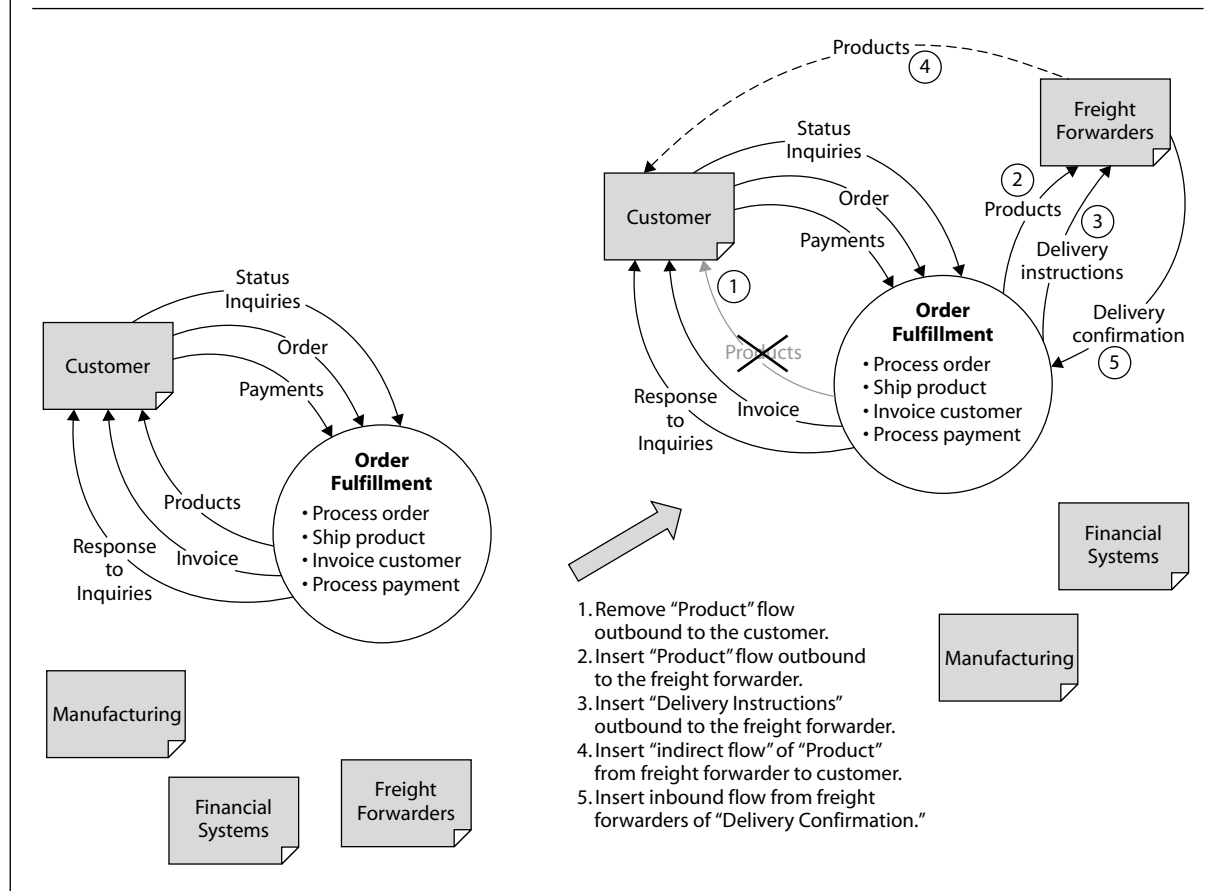
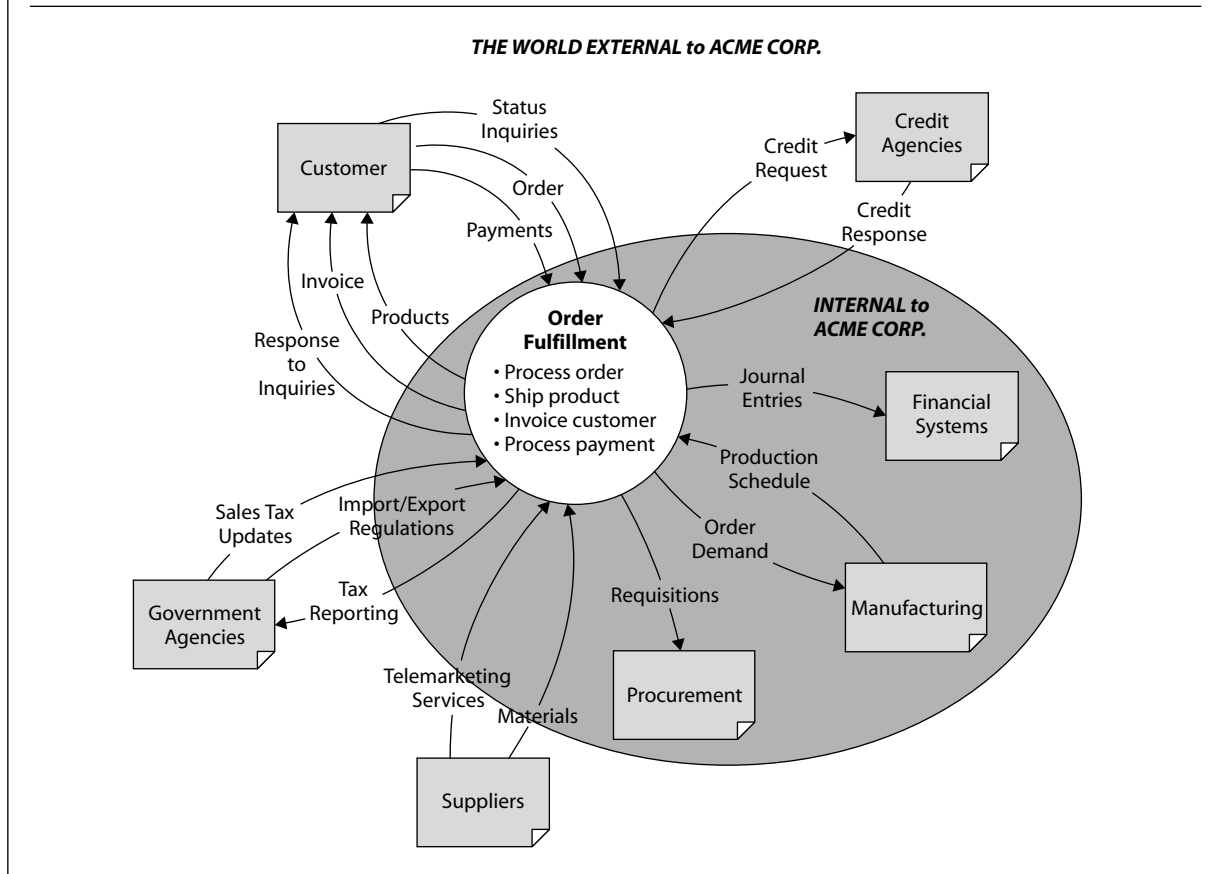


diagram on the right to display the interactions involved in getting products into the hands of their customers more accurately.

- Further denote which external agents are external to the company. All sources and receivers of information are not created equal. Similarly, bridges to provide the avenue for sending or receiving information to these external agents may be more or less complicated to define and implement. It is sometimes a helpful clarification for a team to see those external agents that are part of their company environment versus those completely external to their company. This does not change the context diagram content; it simply points out the nature of the environment, which may provide useful insights when considering project resources (people, funding, time). (See Figure 32.8.)

FIGURE 32.8

Denoting External Agents That Are Outside the Company



Facilitating the Technique

A context diagram is typically built after project scope has been set. Although the context diagram assists in defining or refining scope, we've found that most business teams are better able to focus on the context of the environment once there's a substantive definition of what is inside project scope.

Context diagrams can represent how the area of scope exists within the current environment or can be used to depict the interactions of the target environment. More often we build context diagrams to represent the target environment. However, building both the current environment and the target environment context diagrams can provide a useful tool for communicating the changes that will occur as a result of the project.

To provide the most robust description of how to facilitate this technique, we've listed the steps involved in creating a context diagram from scratch. Often the facilitation process will be simplified by having seed material to build on or a context diagram that is already drafted. Whether you have a starting draft or are building from a blank sheet of paper, keep in mind that this is an iterative activity. You follow a pattern of sequenced questioning, but the results are by no means linear. Ideas will pop up throughout the exercise that will cause you to update a previously documented external agent or information flow. Be prepared to revisit items on the diagram as you go.

Creating the Anchor Point

Let's walk through the steps required to build a context diagram. You'll need to have three or four sheets of flip chart paper posted on the walls of the work session room, along with an abundant supply of four- by six-inch sticky notes and markers.

1. Help the group understand what the context diagram depicts by describing it as:

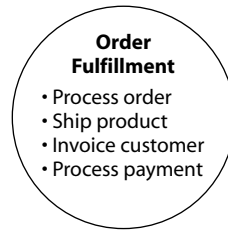
- Putting the project initiative within the context of its environment.
- Identifying what applications, systems, people, organizations, or outside vendors or groups the project needs to communicate with or needs to share information with.
- Using an example like that of the DVD player previously discussed if it helps the team connect with the activity.

2. Help the group understand how this activity is of value by describing the benefits of a context diagram. It enables:

- The clear communication of scope within the context of the implementation environment.
- A more robust build-out of requirements, design, test plans, and implementation plans.
- A validation of stakeholders and project team participants.
- A checklist for necessary interfaces—those bridges that must be in place in order to share information successfully with systems, people, or organizations.

3. Establish the anchor point. Write the name of the project in a large circle in the center of the flip chart pages (Figure 32.9):

- If it helps the group to focus, ask for a list of key features, functionality, or business processes that are inside the project scope. List these as bulleted phrases within the large circle.
- Remind them that these are the things that make up their project scope.

FIGURE 32.9**Creating the Anchor Point****Identifying the External Agents**

Now that the anchor point is set, you're ready to start exploring how it fits into the environment in which it must operate. Create a draft list of external agents first. These are the people, organizations, systems, applications, and third-party groups (such as government agencies or vendors) with whom we need to share information in order to operate the business area within our scope successfully.

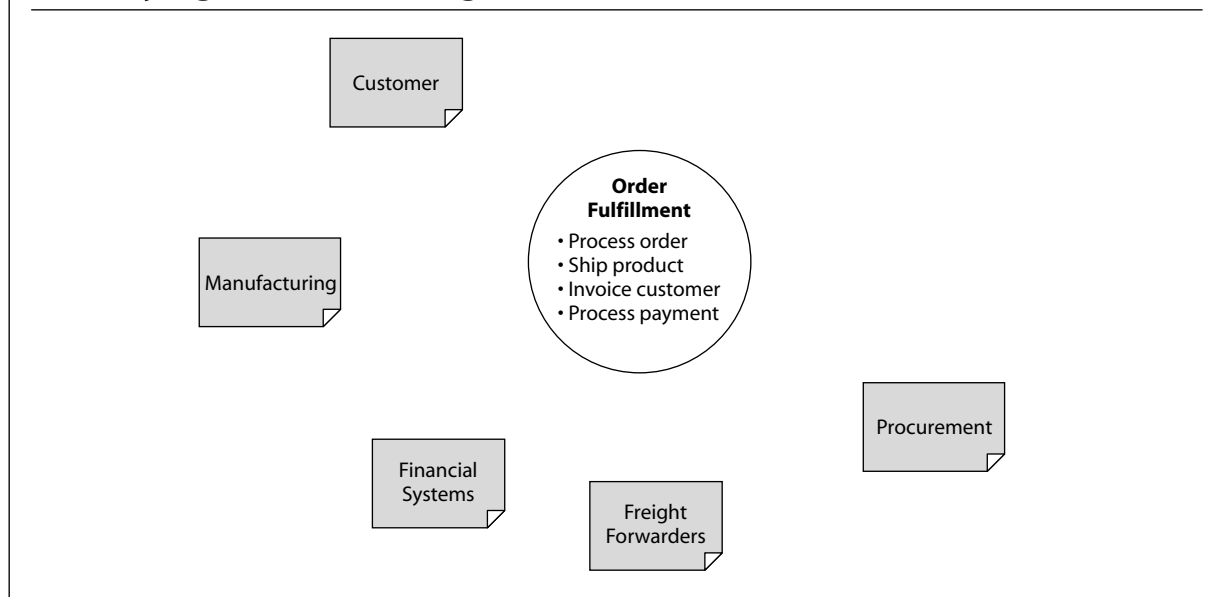
1. Start by asking the group, "Keeping our scope in mind, what people, systems, and organizations send us information or receive information from us?" Using large sticky notes, write down the ideas of the group and place them on the flip charts surrounding the circle. Don't be concerned with placement; just get the ideas down and posted around the focal point (see Figure 32.10).
2. When the ideas start to slow down, you're ready to move on. Keep in mind that you may discover additional external agents as you continue to document further details of the context diagram.

Identifying the Flows of Information

The information flows provide the substance of the diagram. Information, materials, or services that flow into and out of the scope of interest are documented. This identification of information flows also serves the purpose of refining and updating the drafted external agents:

1. Start with one of the external agents, something well known such as the customer, and ask the group, "What information does the customer send to our project? What do we need from the customer in order to perform the functionality that is listed inside the scope?"
2. The group will generate ideas about inbound information flows from the customer to project scope.
 - If there are a lot of ideas flowing, you may want to write these down on another flip chart and clarify them prior to posting on the context diagram. The diagram will get cluttered enough as the process continues

FIGURE 32.10
Identifying the External Agents



without compounding the clutter by documenting a brainstormed list of things, some of which may drop out during clarifying discussion.

- If the ideas are slower to generate and there is deliberate discussion around each one, then draw an arrow from “Customer” to the center circle, and label it with a noun or noun phrase that represents the type of information provided by the external agent.
- Feed back what you have captured, requesting clarification. Continue asking, “What else does the customer provide to us?” and documenting the inbound flows of information until the ideas slow down (Figure 32.11).

3. Repeat the questions in steps 1 and 2, altering them to request output flows. For example, ask the group, “Keeping in mind our project scope, what information, goods, or services do we send to the customer?” Again, document the responses on outbound information flows on the context diagram. (See Figure 32.12 for the view of both inputs from and outputs to the customer.)

4. Continue around the diagram repeating steps 1, 2, and 3 for each external agent listed, identifying both inbound and outbound information flows. Be prepared to add new external agents along the way, as the discussion of information flows often leads to discovery of additional external agents:

- If the group cannot identify what the inputs or outputs might be for a specific external agent, then it may not be a valid source or receiver of

FIGURE 32.11
Identifying the Flows of Information—Inbound

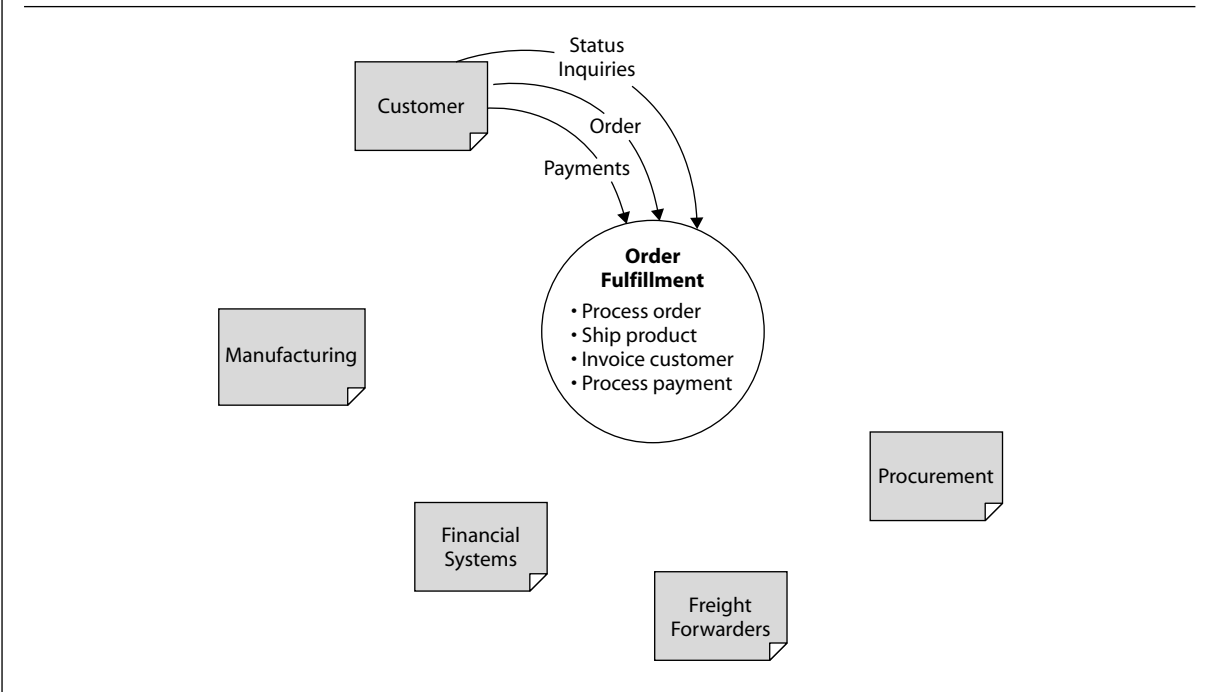
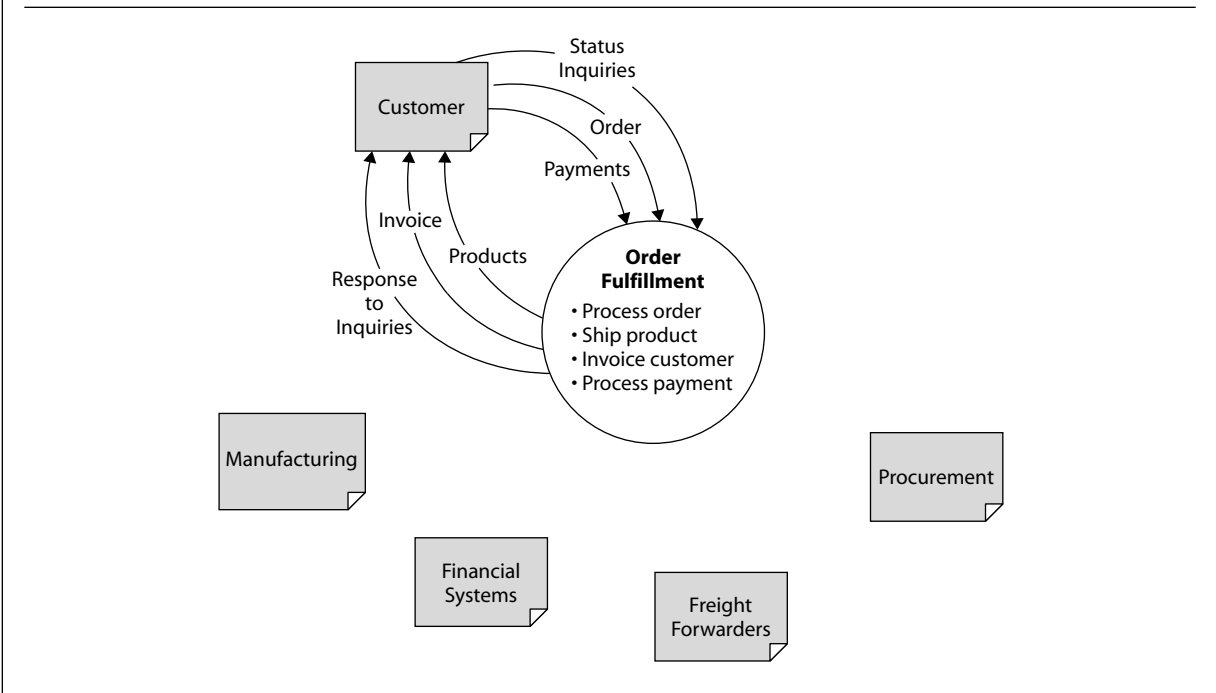


FIGURE 32.12
Identifying the Flows of Information—Outbound



information, goods, or services from the project scope. Either capture an action item to validate its inclusion on the context diagram, or remove the sticky note from the diagram and continue exploring other sources and receivers of information.

- Not every external agent will both generate inputs and receive outputs. Some provide only inputs, and others may receive only outputs.

Finalizing the Deliverable

When all external agents have been identified and their associated information flows documented, it's time to finalize this draft of the context diagram:

1. Ask the team to give you one or two typical business scenarios for the project (for example, the customer places an order through the Internet or returns a shipment because the wrong part was sent). Walk through the business scenarios, validating that the external agents and the inputs and outputs shown on the context diagram are comprehensive and sufficient to satisfy the business scenarios.

2. If it helps to clarify the context diagram, identify which external agents are external to the company and which are internal to the company. Find a way to depict this difference visually:

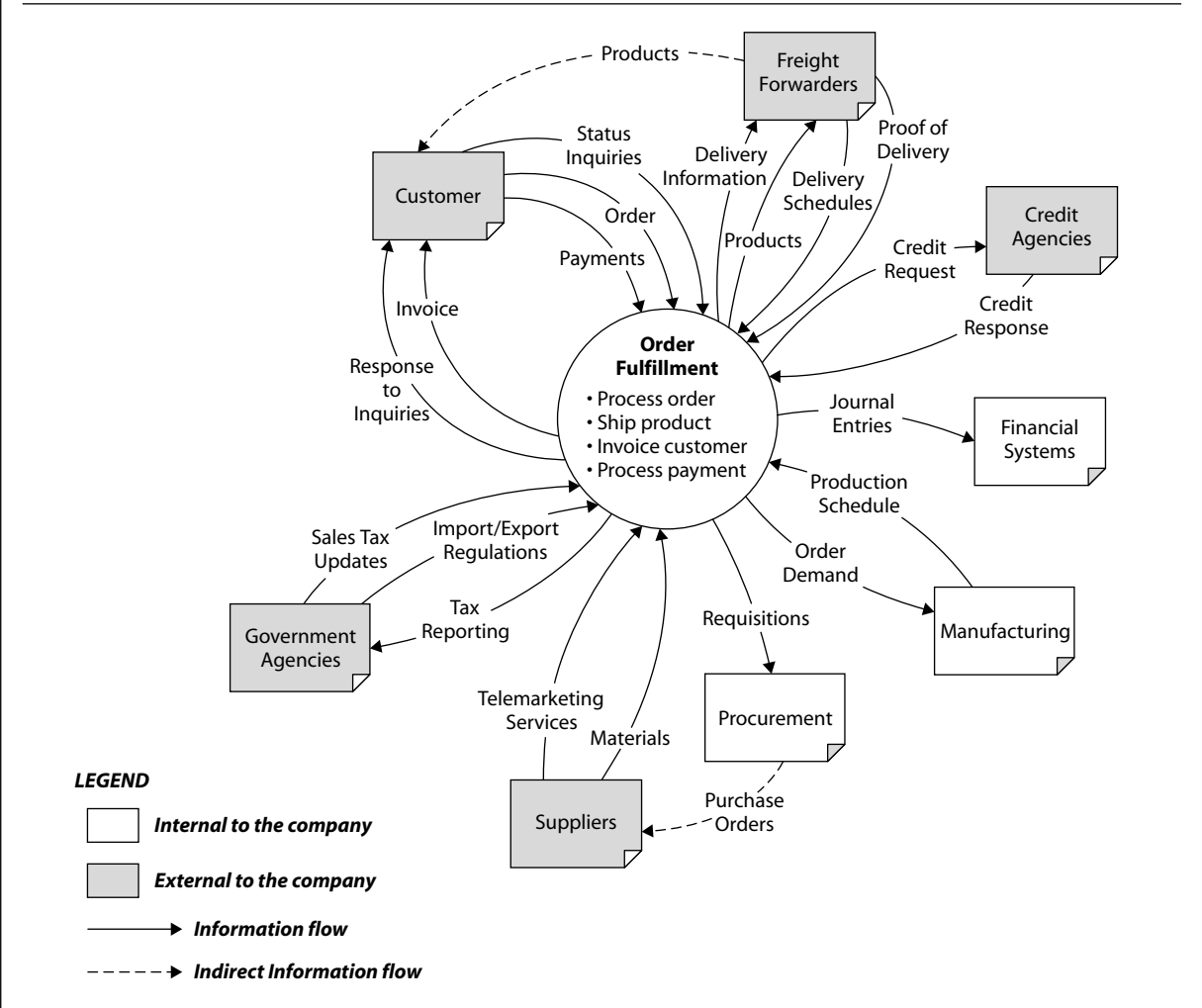
- One option is to draw a background field (such as a shaded box or shape in the background of the diagram) that indicates "internal to the company" and another one indicating "external to the company" and ensure that the external agents are posted onto the appropriate background field. (See Figure 32.8.)
- Another option is to use different color sticky notes for sources or receivers of information that exist within the company versus those that exist outside the company.

3. It can be helpful to represent the information on the context diagram in another format. A table format can be used as an alternate view of the information represented in the context diagram. This table describes the inputs used and outputs generated by each external agent. (See the accompanying CD for a template to use when creating a context diagram input output matrix.)



Figure 32.13 is a comprehensive view of the final context diagram draft.

FIGURE 32.13
Sample Context Diagram



Keys to Success

- DON'T start detailing the context diagram until you have a substantive understanding of project purpose and project scope. Although the context diagram can assist in solidifying and communicating scope, it helps to understand the basics of what lies within the project boundaries before starting the context diagram.
- DON'T expect the creation of the context diagram to be linear. It is a very iterative activity.
- DO be careful not to model what is within the project scope on the context diagram. This diagram depicts the core project initiative as a "black box" and

is intended to show how this black box connects within the environment in which it will live.

- DO use the final diagram to provide a guideline or checklist for future project deliverables such as:
 - Business requirements (including interface requirements and vendor requirements)
 - Technology design
 - Test plans
 - Communication plans
 - Implementation plans
- DO use the context diagram as a validation that the right stakeholders and project team members have been identified and engaged.
- DO use context diagrams to compare existing and future environments and interactions. When building more than one context diagram, clearly label the context diagram to denote whether it is representing the current environment or the target environment.

Chapter 33

Requirements Table

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A table with various columns for capturing:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Business requirementsAssociated business rulesCategory or reference to process stepRequirement typeRequirement priorityWho created the requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To capture the business requirements and their associated business rules in one place• To get team consensus on requirement prioritization• To correlate requirements to process steps• To group requirements into relevant categories• To allow requirements traceability in later phases of the project



A REQUIREMENTS TABLE provides a helpful way to organize information regarding what the business needs in order to satisfy project objectives and targets. This requirements table is typically used within the context of a business requirements work session (see Chapter Twelve) and is part of the larger deliverable called the business requirements document (see the template provided on the accompanying CD).

The Conventions

In order to use a table to guide the group requirements discussion, you must first understand what you're looking for in each column. So let's take a look at the requirements table to get a good grasp on how to elicit the information needed (Table 33.1):

- *Requirement Number.* Each requirement must have a unique number. This allows the team to easily refer to specific items on the list. These numbers will change as requirements are added and deleted until the business requirements document is finalized.

TABLE 33.1

Sample Business Requirements Table

REQUIREMENTS TABLE							
Requirement #	Process Map Ref.	Category	Requirement	Associated Business Rules	Requirement Type	Priority	Created by Name & Date
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

- *Process Map Reference.* If the project includes new or redesigned processes, we recommend that you use the process maps as a basis for building out business requirements. Moving step-by-step through the process map allows a thorough group discussion regarding requirements and ensures that no pieces of the process are overlooked. If you've used a process map to generate your requirements, use this column to indicate which process map and process steps this specific requirement supports. This cross-reference is helpful when developing testing scenarios to ensure that necessary functionality is available at the point in the process where it's needed.

- *Category.* Categories are a helpful way of ensuring that the list of requirements is complete and comprehensive. After you've generated a fairly complete set of requirements, group them into the standard categories listed in Table 33.2 or generate a list of categories that better fits your needs. This will give you some insight into what, if anything, you may have overlooked.

TABLE 33.2
Standard Requirements Categories

General	These requirements apply to all process steps or represent overarching statements regarding the project approach.
Product or service	Requirements specifically related to the product or service being designed and its features.
Channels	Requirements that relate to the specific channels used to sell or maintain this product or service. You can subdivide the requirements by each individual channel (for example, Web or Internet, telephone, in person).
Process	Requirements related to process changes resulting from this project. These can be subdivided by department or organization (for example, Finance, Marketing, Customer Service).
Training	Requirements regarding training those who will use or support the solution.
Communication	Requirements that describe specific messages or information that must be communicated about the solution.
Vendor	Requirements that must be implemented by an outside party in order for the project to be successful.
Conformance	Requirements that relate to physical or information security, legal, compliance, or audit regulations.
Performance	Requirements related to processing speed, acceptable downtime, service-level agreements, and fallback and recovery.
Reporting	Requirements about the types of reporting and automated support needed. If these are extensive, consider using the report matrix to capture the details.
Interface	Requirements related to how files and information must flow or interact. These requirements are the beginning of high-level design.

- *Requirement.* This column is used to capture the requirements the business has for developing and implementing the project. Sounds easy, right? But what makes up a good requirement? How do you know if you're capturing the right information? To help you guide the group in developing good business requirements, we've put together a few tips.

Every requirement should be:

- *Understandable.* Everyone in the room should understand clearly what it means. If there are any questions or discussion about meaning, get the group to clarify the requirement so they all know what it means two weeks from now.
- *Specific.* Don't use jargon or commonly understood phrases (such as "user friendly"). Be very specific in your wording of the requirement to ensure that everyone's understanding is the same.
- *Singular.* As a general rule, each requirement should be a one-sentence statement of thought. As much as possible, avoid the use of *and* or *or*. Use of these conjunctions usually indicates that two thoughts are being connected into one sentence. If it's two separate thoughts, make it two requirements.
- *Testable.* Each functional requirement should be phrased in a manner that would allow it to be tested to see if it functions as desired. You should ultimately be able to determine if it works or doesn't. So help the team think at this granular level by asking if the requirement could be tested as it's written.
- *What.* We all like to solve the problem, so keeping people focused on what they need rather than how to do it is a challenge. Each requirement should describe what must be in place to support the new or enhanced product, service, or process. Don't worry about what that means to the supporting technology or organization at this point.
- *Ability or capability.* Often we see requirement statements phrased as tasks: "do this" or "follow up on that." A good requirement is not a task; it is a statement of the ability or capability needed to achieve the business goal. In fact, many good requirements are actually worded as "the ability to . . ."

For examples of well-written requirements, see Table 33.3.

TABLE 33.3**Examples of Good Requirements and Associated Business Rules**

#	Requirement	Associated Business Rules
1	Ability to have no more than one photo on file for identification of each customer.	Available to the primary and secondary owners of the account. Newer photos should replace photo currently on file.
2	Ability to have a photo indicator at both the customer and account level to indicate the status of the photo.	Indicators to be used are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo • No photo • Failed QA • Customer requested delete
3	ABC accounts will stop accruing reward points if the account is in a derogatory status.	Derogatory statuses are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed • Legal action • Credit revoked • Bankruptcy • Delinquent • Fraudulent activity
4	Ability to accumulate reward points for purchases.	1 point is earned for each \$1 spent An additional 2 points are earned for each \$1 spent at the following vendor locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ING Foods • Tri-City Cycling • Groceries To-Go
5	Ability to convert a single customer to the new system in its entirety.	Customers will be moved as a whole, not as individual users of specific accounts. All activity (current and historical) for the customer will be moved at the same time.
6	Ability to distinguish non-U.S. addresses from U.S. addresses.	U.S. citizens residing in Canada will be processed as U.S. citizens. Non-U.S. customers can open an account, but will need to have a U.S. address for the account.

- *Associated Business Rules.* Business rules correspond to a specific requirement and are used to describe specific rules or logic that must be applied to the requirement. (Refer to Table 33.3 for examples of business rules.) Business rules may define:

- The conditions that describe when the requirement is applicable, as shown by requirement 1 in Table 33.3.
- Options or selections that apply to the requirement (requirements 2 and 3).
- Computations or calculations that relate to the requirement (requirement 4).
- Additional clarifying information about the requirement (requirements 5 and 6).

- *Requirement Type.* All requirements can be classified into two types. Technology-related requirements indicate what a system should be able to do, the functions it should perform. These requirements are what the technology sizings and development time frames will be based on. Subsequent testing plans, deployment plans, and, to some extent, training plans will use these requirements as their foundation.

Non-technology-related requirements describe what the people or process should be able to do (can be fulfilled by training, documentation, or communication, for example). These requirements will drive development of the communication and training plans for the project.

- *Priority.* It is essential that all requirements be prioritized to allow businesses the opportunity to make decisions regarding the solution. Prioritization of requirements helps the project sponsor make appropriate cost, benefit, and time trade-off decisions. It also enables intelligent choices with respect to multigeneration implementation of the comprehensive solution. You can use the standard definition of priorities listed in Table 33.4 or create definitions that better fit your needs.

Priority 1	This requirement is absolutely essential to this project. If it cannot be met, then postpone the initiative.
Priority 2	This is a significant requirement that should be met by this project if at all possible. If this requirement is not fulfilled in the final implementation, it will cause considerable difficulty for the business.
Priority 3	This requirement provides benefit to the business if it can be met within this project effort.

- *Created by Name & Date.* This indicates the individual, team, or team leader who created the requirement and the date it was created. This column can have multiple uses:

- It can indicate when a requirement was created and by whom so the project manager will know at what point various requirements were identified.
- It can indicate validation and approval of the requirement. If a financial subteam is creating a set of finance-specific requirements, this column can be used to indicate when the team approved the requirements.
- It can serve as a reference for technologists. If they need further clarification of a requirement, they can contact the person or team leader identified in this column.

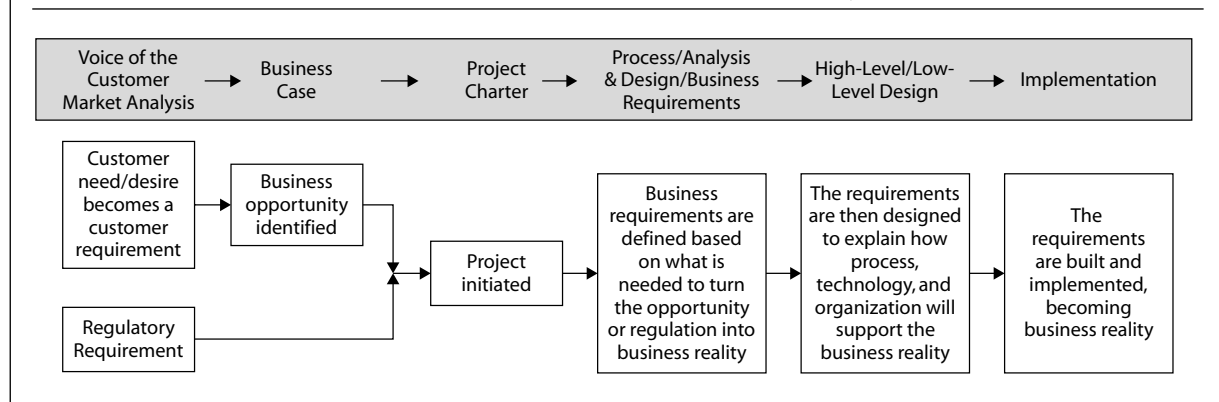
Facilitating the Technique

Now that we understand the requirements table conventions, let's discuss keys to facilitating its development.

Clarify the Definition of a Requirement

In our experience, we've seen everything from one-line phrases of desire to detailed paragraphs explaining what needs to happen. Everyone seems to have differing understandings of what constitutes good business requirements. Part of the difficulty stems from the fact that what constitutes a requirement varies over the course of the project lifecycle. For example, when performing market analysis or customer surveys, a requirement may be a statement of customer need. By the time we are ready for technology design, however, a requirement needs to be a specific statement of business need that will be fulfilled by supporting technology. This also emphasizes the need for "requirements traceability" to exist across the project lifecycle. We should be able to trace elements of the implemented solution back to the business requirements that are supported and the customer needs that are fulfilled. Figure 33.1 illustrates the evolution of a requirement over the project lifecycle.

In a facilitated business requirements work session, you will encounter people with differing perspectives regarding the level of detail necessary for thorough, complete business requirements. To some, the requirements may still equate to the customer needs and desires; to others, the requirements represent the system design or interface relationships. To make sure the team is on the same page, remind them of where you are in the project lifecycle: you've defined the project and are analyzing what's needed to accomplish it. You are *not* ready to define how those needs translate into system changes or design the architecture of the solution.

FIGURE 33.1**Evolution of a Requirement over the Project Lifecycle****Document the Requirements**

Due to the sheer volume of requirements generated during a work session, there is no better way to capture them than using a laptop computer. We hook our laptop up to a projector and type directly into the requirements table. This allows the team to see and validate what we're capturing as we go. Be careful, however, to use the electronic capture of requirements only if your ability to type is not going to slow down the group. (See Chapter Sixteen for tips on electronic capture of information.)

What If There Are No Process Maps?

As reflected in the agenda in Chapter Twelve, we believe process maps are the best way to drive the building of requirements. However, process maps don't apply in all situations. If you're building a new product or service or enhancing features of an existing product or service, you may use existing processes that require no process changes. The only requirements may be related to the product or service itself, supporting documents, information interfaces, reporting, training, and communication. In these cases, we recommend that you use the categories in Table 33.2 to drive requirements building rather than the process maps.

If you find yourself in a situation where processes are changing but these changes haven't been documented, we suggest you take the time to work the group through a process analysis and design work session prior to building requirements (see Chapter Eleven).

How Do You Handle Reporting Requirements?

In order to define what's needed for reporting, you need more than a one-line statement. You'll need to describe:

- The report name and what it will be used for.
- Whether it's generated on a schedule or on demand.

From Real Life

Recently one of our clients experienced firsthand what it means to have differing definitions of a requirement. He was promised that his team would have detailed business requirements after undergoing a week of Design for Six Sigma team training. Unfortunately the trainer's definition of a "good, detailed business requirement" focused on defining the customers' needs, not on translating those needs into what is required of the business to meet them. A follow-up three-day business requirements work session was held to develop the business requirements document.

- The audience of the report.
- The information needed on the report.
- The sources of the report data.
- How often the report should be generated.
- Whether it is an existing report that needs modification or is new.
- Any other selection, formatting, or sorting information that can be defined at this time.

For a minimal number of reports, just include this information in the requirements table. However, if the project requires a substantial number of new or modified reports, we suggest you state the name of the report in the main table of requirements and then use the reports matrix for further report details (see the CD for the template) and include it as an appendix in the business requirements document.



Developing More Comprehensive Requirements

If your team has a need for more comprehensive requirements, here's an alternate option. The requirements table in Table 33.5 includes all the information in the original requirements table (Table 33.1) plus additional columns to support solution design, such as:

- Data Needed to Support the Requirement
- Acceptance Testing Criteria
- Dependencies
- Affinity
- Comments/Rationale

Let's take a closer look at what information is captured in these columns:

- *Data Needed to Support the Requirement.* This information describes the data sources (entities and attributes of data) that will be accessed to satisfy the requirement. If there are specific calculations or algorithms needed to derive or summarize data, this may also be described here.

- *Acceptance Testing Criteria.* The definition of business requirements provides an opportune time to obtain the specific conditions regarding acceptance of the implemented requirement. Acceptance testing criteria are specific descriptions of what the business needs to see or experience to be convinced that a requirement is satisfied. Document the specific elements that constitute user acceptance. This will provide a basis for generating user acceptance test plans in subsequent project activities.

Sometimes acceptance testing criteria will pertain to more than one requirement. If this is the case, consider lifting the acceptance testing criteria into a separate table, and provide columns that refer back to the original requirements statements, allowing multiple requirements to be satisfied by a single description of acceptance testing criteria.

- *Dependencies.* This column encourages the team to think about the interdependencies of the requirements statements. Sometimes a specific business requirement depends on another requirement being completed before it. When this is the case, use this column to document the requirement numbers of the requirements that are precedent to the one you're reviewing.

This can also help confirm the priorities that were set for the requirements. If a high-priority requirement is dependent on a requirement that was ranked as lower priority, the team will have to resolve such conflicts before moving forward.

- *Affinity.* Analyzing affinity among requirements can provide helpful information to those who will use the business requirements document. Affinity can be interpreted in several ways; primarily it means noting which requirements have a close association to one another. Sometimes this close association pertains to requirements that are affecting a specific area of a business process or a specific area of work for a business user group. Sometimes it reflects business requirements that are supported by the same technology application (although this latter example is often not discovered until design activities occur).

Use the type of affinity grouping that is most meaningful for the team. Understanding which requirements are closely associated can assist in making prioritization or phasing decisions in later stages of the project lifecycle.

- *Comments/Rationale.* This column captures comments related to the requirement or rationale that clarifies some aspect of the requirement. For example, if the requirement was the subject of debate by the team, you can capture the decision-making rationale for including the requirement here. Or if there was debate regarding priority, a description here can help the team remember why the requirement was given priority rating 2 rather than priority rating 1. Several weeks after a work session, it is easy to forget the exact discussion that led up to requirement-related decisions. Using this column in the requirements table can help capture meaningful reminders that support the requirements rationale.

Keys to Success

- DON'T allow every requirement to be a priority 1. For each priority 1 requirement identified, confirm with the team that the project will truly be stopped if that requirement cannot be fulfilled.
- DON'T wait until you're in the work session to determine what the definitions for the requirement priorities should be. Discuss that with the project manager and project sponsor, and have draft definitions created prior to beginning the work session.
- DON'T get caught up in spending excess time formatting the requirements table during the work session. You can make the table "look pretty" after the work session is over.
- DON'T let the discussion travel into how the solution will be done. That's the work of design. Focus on what the solution needs to do.
- DO remember that these are called "business" requirements for a reason. They should be worded to reflect the perspective of the business, not the systems or technology perspective. So refrain from using system and application program names if possible.
- DO either post or hand out the rules for a "good" requirement so you can refer to them as needed.
- DO identify the requirement, business rules, requirement type, and priority as you go. We've found it's easier to gather this information while you're initially discussing the requirement and it's fresh in everyone's mind rather than waiting until the end to prioritize. (If you are using the more comprehensive requirements table, the other columns, such as dependencies or acceptance testing criteria, can be discussed as a separate walkthrough of the requirements table, after the first pass at drafting the requirements has been completed.)
- DO continue to remind the group that they are not here to figure out how the organization or systems will support the changes. That comes later in the project lifecycle.

Chapter 34

Developing a Timeline

What It Is	How You Can Use It
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An interactive way of developing the project milestones• A graphic or textual representation of the tasks necessary to get from here to there and who owns them• A method for identifying tasks that need to be “fast-tracked” to meet target dates• A way for everyone at the table to air their needs and constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To highlight that implementation targets have been set unrealistically• To raise awareness regarding interdependent projects with which your implementation date must dovetail• To depict the complications of timing deliverables from the business with vendor development time frames• To emphasize the magnitude of the effort



TIMELINES ARE A WAY of depicting the events, tasks, or milestones necessary to successfully implement or roll out the project. Timelines may be built at various points within the project lifecycle but are often used within the context of a business requirements work session (see Chapter Twelve), and can be included as part of the larger deliverable called the business requirements document (see the template provided on the accompanying CD).

You may be thinking, “By the time I get to the point of defining requirements, I already have a fairly detailed project plan. So why would I be building a timeline now? Shouldn’t that already be done?” Well, yes and no. Let’s look at an example. We have experienced many projects where the team was given a deadline by executive mandate as the project started. The project manager may have created a project schedule to accommodate that deadline early in the project, but as we uncover more information and knowledge throughout the project charter work session, process analysis and design work sessions, and the business requirements work session, often the team discovers that the mandated dates are unrealistic.

Does this mean that the team can simply develop its own timeline and change mandated deadlines? Not necessarily, but the build-out of a realistic

timeline reflecting the knowledge that now exists regarding the project challenge and the solution provides an excellent rationale for revisiting deadlines and project expectations with sponsoring executives. For example, a timeline can provide a rationale for fast-tracking certain activities, altering deadlines to be more realistic, or perhaps phasing the solution to accommodate complicated functionality.

The Conventions

Timelines provide a visual depiction of key milestones, tasks, or events across time. The timeline is intended to provide awareness as we map the project challenge onto the dimension of time. It should not be assumed that the list of milestones or tasks represents the lowest level of detail necessary to complete the project. It's not a work breakdown structure (WBS). Each of these tasks may have multiple subtasks and supporting action plans to complete it. The end result can be portrayed graphically using Visio or PowerPoint software (Figure 34.1) or in a Word or Excel table (Table 34.1).

- *Task Description.* It's important that the team be able to recognize these tasks after the work session so do not attempt to use generic names to fit a standard model. Use the team's business terminology in the task names. If they call it "Use Case Analysis" rather than "Testing Scripts," so be it.

Each task represents an action, so phrase each one in a verb-object combination (for example, "Get sign-off," "Finalize BRD"). Make sure that tasks are clearly understood to contribute to a specific project milestone or deliverable. Tasks that do not play a role in generating a specific required outcome are superfluous.

TABLE 34.1

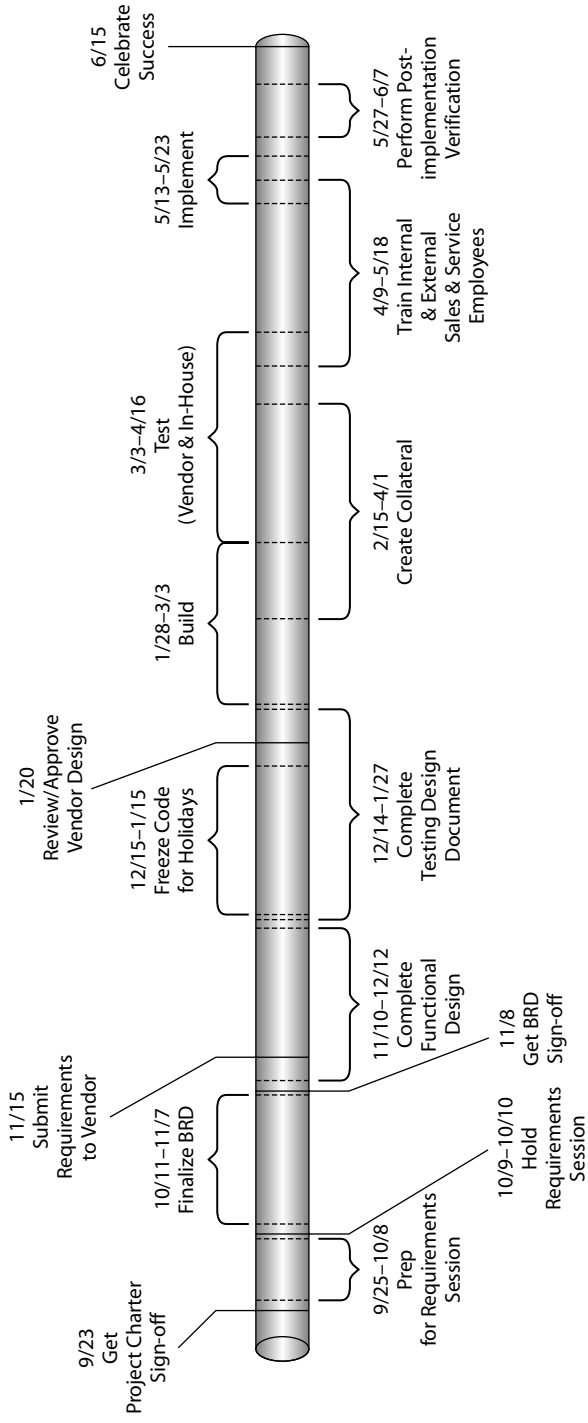
Sample Timeline: Table Format

High-Level Project Timeline					
Task #	Task Description	Start Date	End Date	Duration	Responsible Party
1	Get project charter sign-off	9/23	9/23	1 day	Business Sponsor
2	Prep for requirements session	9/25	10/8	2 wks	Business Project Manager
3	Hold requirements session	10/9	10/10	2 days	Business Project Manager
4	Finalize BRD	10/11	11/7	4 wks	Business Project Manager
5	Submit requirements to vendor	11/15	11/15	1 day	Business Project Manager
6	Complete functional design	11/10	12/12	4 wks	Technical Project Manager

FIGURE 34.1

Sample Timeline: Graphical Format

High-Level Project Timeline



Use sticky notes to capture the task names. Write only one task on each sticky note. This will allow you to move it around on the timeline as needed.

- *Task Dates.* Task dates and durations are based on business days. If there is a fixed date for a task, capture that date and the duration of the task (how long it will take). If there is no fixed date, just find out how long the task will take. The actual dates will be driven by the task's relationship with other tasks.

- *Responsible Party.* The responsible party is the person or role authorized to drive that task to completion. It must denote ownership of the activity, so it cannot be a team or an organization. This does not imply that the responsible party must physically perform the task; rather, he or she is responsible for ensuring the task gets done.

Here are some guidelines to help you post the sticky notes appropriately:

- Tasks will run left to right in time.
- Keep lines as straight as possible.
- Stack tasks only when they occur in the same relative time period.

Facilitating the Technique

Now that we understand the information required for the timeline, let's discuss keys to facilitating its development.

Prepare for the Activity

This activity requires a little preparation to make it run smoothly. Here are the steps you need to perform before the team walks into the room:

1. Write the following task naming and layout conventions on a flip chart prior to the activity:

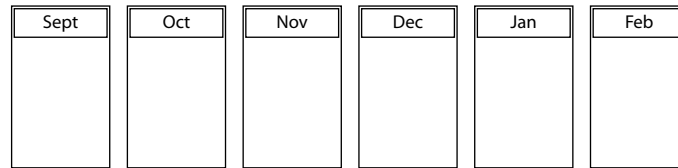
Task Naming

- Each task should be in verb-object format.
- Write one task per sticky note.

Task Layout

- Tasks will run left to right in time.
- Keep the lines as straight as possible.
- Stack tasks only when they occur in the same relative time period.

2. Post six blank flip chart pages on the wall with a little space between each, as shown in Figure 34.2. Label each page with the month (start with the current month).

FIGURE 34.2**Timeline: Preparing for the Activity**

3. Have enough sticky notes (five to eight per person) and fine-tip markers for each person.

Introduce the Activity

Once the team arrives, you'll need to explain how the activity works.

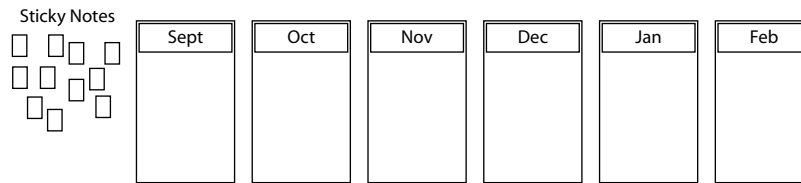
1. Hand out five to eight large sticky notes and a marker to each person.
2. Explain that you will be asking each of them to write five to eight things that must be done (from your perspective) between now and the identified end date. Typically this is the project implementation date, but it may be another end date for which the team is preparing.
3. Review the task-naming conventions on the flip chart.
4. As they write out each task, you'll want them to list the responsible party if they know who should be assigned. Ask them to place an abbreviation of the responsible role, not the initials of a specific person, in the lower right corner. So that everyone uses the same abbreviation, discuss the roles involved in completing tasks for this project, and define abbreviations for each on a flip chart. Standard roles might include:

- Project sponsor
- Business project manager
- Technical project manager
- Testing lead
- Development lead
- Subject matter expert [identify business area]
- Developer

Perform the Activity

Now it's time for the team to get engaged:

1. Give the participants ten minutes to write out their tasks and identify the responsible role for each.
2. Gather the sticky notes, and post them all on the wall to the left of the first flip chart page (Figure 34.3).

FIGURE 34.3**Timeline: Posting the Ideas**

3. Review the task layout conventions on the flip chart. Then ask the group to number off (1–2, 1–2) around the room. Instruct the ones to come to the front and start arranging the tasks in logical order across the flip chart pages, taking into consideration what tasks may be dependent on others. (If they find duplicate tasks, then simply stack the sticky notes on top of each other as they are placed on the timeline.) Give the twos a ten- to fifteen-minute break during this. Then reverse the roles: ask the second group to come up and revise the timeline draft prepared by the first group.

4. After the teams have finished arranging the sticky notes in order, walk back through the items one by one starting from the left. As you go:

- Validate that everyone understands the task. Reword if necessary.
- Put a role abbreviation in the bottom right if it's not already listed.
- Number the tasks (from left to right).
- Ask approximately how long this task will take (in business days, weeks, or months). Write the duration in an alternate color on the sticky note.
- Ask if this task is dependent or must wait on any other task. If so, draw a line from the required predecessor task to this one, or write the number of the predecessor task in the upper left corner of the sticky note.
- If the sticky note is not in the appropriate place, move it based on duration and dependencies identified by the team.

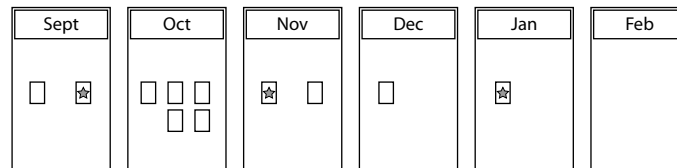
5. Once the team is comfortable with the structure of the tasks, have them identify the key milestones. This enables the team to create a critical path of tasks that cannot slip or tasks that must be completed before the project can move forward. Mark these tasks with a star or asterisk (Figure 34.4).

6. Note any issues or inconsistencies. Has anything substantive been discovered that alters project expectations regarding deadlines or ability to meet objectives with given resources? Are any interdependencies with other projects of concern? If so, document the issue, and assign it to be escalated and resolved.

7. Document the results in one of the two formats shown in Figure 34.1 or Table 34.1.

FIGURE 34.4

Timeline: Identifying Milestones



Keys to Success

- DON'T get hung up if the team can't identify the duration. Go on without it, and come back to this item at the end.
- DON'T use this activity to force a renegotiation of the implementation date during the work session. That discussion, although valuable, needs to be handled outside the work session by the appropriate decision makers.
- DON'T do this activity unless it adds value to the session. Not every work session requires a timeline activity. Save it for situations where an understanding of task dependencies and project duration impacts is critical.
- DO suggest identifying the tasks, responsible owners, and dependencies without discussing dates or durations if the organization is uncomfortable discussing dates prior to adequate technology sizing.
- DO start the timeline activity prior to taking a break since a break is incorporated into the exercise.
- DO allow at least two hours for developing a timeline.
- DO evaluate the level of rigor needed for each project. For some, high-level milestones are enough.
- DO have a calendar handy for easy identification of dates.
- DO capture any significant concerns or issues that arise out of the timeline activity. Do not delay escalation of critical issues that may relate to project deadlines or the ability to meet expected objectives with the resources given.

Part Four

Resources

Resource A

Cross-Reference Tables for Tools and Techniques

PLACE FACILITATED work sessions into your project lifecycle intelligently. Insert them into the project phases at the point where the corresponding deliverable they generate or the activity they support is needed. Use Table A.1 for an at-a-glance look at where work sessions might be best placed within the project lifecycle.

TABLE A.1

At a Glance: Where Work Sessions Work

Deliverable Generated or Activity Supported	Work Session Type	Typical Phase Within Generic Project Lifecycle	Typical Phase Within Six Sigma Project Lifecycle
Project scope	Project Charter	Opportunity Identification	Define
Business process design or redesign	Process Analysis and Design	Solution Analysis	Define
Business requirements for people, business processes, and technology support	Business Requirements	Solution Analysis	Measure
Project, business, or customer risks identified and mitigating actions defined	Risk Assessment	Solution Analysis	Measure or Analyze
Potential process or product failure points identified and mitigating actions defined	Risk Assessment	Solution Analysis	Measure or Analyze
Risk checkpoint prior to implementation	Risk Assessment	Solution Development or Solution Delivery	Improve
Checkpoint on project progress	Work-in-Progress Review	All phases	All phases
Integration of deliverables	Work-in-Progress Review	All phases	All phases
Preparing for approval or funding tollgates	Work-in-Progress Review	All phases	All phases
Postimplementation review	Work-in-Progress Review	Solution Delivery	Control

General and specialized facilitation techniques can be applied in many work session situations. Some of the more common applications of the techniques presented in this book are shown in Table A.2.

TABLE A.2**At a Glance: Where Do the Techniques Fit In?**

Work Session Technique	Project Charter	Process Analysis & Design	Business Requirements	Risk Assessment	Work-in-Progress Review
General facilitation techniques					
Flip-charting	R	R	R	R	R
Brainstorming	R	R	R	R	R
Facilitated dialogue	R	R	R	R	R
Nominal group and affinity analysis		O	R	R	
Prioritization techniques (Force-Field Analysis, Nine-Block, Impact Matrix)	R	R	R	R	R
Breakout groups		O	R	R	
Focusing techniques (action items, issues lists, parking lot)	R	R	R	R	R
Specialized facilitation techniques					
Purpose statement	R				
Objectives and targets	R	O	O		
Scope framing	R	R	R	R	
Guiding factors (assumptions, constraints, dependencies, touch points)	R	R	R	R	O
Impacts	R	O	R	R	O
Risk analysis matrices (standard, FMEA, hybrid)			R	R	O
Process decomposition		R			
Process mapping		R			
Process detail table		R			
Context diagramming			R		
Requirements table			R		
Timeline	R		R		O

Note: R = recommended; O = optional.

Resource B

Recommended Books and Journals

TO LEARN MORE about basic facilitation skills and the application of these skills, complementary skills regarding human dynamics, and fundamental techniques regarding business modeling and quality methods, we recommend the following books and journals.

Books Combining Facilitation Skills with Building of Project Deliverables

Fogg, C. D. *Team-Based Strategic Planning*. New York: AMACOM, 1994.

Gottesdiener, E. *Requirements by Collaboration*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 2002.

Wood, J., and Silver, D. *Joint Application Design*. New York: Wiley, 1989.

Books on General Facilitation

Bens, I. *Facilitation at a Glance*. Sarasota, Fla.: Participative Dynamics, 1999.

Bens, I. *Facilitating with Ease!* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Cameron, E. *Facilitation Made Easy*. London: Kogan Page, 2001.

Hunter, D., Bailey, A., and Taylor, B. *The Art of Facilitation*. Tucson, Ariz.: Fisher Books, 1995.

Hunter, D., Bailey, A., and Taylor, B. *The Zen of Groups: A Handbook for People Meeting with a Purpose*. New York: Perseus Publishing, 1995.

Justice, T., and Jamieson, D. W. *The Facilitator's Fieldbook*. New York: AMACOM/HRD Press, 1999.

Kaner, S., and others. *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*. Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers, 1996.

Kinlaw, D., and Roe, R. *Facilitation Skills: The ASTD Trainer's Sourcebook*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996.

Kiser, A. G. *Masterful Facilitation: Becoming a Catalyst for Meaningful Change*. New York: AMACOM, 1998.

Rees, F. *The Facilitator Excellence Handbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1998.

Schwarz, R. M. *The Skilled Facilitator*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Sibbet, D. *Principles of Facilitation: The Purpose and Potential of Leading Group Process*. San Francisco: Grove Consultants International, 2002.

Books on Scope, Requirements, Risk Analysis, and Business Modeling Techniques

Bernstein, P. L. *Against The Gods: The Remarkable Story of Risk*. New York: Wiley, 1998.

Damelio, R. *The Basics of Process Mapping*. Portland, Ore.: Productivity Press, 1996.

DeMarco, T., and Lister, T. *Waltzing with Bears: Managing Risk on Software Projects*. New York: Dorset House, 2003.

Gause, D. C., and Weinberg, G. M. *Exploring Requirements: Quality Before Design*. New York: Dorset House, 1989.

Goldsmith, R. F. *Discovering Real Business Requirements for Software Project Success*. Norwood, Mass.: Artech House, 2004.

Harmon, P. *Business Process Change: A Manager's Guide to Improving, Redesigning, and Automating Processes*. San Francisco: Morgan Kaufmann, 2002.

Highsmith, J. A. III. *Adaptive Software Development: A Collaborative Approach to Managing Complex Systems*. New York: Dorset House, 2000.

Jacka, J., and Keller, P. *Business Process Mapping: Improving Customer Satisfaction*. New York: Wiley, 2001.

Johann, B. *Designing Cross-Functional Business Processes*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995.

Leffingwell, D., and Widrig, D. *Managing Software Requirements: A Unified Approach*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1999.

Robertson, S., and Robertson, J. *Mastering the Requirements Process*. Toronto: ACM Press, 1999.

Sharp, A., and McDermott, P. *Workflow Modeling: Tools for Process Improvement and Application Development*. Norwood, Mass.: Artech House, 2001.

Sommerville, I., and Sawyer, P. *Requirements Engineering: A Good Practice Guide*. New York: Wiley, 1997.

Wiegers, K. E. *Software Requirements*. (2nd ed.) Redmond, Wash.: Microsoft Press, 2003.

Books on Human Dynamics Specifically Related to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Neurolinguistic Programming

Hirsh, S. K. *Work It Out*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Davies-Black Publishing, 1996.

Knight, S. *NLP at Work: The Difference That Makes a Difference in Business*. (2nd ed.) London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2002.

- Kroeger, O., with Thuesen, J. M. *Type Talk at Work*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1992.
- Laborde, G. Z. *Influencing with Integrity: Management Skills for Communication and Negotiation*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Syntony Publishing, 1987.
- Myers, I. B., with Myers, P. B. *Gifts Differing*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Davies-Black Publishing, 1980.
- Tieger, P. D., and Barron-Tieger, B. *Do What You Are*. (2nd ed.) New York: Little, Brown, 1995.

Books on Quality Methods and Six Sigma

- Brassard, M., Finn, L., Ginn, D., and Ritter, D. *Six Sigma Pocket Guide*. Lexington, Mass.: Rath & Strong, 2000.
- Brassard, M., Finn, L., Ginn, D., and Ritter, D. *The Six Sigma Memory Jogger II: A Pocket Guide of Tools for Six Sigma Improvement Teams*. Salem, N.H.: GOAL/QPC, 2002.
- Ecckes, G. *Six Sigma for Everyone*. New York: Wiley, 2003.
- McDermott, R. E. *The Basics of FMEA*. Portland, Ore.: Productivity Press, 1996.
- Pyzdek, T. *The Six Sigma Handbook, Revised and Expanded: The Complete Guide for Greenbelts, Blackbelts, and Managers at All Levels*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003.
- Six Sigma Academy. *The Black Belt Memory Jogger: A Pocket Guide for Six Sigma Success*. Salem, N.H.: GOAL/QPC, 2002.
- Tauge, N. R. *The Quality Toolbox*. Milwaukee, Wis.: American Society for Quality/Quality Press, 1995.
- Terninko, J. *Step-by-Step QFD: Customer-Driven Product Design*. (2nd ed.) Los Angeles: Saint Lucie Press, 1997.

Journals

- Group Facilitation: A Research and Applications Journal*. A multidisciplinary publication put out by the International Association of Facilitators focused on the art and science of group facilitation. The aim of *Group Facilitation* is to advance our knowledge of group facilitation and its implications for individuals, groups, organizations, and communities. Published semiannually.
- Master Facilitator Journal*. A free e-zine that features articles, tools, and skills for facilitators. Sign up on the Internet at www.masterfacilitatorjournal.com. Published weekly.
- PM Network*. The professional magazine of the Project Management Institute. Access it via the Internet at http://www.pmi.org/info/PIR_PMNetworkOnline.asp. Published monthly.

Resource C

Recommended Web Sites

THERE ARE MANY Web sites with excellent information associated with facilitation and related disciplines that benefit from facilitation skills. The following Web sites may be helpful:

BPR Online Learning Center, www.prosci.com

The BPR and Change Management Learning Center is a comprehensive directory and resource guide for reengineering teams. It offers an index of articles from around the world, an online tutorial series, benchmarking studies, Yellow Pages for BPR, and change management resources and information on reengineering and change management toolkits and templates for project teams.

Business Guide to Reengineering Books, www.reengineering.net

This is a complete listing of reengineering books, handbooks, and reference material for project teams, consultants, and facilitators.

eBizQ-The Insider's Guide to Business Process Integration, www.ebizq.net

eBizQ provides a forum for information technology professionals, vendors, and industry analysts to exchange information on business integration technologies, problems, and solutions. The site provides information on vendors, products, market directions, and best practices. eBizQ's content is freely available to subscribers.

Facilitation Factory, www.facilitationfactory.com

The Facilitation Factory is a central location for facilitation tools and techniques. It allows members to test old and new philosophies and refine their skills. Inside the Facilitation Factory, members have access to a Lotus Notes database that houses information on how to facilitate a successful group session.

FacilitatorU: Virtual University for Group Workers, www.facilitatoru.com

FacilitatorU offers facilitation teleclasses, selections of facilitator tools such as flip charts and whiteboards, articles, and book recommendations.

Flip Charts 2 Go, www.flipcharts2go.com

Flipcharts2go.com is an online specialty printer with offerings including tabletop flip charts, presentation flip charts, posters, puzzles, and foam core presentations.

4pm—Project Management: Tools, Techniques and E-learning, www.4pm.com

4pm.com offers project management training, certification courses, and a library of reference materials. This site includes book recommendations as well as links to articles, templates for project deliverables, tools, and descriptions of techniques.

Gantthead: The Online Community for IT Project Managers, www.gantthead.com

Gantthead.com is a resource for project professionals to find process examples, deliverable templates and samples, discussion threads, articles, and tips on the art of managing projects.

iSix Sigma, www.isixsigma.com

iSix Sigma is a free information resource to help business professionals learn about quality principles and successfully implement quality within their organizations. The resources available at iSix Sigma include articles on the basic fundamentals of quality discussion boards, as well as detailed descriptions of quality tools, methodologies, and examples of their applications.

Jim Clemmer Process Improvement, www.clemmer-group.com

This site offers articles, columns, and descriptions of models and frameworks that focus on process improvement, leadership, change, customer focus, culture, and teams.

Mimio by Virtual Link, www.mimio.com

Mimio.com offers products, software, and conferencing solutions that can support facilitated work sessions. Software tools allow users to capture, create, and present information through a projector or interactive whiteboard and then manipulate previously created content.

Mind Tools, www.mindtools.com

Mind Tools outlines thinking skills in nine essential areas: time management, stress management, memory improvement, information skills, practical creativity, problem solving, decision making, project planning and management, and communication skills. This resource offers techniques that improve creativity, assist problem solving, organize time and deadlines, and improve memory.

National Facilitator Database, www.nfdb.com/nfdb

This tool helps pair skilled facilitators with organizations that have facilitation needs such as strategic planning, meeting facilitation, requirements gathering, and team building. Facilitators enter information about their skills, areas of expertise, clients, projects, certifications, and billing rate into a searchable database.

Process Impact, www.processimpact.com

Requirements author and consultant Karl Wieggers shares his expertise in an informative Web site. Process Impact focuses on practical requirements engineering, software process improvement, process assessment, metrics, and management of software projects.

3M Meeting Network, www.3m.com/meetingnetwork

The 3M Meeting Network provides tips on facilitating meetings and delivering presentations, offers advice and information on meeting room products, and contains a database of professional facilitators, planners, and trainers.

Resource D

Recommended Organizations

MANY ORGANIZATIONS have formed as facilitator networks or as organizations that recognize facilitation as an important skill within a discipline. The list here includes some organizations of interest.

American Society for Quality, www.asq.org

The American Society for Quality (ASQ), formed in 1946, is the world's leading authority on quality. The 104,000-member professional association creates better workplaces and communities worldwide by advancing learning, quality improvement, and knowledge exchange to improve business results. It provides information, contacts, and opportunities to make things better in the workplace, in communities, and in people's lives.

Creative Problem Solving Institute, www.cpsiconference.com

For fifty years, the Creative Problem Solving Institute (CPSI) and the Creative Education Foundation (CEF) have been helping people throughout the world understand and unleash their creative potential. CEF is the industry leader in teaching people to apply creativity and innovation. Its mission is to "provoke creativity and inspire worldwide imaginative change." Leaders from a wide array of fields converge to explore the theory and practice of creativity in education, business, and other areas at CPSI.

Institute for Cultural Affairs—World-Wide, www.icaworld.org

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) is a worldwide private, nonprofit social change organization that aims to develop and implement methods of individual, community, and organizational development. ICA activities include community meeting facilitation, educational research and training, organizational transformation, youth and women's programs, sustainable rural development symposia and projects, leadership training, personal development workshops, strategic planning seminars, conference facilitation, documentation, and evaluation. Its methods generate ownership, create clear goals, open lines of communication, broaden perspectives, and motivate people to adapt to their changing environment while honoring the cultural traditions and diversity of all involved.

International Association of Facilitators, www.iaf-world.org

The International Association of Facilitators (IAF) was formed by a group of professionals desiring an avenue for interchange, professional development, trend analysis, and peer networking. Since 1994, the IAF has grown to over thirteen hundred members in more than twenty countries. It encourages and supports the formation of local groups of facilitators to network and provide professional development opportunities for its members.

International Society for Performance Improvement, www.ispi.org

Founded in 1962, the International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI) is the leading international association dedicated to improving productivity and performance in the workplace. It represents more than ten thousand international and chapter members throughout the United States, Canada, and forty other countries. ISPI's mission is to develop and recognize the proficiency of its members and advocate the use of human performance technology.

National and Regional OD Networks, www.odnetwork.org

The OD Network is dedicated to being a leader in the advancement of the theory and practice of organizational development (OD) by helping to define and communicate the values, purposes, and benefits of OD; promoting the effective and ethical use of OD principles, tools, and best practices; supporting practitioners through enhanced learning and professional development opportunities; providing a values-based home for OD practitioners, researchers, and educators to exchange ideas and create dialogue on critical issues; and sharing leadership and partnering with others to achieve its vision.

Project Management Institute, www.pmi.org

The Project Management Institute (PMI) is a global network of over 100,000 project management professionals that promotes sharing of ideas and experiences through networking and project participation and provides access to industry information, seminars, and workshops on leading-edge topics.

Society for Human Resource Management, www.shrm.org

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management. Representing more than 190,000 individual members, its mission is to serve the needs of human resource professionals by providing essential and comprehensive resources. Founded in 1948, SHRM has more than five hundred affiliated chapters within the United States and members in more than one hundred countries.

Workflow and Reengineering International Association, www.waria.com

Established in 1992, the association's mission is to make sense of what is happening at the intersection of business process management, work flow, knowledge management, and electronic commerce and reach clarity through sharing experiences, product evaluations, networking between users and vendors, education, and training. It facilitates opportunities for members to discuss and share their experiences.

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Templates on CD-ROM

Number	Template	Description
1	9-Block Diagram	A PowerPoint diagram that allows comparison of each item to be prioritized to two distinct decision criteria, helping the team to overcome personal biases and preferences and look at the contribution of the items in a more objective manner.
2	Action Items	A spreadsheet that enables the identification, assignment, and tracking of out-of-work session tasks.
3	Brainstorming	A table to capture and rank the output of a Brainstorming activity.
4	Business Processes Within Scope Table	A table to identify the business processes (either existing or new) that are within the scope of the project initiative.
5	Business Requirements Document	The key deliverable from a Business Requirements Work Session. Often referred to as the BRD.
6	Business Requirements Prep Conference Call Agenda	The standard Prep Call Agenda for the Business Requirements Work Session.
7	Business Requirements Table	A table to capture business requirements and their associated rules and priorities. Two options are included: the standard and expanded versions.

Number	Template	Description
8	Business Requirements Work Session Agenda	The standard Two-Day Agenda for the Business Requirements Work Session.
9	Context Diagram	A Visio diagram that allows you to depict how the project as a whole needs to interconnect with its environment.
10	Context Diagram Input/Output Matrix	An alternate view of the information represented in the Context Diagram. This table describes the inputs used and outputs generated by each External Agent.
11	CTQs & Targets Table	A table to represent the relationship between Objectives, Customer Needs, Critical-to-Quality Factors, and Targets. Two options are included: the standard and expanded versions.
12	Equipment & Supplies Checklist	A checklist of the supplies and equipment needed for a Work Session.
13	Force-Field Analysis	A template to analyze two opposing forces of a problem or potential solution.
14	Ground Rules	A list of the suggested "rules" to create an even playing field and ensure productive discussion between participants. These will be referred to at the beginning of each work session.
15	Impact Matrix	A matrix that allows each project, opportunity, or process improvement to be measured for its contribution to the objectives or targets of the organization or project.
16	Impacts Table	A table to document the people, process, and technology impacts resulting from the implementation of the project.
17	Issues List	A spreadsheet for capturing areas of team concern that may become roadblocks to project progress if not resolved in the timeframe allotted.

Number	Template	Description
18	Lessons Learned	A table to document the positive and negative experiences encountered in the project and the resulting lessons learned to apply to future projects. Two options are included: one to rank order the lessons and a second to identify follow-up action items to implement the lessons learned.
19	Measurement Framework	A table to define how the objectives and CTQs will be measured after implementation, and who is responsible for monitoring the measurement.
20	Multi-Generational Plan	A spreadsheet to describe the multiple generations or phases of a project.
21	Participant Contact List	A table to gather and document key information about work session participants. Used in work-session planning to ensure that the right participants are involved.
22	Planning Questions Guide	A list of questions to guide your planning discussions with the Project Sponsor.
23	Process Analysis & Design Document	The key deliverable from a Process Analysis & Design Work Session.
24	Process Analysis & Design Prep Conference Call Agenda	The standard Prep Call Agenda for the Process Analysis & Design Work Session.
25	Process Analysis & Design Work Session Agenda	The standard Two-Day Agenda for the Process Analysis & Design Work Session.
26	Process Decomposition	A Visio model for decomposing a process into its components in a hierarchical, nonredundant manner.
27	Process Detail Table	A table for capturing detailed information about each step within a process. Two options are included: a standard and an expanded version.
28	Process Map	A Visio model for documenting a swimlaned process map.

Number	Template	Description
29	Project Charter Document	The key deliverable from a Project Charter Work Session.
30	Project Charter Prep Conference Call Agenda	The standard Prep Call Agenda for the Project Charter Work Session.
31	Project Charter Work Session Agenda	The standard Two-Day Agenda for the Project Charter Work Session.
32	Reports Matrix	A table for describing the reports needed for a project and their detailed requirements.
33	Risk Assessment Document	The deliverable from a Risk Assessment Work Session.
34	Risk Assessment Prep Meeting Agenda	The standard Prep Meeting Agenda for the Risk Assessment Work Session.
35	Risk Assessment Work Session Agenda	The standard One-Day Agenda for the Risk Assessment Work Session.
36	Risk Matrix-FMEA	Six Sigma's Failure Mode Effects Analysis (FMEA) with various columns to identify potential process or product failures and their causes and mitigations.
37	Risk Matrix-Hybrid	This version of the risk matrix combines the category approach suggested in the Standard Risk Analysis Matrix with the root cause investigation of the FMEA. It includes a feature not addressed in the other versions: the identification of contingencies.
38	Risk Matrix-Standard	A standard risk matrix with various columns for capturing risks and their ratings for severity, probability of occurrence, and visibility to the customer. It also allows for the capture of mitigating actions. This is the version used in the Business Requirements Document.

Number	Template	Description
39	Save the Date Notice	A template for the announcement that should be sent to all prospective work session participants so they can “save the date” on their calendars.
40	Scope Documents	Templates for describing the boundaries of the project. Three options are included: the bulleted list, the frame, the scope table.
41	Timeline Diagram	A Visio diagram for visually depicting key milestones or activities in the project timeline.
42	Timeline Key Milestones	A PowerPoint diagram for visually depicting key milestones in the project by swimlane.
43	Timeline Table	A table to capture the high-level tasks in the project timeline.
44	Work Session Evaluation	An evaluation form to use after the work session to gather feedback on work session value and facilitator effectiveness.
45	Work Session Invitation	A standard Invitation to attend a work session. It includes the date, time, and location of both the Prep Call and Work Session events.
46	Work-in-Progress Deliverable Table	One of the deliverables from a Work-in-Progress Review Session. It lists each deliverable that will be discussed by sub-team, the sub-team leader, and the allotted amount of time they have on the agenda.
47	Work-in-Progress Prep Conference Call Agenda	The standard Prep Call Agenda for the Work-in-Progress Review Session.
48	Work-in-Progress Review Session Agenda	The standard One-Day Agenda for the Work-in-Progress Review Session.

How to Use the Accompanying CD-ROM

System Requirements

PC with Microsoft Windows 98SE or later

Mac with Apple OS version 8.6 or later

Using the CD with Windows

To view the items located on the CD, follow these steps:

1. Insert the CD into your computer's CD-ROM drive.
2. A window appears with the following options:

Contents: Allows you to view the files included on the CD-ROM.

Software: Allows you to install useful software from the CD-ROM.

Links: Displays a hyperlinked page of Web sites.

Author: Displays a page with information about the Author(s).

Help: Displays a page with information on using the CD.

Exit: Closes the interface window.

If you do not have autorun enabled, or if the autorun window does not appear, follow these steps to access the CD:

1. Click Start -> Run.
2. In the dialog box that appears, type `d:\<drive letter>\start.exe`, where d is the letter of your CD-ROM drive. This brings up the autorun window described in the preceding set of steps.
3. Choose the desired option from the menu. (See Step 2 in the preceding list for a description of these options.)

Using the CD with a Mac

1. Insert the CD into your computer's CD-ROM drive.
2. The CD-ROM icon appears on your desktop; double-click the icon.
3. Double-click the Start icon.
4. A window appears with the following options:
 - Contents: Allows you to view the files included on the CD-ROM.
 - Software: Allows you to install useful software from the CD-ROM.
 - Links: Displays a hyperlinked page of Web sites.
 - Author: Displays a page with information about the Author(s).
 - Contact Us: Displays a page with information on contacting the publisher or author.
 - Help: Displays a page with information on using the CD.
 - Exit: Closes the interface window.

In Case of Trouble

If you experience difficulty using the CD-ROM, please follow these steps:

1. Make sure your hardware and systems configurations conform to the systems requirements noted under "System Requirements" above.
2. Review the installation procedure for your type of hardware and operating system.

It is possible to reinstall the software if necessary.

To speak with someone in Product Technical Support, call 800-762-2974 or 317-572-3994 M–F 8:30a.m.–5:00p.m. EST. You can also get support and contact Product Technical Support at <http://www.wiley.com/techsupport>. Before calling or writing, please have the following information available:

- Type of computer and operating system
- Any error messages displayed
- Complete description of the problem.

It is best if you are sitting at your computer when making the call.