

Interview Questions

1. Company background details:

- 1.1. How many people are employed at your company?
- 1.2. And how many of these are in IT?

2. Product background details:

I would now talk about the Product A/B/C. I understand that Company A/B tailors this product for individual clients, but where possible I'd like to focus on the core of that product that goes out to all new customers.

- 2.1. How many employees are working on the product(s)?
- 2.2. What are their backgrounds? For example; business analyst, computer scientists, engineer, tech support.
- 2.3. Can you give me an idea of how big the product is in either man months or lines of code?

3. Requirements engineering process:

- 3.1. Is requirements engineering explicitly planned?
- 3.2. How is this defined? (How is it documented? / How much detail?)
- 3.3. Is it tailored specifically for the project/product?
- 3.4. How closely is this process followed? Is adherence to the requirements engineering process verified?
- 3.5. As the product undergoes iterative development, after the first release (1) are changes handled by change management procedures; (2) is there a new requirements elicitation process at the beginning of each iteration; or (3) do you manage changes to the system by some other procedure? (If 3, Could you please define that for me?)
- 3.6. Is there a role defined for a requirements engineer? What is their title? For example, they might be called a system analyst.

4. Requirements elicitation process

Now we will discuss how your company elicits requirements for the product that you have chosen.

- 4.1. Does the project team communicate with the customer through (1) direct contact, (2) indirect contact, marketing represents the anonymous customer, (4) are any other methods used, (if not) is there no communication between the project team and the market?
- 4.2. Are there any formal methods for eliciting requirements? Who is involved in this process? For example market surveys, business process reengineering, scenarios and/or prototyping.
- 4.3. In addition to formal requirements elicitation processes, do requirements come from other sources? If so, whom? And how is this information managed? Is there any informal feedback from sales/marketing
- 4.4. How are changes to the requirements managed?
- 4.5. Are any documents or software packages used to store and/or manage requirements that have been identified? Which software packages? Who uses them?

5. Requirements interpretation, structuring, verification and validation

Can you tell me how the elicited requirements are interpreted and structured? So:

- 5.1. Who is responsible for interpreting the requirements that have been identified?
- 5.2. What processes are used? For example use cases, modelling techniques or document templates.
- 5.3. What documents are produced as part of this process?
- 5.4. What software supports this process?
- 5.5. Can you tell me how the requirements are now verified and validated? For example, Inspection, prototyping or simulation.

6. Requirement prioritisation and selection

Software is increasingly being released incrementally – for example, Microsoft Windows has had a number of major releases, such as 95, 98 and XP. Each release implements a set of requirements. I'd now like to discuss how requirements are selected for inclusion in a release at your company.

- 6.1. Who is responsible for prioritising requirements and who is responsible for selecting which requirements go into a release of software or project?
- 6.2. Are any processes used to help prioritise and select requirements for a release? For example, negotiation, workshops or prioritisation.
- 6.3. Which methodologies are formally used to select and prioritise requirements? For example cost-benefit analysis. How rigorously are these used?
- 6.4. Are any software tools used to help prioritise and select requirements for a release?
- 6.5. Which methodologies are informally used to select and prioritise requirements, if any?
- 6.6. Can you identify the major stakeholder groups and prioritise them according to the impact they have on the requirements included in a specific release of software?
- 6.7. How far ahead do you plan software releases?
- 6.8. What are the biggest constraints you face in selecting and prioritising requirements? For example time, resources or budget.
- 6.9. What other issues do you consider?

7. Value-Based Software Engineering

Value-based software engineering is a new area of study. It looks at computer science theory; managerial aspects of software engineering; and personal, cultural and economic considerations involved in developing and evaluating software systems.

- 7.1. Have you heard the term value-based software engineering before?
- 7.2. From what you know and what we have discussed what does it mean to you?

8. Personal background details

And finally, if I could just get some personal information about you:

- 8.1. (What company do you work for? – This question was answered by the researcher.)
- 8.2. What is your position in the company?
- 8.3. How many years of work experience do you have?
- 8.4. How many years have you been at the company?
- 8.5. And how long has that been in your current role?