

How to Estimate Early in a Project

Instructor-Led, Web-Delivered Duration 2 Sessions

Overview

“How long will it take you?” is one of the scariest questions that business analysts have to answer. This question is always posed before you know what you are going to have to do to define the requirements. You have not yet done the analysis upon which to base your answer. Given that uncertainty, it is no wonder that whatever answer you come up with will be wrong, leading to a missed delivery date and unhappy customers.

This workshop introduces methods that improve early estimates and the communication of the factors that affect them. We cover foundation approaches for state-of-the-practice in early project estimating based on application, story, object, function point, and other relevant techniques. You will discuss factors that affect estimating accuracy, and apply them in a case study. Included in the class materials is an individual license for our estimating tool, Quest For Better Estimates®.

Note: *This instructor-led course can be delivered in two virtual sessions via the Internet or live your site.*

Target Audience

Senior Business Analysts
Business Analysts in the role of Project Leader
Business Analysts
Anyone who is responsible for estimating the effort required to develop business requirements

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this seminar, you will . . .

- Identify natural estimating points and the most useful methods for early estimating
- List 6 estimating approaches and present the pros and cons of each
- Discuss Function Point estimating and its applicability to early project estimating
- Apply Application, Object and Story point estimating methods and; discuss their strengths, weaknesses and prerequisites

Developed and presented by:



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1 Introducing Early Project Estimating

The Estimating Enigma

Exercise: Estimating Realities
Early Project Estimating

2 Simple Estimating Ideas that Work

Estimating based on Statistics

What Is An Estimate? 1
A Few Words on Statistics
Estimates are Statistics
Subdividing Projects
Increasing Detail Decreases Error

The 20 Questions of Estimating

What Are You Estimating?
Why Estimate? 1
To Improve Estimates, Ask Questions
The Early Estimating Challenge 2
One Step toward Solution 2

Swagging it

The SWAG Estimate
Case Exercise 3: SWAG
Consensus Estimating 3
Quest for Better Estimates
Case Exercise 4: Consensus & Quest

3 Estimating based on Expertise

Expert Guesswork

The Expert Estimator 3
Units of Estimating 1
Comparison Estimating 3
Comparison Estimating Exercise 3

Requirements Impact Estimates
COCOMO II Cost Factors 3
Quest/SWAG and COCOMO Cost

The Finer Points of Estimating

Using "Points" for Estimating
Points as Sizing Parameters
User Requirement Sizing, the Initial Process 3
User Story Sizing, the Estimating Process 1
Reality Check
Iterations, Increments & Releases
Backing into Duration
Making Points

Size Matters in Estimating

Successful-Project Profiles 5
Summary: Experience-Based Estimating 3

4 Improving Your Estimating Practices

Timing is Everything

When Do You Estimate?
Where's The Cost? 3
Summary

Implementing Lessons Learned

Implement Better Estimating
Management Issues
In-House Estimating Experts
Keeping History Databases
Providing Software Support
Avoiding Management Malpractice
Summary: Final Assignment
Epilog 2