

Requirements – 14 Common Pitfalls

When developing a new product, system or service there are two primary ways you can end up going down the wrong path.

Firstly, **inadequate requirement capture** can result in you developing something that may not work properly due to:

- critical performance shortfalls
- interoperability issues at key interfaces
- survivability/reliability issues in the real operating environment
- unexpected/unwanted behaviour
- solution will not work at scale

Secondly, **inadequate requirement validation** can result in you creating something that nobody wants because the solution:

- solves the wrong problem
- is more difficult to use than existing or competing options
- doesn't work properly with other systems key to the user
- cannot realise its potential due to limitations in other systems owned or operated by the user

In order to set yourself up for success, make sure you avoid the following **common mistakes** associated with requirements definition:

1. Not engaging with key stakeholders (validation)
2. Trying to specify the “how” (solution) instead of the “what” (need)
3. Bundling multiple requirements into a verbose statement that is not simple, concise, clear, unambiguous and easily understood
4. Not relating the requirement to a specific objective or outcome
5. Not specifying a context or operational environment
6. Neglecting critical interface dependencies
7. Specifying objectives that cannot be proven (ie success cannot be verified)
8. Failing to include tolerances or ranges for numerical requirements
9. Including things that are not necessary (and, by implication, irrelevant)
10. Including things that are not achievable (within the known constraints)
11. Failing to include any kind of supporting rationale
12. Failing to clarify the difference between “must-haves” and “desirables”

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13. Failing to include references to the parent and/or child (derived) requirements (ie lack of traceability to the source and associated key drivers)
14. Duplicating requirements (each should be unique)

If you'd like some specific help with your requirements management concerns please drop us a line at info@sigmarose.com or simply call the number below.