

Best Practices for Software Projects - Requirements Scrubbing

March 2004 - Pragmatic Software Newsletters

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This year's newsletters will focus on best practices for Software Development Projects. Each month will cover a different best practice technique. This month focuses on improving requirements gathering with the use of requirements scrubbing.

Best Practices for Software Projects - Requirements Scrubbing

A key component to delivering software projects on-time and on-budget is to do a great job of defining the requirements of the system and to be objective as to which requirements are absolutely necessary. Once the requirements are defined, they should be reviewed with a fine-tooth comb to ensure that all the requirement details are fully defined and that each requirement is absolutely necessary for the release of the software.

The process of reviewing each requirement in detail is called **Requirements Scrubbing**. Each requirement should be evaluated objectively by the JAD Session members and a decision should be made as to whether the requirement is **absolutely necessary** for the upcoming release. Any requirements that can be eliminated from the upcoming release will have a direct savings on time and money, as it eliminates the need to go through design, programming, testing and documentation. All requirements that are not absolutely necessary for the upcoming release can be marked for a future release.

Each requirement should be evaluated for the following criteria:

- Is the requirement absolutely necessary for the upcoming release? If not, it should be moved to a future release.
- Is the requirement sufficiently defined so that the designers will easily be able to provide a design for the requirement?
- Is the requirement in it's simplest form? Many times requirements are not well thought out and can be more complex than is needed. This causes unneeded time and effort in the programming and testing phases.
- Can you substitute other options for a requirement? For example, let's say that you have a requirement that calls for a spell checker to be implemented for your user interface. However, another team in your company has already created a web service that does the same thing and it has been fully tested. This is a good example as to where you can use another option that yields the same result but with faster and improved execution.

Requirement Scrubbing can dramatically increase your chances of delivering on-time and on-budget. Below are some helpful templates to aid you in developing software solutions on-time and on-budget:

- **Project Management Guidelines** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/ProjectMgtGuidelines.rtf>
- **Functional Specifications** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/FunctionalSpec.rtf>
- **Architectural Overview** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/ArchitectureOverview.rtf>
- **Detailed Design** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/DetailedDesign.rtf>
- **Strategic Planning Document** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/StrategicPlanning.rtf>
- **Test Design** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/TestDesign.rtf>
- **Risk Assessment** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/Risk%20Assessment.rtf>
- **Weekly Status** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/WeeklyStatusRpt.rtf>
- **User Acceptance Test Release Report** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/UATRelease.rtf>
- **Post Mortem Report** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/PostMortem.rtf>
- **All Templates** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Templates.htm>
- **Prior Newsletters** - <http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Newsletters.htm>
- **Software Planner** - <http://www.SoftwarePlanner.com>

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