Child Welfare IT Managers' Webinar Series: Procurement and Contract Management
"Requirements for Requirements"
December 19, 2013

Presenters: **Joyce Rose**, ICF International
Mary Kernander, Information Technology Manager, New Hampshire

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. All participants will be on a listen-only mode for the duration of today's conference. We will hold a question and answer session at the end of today's conference and if you wish to ask a question you may do so by pressing star one. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. And I will now turn the conference over to Joyce Rose. You may begin.

Joyce Rose: Thank you and welcome to the initial webinar in the Procurement and Contract Management Series being brought to you on behalf of the Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Family, Children's Bureau and presented by ICF International. I'm Joyce Rose your host and moderator for today's webinar and joining me in just a few minutes will be Mary Kernander.

Changes in funding availability limits the opportunity for in-person discussion and networking among professionals working on state traveler IT systems. Next slide Elizabeth. Between December 2013 and September 2014 the Division of State Systems within the Children's Bureau is offering eleven webinars on assorted topics of interest to state, child welfare, IT program and policy staff. The webinars are intended to provide a venue for information sharing and discussion and are not just for child welfare IT systems managers but also all the staff involved in getting and keeping your child welfare systems up and running.

All of the webinars are recorded and are available online as reference and informational resources for you and your staff. A global notification will be distributed once they are posted and accessible. Elizabeth can we go to slide three please?

Elizabeth Mertinko: This one or one more?

Joyce Rose: My - I'm sorry but my screen has not changed. It's still on the first slide.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Yeah, okay. I will work on that. It looks like our audience is having the same issue although they are changing from here. So I'd ask if you continue speaking and I'll see if I can't get the slides to move forward for us.

Joyce Rose: Okay. Thank you Elizabeth and we apologize for the technical issues going on right now.

As I mentioned previously, today's webinar in the Procurement and Contract Management series is entitled Requirements for Requirements and is a back to basics guide to the development and analysis of requirements. The information presented in this webinar will provide a foundation for the January webinar which will be - which will investigate the different elements comprising an RFP as well as a unique look at an RFP through the eyes of a vendor.

Subsequent monthly topics range from contract negotiation and management which will be in February. Webinar number five will be managing small projects in March. Webinar number six will be managing scope, creep and change orders that will be in April. And then the last webinar in this particular series will be Saying Goodbye to your Vendor in May. And then we will develop - right now we are developing another series and I don't exactly know what the title of that series will be but we have several webinars that we will do between May and September.

So it looks as though we have caught up now with our slides and that we're very, very - next slide please.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Alright, we will try. Did it advance for you?

Joyce Rose: Yes it did. Thank you.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. And I will just ask the audience if it's not - if it's still not working for you if you could just type into the chat box and let me know that. We should be fixed now.

Joyce Rose: Thank you Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Sure.

Joyce Rose: So we are encouraging you to participate in today's webinar with question and comments and while all of our participant lines are muted right now. They will be opened at the end of the presentation for discussion. You can also submit questions to the GoTo Webinar chat feature, though we will also save those questions until after the presentation.

Now should we run out of time we will respond to your questions via email and/or if you have any additional questions, you may submit those to me at the email address listed on the slide - joyce@payassets.com.

So Elizabeth we can move onto the next slide and it's very fortuitous because this is the attendee poll. So we are very interested in knowing who is attending this webinar. It is our intent throughout all of the procurement and contract management webinars to make the concept applicable and attractive for all disciplines participating in a state SACWIS for CWIS effort. We ask that you self-select one of the five categories listed. Also recognizing that not all states are SACWIS states and to be inclusive with everyone we will use the more generic child welfare information system CWIS identifier. Elizabeth please conduct the poll.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. The poll is up on the screen and people have started to respond. We'll just give them another couple of seconds to cast their vote. We have about ¾ of our audience that's voted so everyone else sneak in a last vote. And it looks like 21% project managers, 7% program managers, 21% technical managers, 46% project staff. Well that's I think the biggest percentage of project staff that we've had participate in the webinar so far and 4% ACF CB personnel.

Joyce Rose: It is and I find that very exciting that we are inclusive of everyone who works on these projects because they're large, they are very challenging and I'm hoping that we all can take something away from today's topic. So let's move into a look at today's agenda which is basically we'll have a couple of introductions followed by a presentation by our guest state presenter and then again we invite all attendees to participate in the Q&A session with our presenter and then we'll end with a short wrap-up.

So moving to the introductions we are extremely pleased to have Mary Kernander as today's first presenter. Mary is an information technology manager for the state of New Hampshire having worked for the state for the past eleven years. Mary and her staff are responsible for all of the technical aspects of the state SACWIS from design, to coding, to deployment and Mary is also a member of the ACF sponsored Child Welfare Technical Workgroup.

Myself - I am formerly the project director from the state of Wisconsin SACWIS project. I retired in 2004 and since that time I've been involved with several ACF Children's Bureau sponsored training events. And now I will turn it over to Mary. Mary?

Mary Kernander: Thank you Joyce and Elizabeth. As Joyce explained this webinar is going to be focused on business requirements, the importance of business requirements and things to look for. Before I go into the slides I'd like to read you a quote from Mark Gunn. Mark Gunn is a CEO of an IT consulting firm specializing in IT quality assurance. He has over 25 years of experience and this quote is one of the most accurate things I have read in many years in the importance of business requirements.

And Mark Gunn says "thorough, accurate and well written business requirements are the foundation for software development projects. Many of those in the software development business would agree with this statement and would also agree they don't follow it. Sometimes there is project pressure to start coding now, as if that would get the project to market quicker. I have never quite understood this concept. Without a solid foundation on which to build your project as with building a house, sooner or later the project will crumble."

"The time taken to produce solid business requirements will save time and expense by reducing the time and cost of having to redo code that does not meet our users or client's business needs. Coding without having solid detailed business requirements means the developers will in all likelihood have to spend time fixing missed requirements. QA will have to write new test cases. New builds will have to be released and more testing will take place."

So it's basically A, you can pay me now as in pay the business analyst or pay me later which is the developer, DBA and QA. And to me that really drives home the importance of business requirements and getting it right at the very basis because business requirements are the foundation of everything we do in software development projects.

So a general definition of a business requirements document also known as a BRD and the emphasis in a BRD is on what is required rather than on how to achieve it and that's a big distinction. The how is usually captured in a systems requirements spec or a document or other variations such as a functional. The SRS, SRD, FSD facilitate the design of the technical solution proposed by a vendor. The business requirement is basically what you want not how to do it. Next slide please.

Thank you. So the content of a business requirement documentation and again there's variations to all of this. So what I'm going through today is not - this is in stone. You have to absolutely do it this way every single time. But a business requirement document should have a change - a summary of the change. And this basically is a paragraph or two of what is being requested. And then an explanation for the business need. Business needs are what drives the business requirement. A workflow diagram - how do the users currently perform their tasks?

And stakeholders and business sponsor. This is critical. A stakeholder is someone who'll be impacted by the request. A lot of times a project may run into issues because not all stakeholder have been identified at the very beginning. So we get to the end and we get to testing and we realize that a stakeholder was missed so it's very important to identify your stakeholders early on.

And the business sponsor is who is driving this request. Do we have business buy in? Do we have business support for this request? Next slide please. Along with all of that we want to have a scope of the request. It defines what is impacted but not only that. We need to define what is not impacted by this request. It puts boundaries around what we are doing and these are the boundaries that we need to adhere through throughout the entire analysis phase and then an outline of business requirements.

Business requirements again describe what is being requested. The reason we call it an outline of business requirements is because we have to be able to have the continuity throughout the entire process of being able to refer back to the business requirement when we get to the end when we get through technical documentations and functional documentations. Numbering makes it easier to refer back to a specific requirement. Next slide please?

And finally use cases. Use cases help determine if all the scenarios have been accounted for. It’s very difficult to miss a requirement. A use case involves an actor and specific tasks. So if you have all the specific tasks identified, you have your use cases, a lot of times just by writing out your use cases and how somebody is going to use these specific requirements will uncover holes basically and where there are things missing so we can handle it up front.

And again and I, you know, I drive this point in multiple times and the fact is you need to have good solid business requirements if the project is going to succeed and use cases is a part of that. Okay next slide please.

In writing your business requirements there’s certain things to bear in mind as you’re doing it and this is basically validating your business requirement and there’s a list of things. Is your requirement unambiguous? Basically does every statement have one interpretation? Multiple readers of a requirement should be able to arrive at the same interpretation. Make sure your terms are clear and well defined. Are your requirements complete? Completeness is also a desired characteristic of an individual requirement as well as all your entire requirement documents. It’s hard to spot a missing requirement because they’re not there.

If you focus on user tasks rather than on system functions during requirement elicitation you’re less likely to overlook requirements and to include requirements that aren’t really necessary. The use case method works very well for this. Are your requirements verifiable?

All new requirements have a corresponding task. Verifiable - see whether you can devise tests that use other verification approaches such as inspection or demonstration to determine whether each requirement is properly implemented. If a requirement is not verifiable, you need to determine early on what is the correct requirement that you need. Requirements that are not consistent, not feasible or unambiguous are also not verifiable requirements. Next slide please.

Consistent - do you have conflicting terminology? Is there contradictory required actions and impossible combinations? Consistent requirements do not conflict with other software requirements or with higher level or system or business requirements. If you have a disagreement among your requirements this must be resolved before you can move forward. Development aren't - do not - when you get to coding you're not going to be able to code something that's inconsistent.

And is it modifiable? It sounds silly but you need to know that redundancy is absent. You want to make sure that your requirements aren't being duplicated throughout the entire document and I do touch upon this a little bit as well. You do not want to be changing requirement - the same requirement in multiple places.

And is it traceable? Is each requirement uniquely identified? Again you should be able to link a business requirement throughout the entire process through all your technical documentation back to the original business requirement to see if you met the need and is it correct. And again as I say here, it may sound obvious but it's surprisingly easy to include extraneous requirements or requirements that pertain to something else within your business requirements document.

Okay, next slide please. So just and this is certainly not an all-encompassing list of questions to ask but while you're writing a business requirement whether it's entire document or requirement by requirement, here's the list of questions that you should bear in mind. Is it singular? Do you have no ands or ors? Is it unambiguous? Is it measurable? Is it complete? Is it cost justified? That can be anywhere from is the budget there or is what they are asking for - is it worth the resource time and the cost or the vendor cost to do it?

Can it be tested? Is it achievement driven? Is there a benefit? Does the business own this requirement? That is huge. If the business owns it, the business supports it. Without business support, projects can fail. Is it consistent? Again it does not conflict with any other requirement. Is it necessary? Again this could be covered under cost justified. Is it really necessary to do that requirement? Is it feasible? And is it realistic? Does the user community really want this functionality? Next slide please.

Alright so basic guidelines for constructing business requirements. Keep your sentences and your paragraphs short and use the active voice. Use proper grammar, spelling and punctuation and use terms consistently and define them. Next slide please.

Requirement authors often struggle to find the right level of granularity so try to avoid long paragraphs that contain multiple requirements. A guideline is to write individually testable requirements. So if you can think of a small number of related tests to verify the correct implementation of a requirement it's probably written at the right level of detail.

If you envision many different kinds of tests perhaps several requirements have been lumped together and a good example of these last three bullets basically is if you have a requirement that is anyone can populate the field but only a supervisor can modify it. Well first off you have two requirements going at the same time. Multiple tests can be done. Anyone can populate the field. It has to be tested among different security levels whereas only a supervisor can modify it. So someone with supervisory security can go in and multiply - can go in and modify it. So that really should be at least two different requirements. Next slide please.

So be mindful of multiple requirements that have been combined into a single statement. And I repeat myself multiple times because it's important. Conjunctions like "and" and "or" in a requirement really do suggest that you have several requirements combined together. And write requirements at a consistent level of detail. For example a valid color code shall be R for red and a valid color code shall be G for green might be split out as separate requirements.

While the product shall respond to editing directives entered by voice is really an entire subsystem not a single requirement. Excuse me. Next slide please.

So to continue, avoid redundant requirements and I touched upon this a little bit ago. While you include the same requirement in multiple places and it may make your document easier to read but it also makes the maintenance of the document more difficult. You have a greater chance of changing the requirement in one place and missing it in another place and then you have conflicting requirements and it goes further down the process and it can't be coded. We have to go back and work it out. Multiple instances of the requirement would have to be updated.

Okay and now we have an example. What's wrong with this business requirement? The product shall provide status messages at regular intervals not less than every 60 seconds. And on the surface it seems like a very valid business requirement and from experience and I'm sure others have had the same experience. You sit in meetings trying to elicit business requirements and everybody is talking the same language and you're talking about status messages. Everyone at that table understands those status messages.

Well in writing the business requirement one of the things that we have to keep in mind is that there are technical staff or there is a vendor that's going to be reading this business requirement document that was not sitting at that table, did not learn the language or did not understand the intent of your business requirement. Many, many times I have sat looking at test results and having somebody come to me and tell me but that was not the intent of that requirement.

If you're sitting at the table for however long it takes you to write this business requirement, interacting with the business users and the clients, you're all on the same page. You're all talking the same language but somebody is going to read this business requirements document that was not there and does not speak the language. So the product shall provide status messages at regular intervals not less than 60 seconds may make plenty of sense to you or I because we lived it for the last two months but as I hand this document off to someone they're not going to really understand it. So next slide please.

What's wrong with this requirement is that it's incomplete. What are the status messages and how are they to be displayed. The requirement contains several ambiguities. What part of the product are we talking about? Is the interval between status messages really supposed to be at least 60 seconds? Is showing a new message every ten years okay? I know that's ludicrous but at least every 60 seconds every ten years does meet that requirement. Perhaps the intent is to have no more than 60 seconds of lapse between messages. If that's the case would one millisecond be too short and we're going to bombard people with messages.

It's also not verifiable because the word every confuses the issue. But these are the points that I'm basically trying to make is that I knew what the business user wanted by this requirement because I sat there and I spoke with them and I understood where they were coming from. But then I handed this off to one of my developers or I handed this off or I put this in an RFP as my requirement said somebody has to bid on and it's incomplete, it has ambiguities and it's not verifiable. Next slide please.

This again is just one of many ways it could have been written, you know. Status messages - the background task manager shall display status messages in a designated area of the user interface at intervals of 60 plus or minus ten seconds. It narrows it down. It tells you basically every minute plus or minus ten seconds I am going to display a message. I'm going to display a message if the background task processing is progressing normally, the percentage of the background task - processing that has been completed shall be displayed.

A message shall be displayed when the background task is completed and an error message shall be displayed if the background task has stalled. Now this is again just one example of how that could - could be changed. Next message - next slide please.

One last example - the product shall switch between displaying and hiding nonprinting characters instantaneously. If we can go to the next slide. This requirement is incomplete and here, you know, it doesn't state the conditions that trigger the state switch. Is the software making the change on its own or is it under some condition. Does the user take some action? What is the scope of the display change? Is it selected text, the entire document or something else and again it contains ambiguities. Are nonprinting characters the same as hidden text or are they attribute tags or control characters of some kind.

So if we go to the next slide is again just an example of what it could have been. The user shall be able to toggle between displaying and hiding all HGMO markup tags in the document being edited with the activation of a specific triggering condition. Specific triggering condition leaves it open for further down the requirements line when we get to system and technical requirements to be able to come back with a specific design without putting the design in a corner and forcing a specific design that may or may not work.

So business requirements. Next slide please. Not to beat a dead horse but business requirements are the foundation of every software product and without clear concise business requirements on what is needed not how it is to be done, making sure that all business needs are accounted for, making sure that all use cases and stakeholders have a piece of the puzzle and is able to be represented in the business requirements. You're going to have issues further down the line.

After the business requirements are done you get into functional documentation and technical specs. Again people name them different things. Its functional gives you a little bit more detail on how the business requirement will work in the system. You can add screen prototypes and field definitions. In the functional it should refer back to the business requirement. So functional requirement 1.7 should specify that it is satisfying the need of business requirement 3.2 and the same as you get into your technical specifications.

How the business requirement will be implemented in the system. That is your technical spec and again, your technical documentation should refer back to your system functional documentation, your business requirements so there is a consistency and a continuity of the requirements throughout the entire documentation process and then hopefully coding. And by the time you get to coding hopefully everything has been defined and worked out and there'll be less rework because it costs more to do rework once you get to the coding phase than if you can handle it in the requirement phases. Next slide please.

Again the functional is more detail and the technical is how we implement it. It's all yours now Joyce.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Joyce if you're speaking we can't hear you. You might be on mute.

Joyce Rose: Yes, I was on mute. I am sorry. Mary thank you so very much for that wonderful information on construction of requirements and questions to ask to validate them. So Elizabeth we can now open the lines or chat to our webinar attendees for any questions and we will make every attempt to answer them. So do we have any questions?

Elizabeth Mertinko: We don't have any on chat but Gabrielle can you go ahead and let us know how the folks on the phone can queue up to ask a question?

Coordinator: Of course. So again at this time if anybody would like to ask a question, please un-mute your phone, press star one and record your name clearly at the prompt. A name recording is required so that your question can be introduced. So again press star one to ask a question and those will take a moment or two to queue up. Please stand up.

Joyce Rose: Well while everyone is visibly typing away or coming up with your questions, Mary I have one to ask you. And that's you spoke about requirements outline, etcetera - where does a traceability matrix fit into this - into the grand scheme of requirements definitions.

Mary Kernander: Every document should have a traceability matrix. The reason that we stress the fact that requirements should be numbered is so that every subsequent document that is created throughout the process can refer back to those specific requirement numbers.

What we normally do is at the beginning of each document we have a traceability matrix which will tell your business requirement number, functional requirement number and technical requirement number and again the documents - people name them different things - system requirement documents, functional, so forth.

And then throughout the actual requirements grid we also specify the previous documents requirement number and the business requirement number that we're satisfying with that item. So we should be able to at the very end look at the very final document on how it's going to be implemented and we can look at that implementation item and know exactly what business requirement that implementation piece and design is satisfying.

Joyce Rose: Thank you. And just to follow-up with that, it's my assumption that a requirements traceability matrix or document - whatever you want to call it - starts with the very beginning of the project and stays with the project through retirement.

Mary Kernander: Correct.

Joyce Rose: It's there forever and it's changed accordingly and it's kept up to date and accurate.

Mary Kernander: Correct but that's actually an important thing to note Joyce because a project does not end when it is coded and deployed, you know, tested successfully and deployed. I have yet to see a software project that has not had enhancements or does not need to be maintained and these documents are archived pieces - archived history of the project and it is extremely important as you go through to make sure that they're all maintained and updated.

Many times you may hit a systems or a technical document and items have come up that may change your requirement and it's important that that business requirement document gets updated at the same time. They're all living pieces of a project until that project is deployed.

Joyce Rose: Right and obviously when you have a vendor onboard that's something that you want to put into an RFP as a definite requirement as a traceability matrix but the life of that - I mean it's so important when and we're going to do a webinar on saying goodbye to your vendor. It is so important that that document is accurate when the vendor steps out the door so that internal staff know exactly what's going on.

Mary Kernander: Correct. One of the things also when you're talking about having a vendor come in - business requirements and making sure that there is accurate and clear and consistent as possible is critical. I mean how many times have we been - any of us have been in a position where we have handed business requirements over to a vendor, thought we were going down the right path but their interpretation of the requirement is different than our interpretation of a requirement. And, you know, that, you know, I tried to stress during this webinar.

It's very important that we're all on the same page. The vendor is trying to do their best and their due diligence in providing what we're requesting but if we're not clear in what we're requesting, the final outcome may not be what we wanted. But even before all of that you want to make sure that your - the proposals that you receive and the cost that you receive from vendors to your RFP is as accurate as can be because you are - your requirements were accurate. If you don't have accurate requirements going out with that RFP then the vendor isn't quite sure what they're bidding on.

Joyce Rose: Correct and that's starting a project off on very shaky ground and on the wrong foot.

Mary Kernander: Correct.

Joyce Rose: Yes you're going to incur a lot of costs for vendor change requests.

Mary Kernander: Yes, something that we all want to avoid.

Elizabeth Mertinko: We have a question that's come in through the live chat. Someone is asking which requirements tracing tools does New Hampshire use.

Mary Kernander: New Hampshire does not use and automated requirements retracing tool. We have a series of documents that we have modified the templates to the point that we feel they're very, very concise but we do not have a specific tool. As a matter of fact we are just in the process of switching over our existing change request tool in hoping that at that point we would be able to also incorporate some type of requirements matrix into that as opposed to just having it in our documents at this time.

Elizabeth Mertinko: And I would maybe put that out to the rest of our audience. If someone has something they're using that they think works well maybe press star one and you can tell us about it.

Joyce Rose: That would be great.

Coordinator: And this is Gabrielle. We do already have a question here in queue. This question press star one but they didn't record their name but if you press star one, your line is now open to ask your question. You're line's open. Go ahead.

Man: Yes. I'm used to the technical design document. I was just wondering does the functional document and the technical specification become as one document or two different documents.

Mary Kernander: We actually have it as two different documents and it also depends on the project. Our functional documents go through and come up with the screen prototypes and a little bit more definition to how the business requirements could work in the system. We do more field definitions and then our technical specification is very detailed, very technical on how it will be implemented in the system.

In our particular case our functional is a cross between the business and the technical and it is presented back to our users and it's more along the lines of this is how we interpreted your business requirements and this is how we see it fitting in the system. Our technical documents are geared more for the technical staff where we discuss we're a power builder shop. We're also a dot net shop but it discusses what pebbles to pull out, what backend processes need to be changed and so forth. And that's not something we present to the end user.

Man: Thank you.

Elizabeth Mertinko: So Mary I think imitation is the highest form of flattery. Someone's also asking if you have an example of your requirements template that you would be willing to share.

Mary Kernander: Yes.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay.

Mary Kernander: Yes, we can - I can share our business requirement, our functional and our technical if people are interested.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. So I think what I'll do is I'm just going to put the next slide up that has Joyce's email. If you're interested in receiving those templates maybe Joyce can we send those requests to you and you can get the documents from Mary and send them back out to folks?

Joyce Rose: Absolutely.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. So Joyce's email is right here on the slide if you're interested in getting those documents. Email Joyce and she will send them along to you. We have another online question and it's as much for our audience I think as for our speakers. It is has anyone done a procurement with business objectives rather than detail requirements and if so what was your experience. So Mary and Joyce I'll put that to the two of you if you have any thoughts on it and anyone in our audience - if you have some experience you would like to share around that subject, push star one to queue up on the phone.

Mary Kernander: I personally have not had that experience. We have gone out with RFI's for somebody to come in and do the analysis however the RFI's never made it out there. They were just internal and the projects were killed so I personally do not have any experience in that.

Joyce Rose: And I too basically have only experienced using business objectives in an RFI and that was the state of Wisconsin did an RFI stating business objectives to do a change from Power Builder to a web based application. But we first did an RFI using - including business objectives but, you know, obviously you need to get to the business requirements level to make sure of what you're asking for and that you get a decent response back.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Alright, perfect. So anyone else who has experience doing the procurement with business objectives rather than detailed requirements - if you'd like to share that with us, please press star one to queue up. We have somebody online suggesting and I'm sure I'm going to mangle this. Is it JAMA - J-A-M-A - as an open source tool for requirements traceability matrix. So that's been put out as a suggestion. Gabrielle do we have any questions on the phone?

Coordinator: No, we have none on the phone lines right now but again as a reminder, go ahead and press star one and record your name at the prompt.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Okay. We do have one more question online and I suspect this might be a longer answer than the shorter one. How are RFP requirements different if procuring a cost rather than building from scratch?

Joyce Rose: Mary do you want to tackle that?

Elizabeth Mertinko: That's a whole different webinar.

Mary Kernander: Yes. That's a webinar unto itself. I don't know an easy answer or short or straightforward answer for that. If truly if you have a business need and you're going out with an RFP my assumption is going to be and my experience has been that you do not have a preconceived notion whether it's a cost or it's going to be custom development.

So from a requirement perspective specifying the business need really does in my opinion and Joyce you can certainly speak up and disagree with me. But my opinion is a business need is a business need whether it's satisfied by a vendor coming in and creating a system for you or a COTS product that a vendor has that will satisfy your needs as well.

Joyce Rose: Yes. I don't think the importance of specifically defining requirements is lessened just because you may be going after a COTS solution. In fact it may be even more tightened because, you know, you can't really make many modifications to a COTS product.

Elizabeth Mertinko: I'm remembering Mary earlier in the presentation too you talked about the business requirements really being about describing what the need is and not how to solve the need.

Mary Kernander: Correct.

Elizabeth Mertinko: So I don't know if that sort of factors into this conversation as well that I don't know that it impacts maybe your requirements as much but it's a whole other different set of considerations.

Mary Kernander: Correct. I mean, you know, business requirements are what it is you need and not how are you going to satisfy that need. So again whether you go out with and you choose a vendor to do a custom system or you choose a COTS product that satisfies 95% of your needs, it's still the RFP does need to specify what your business needs are.

Joyce Rose: Absolutely. Elizabeth let's jot that down for a potential webinar topic.

Elizabeth Mertinko: Yes. I've actually gotten several people suggesting we do just that. So yes, we'll definitely look at that. It sounds like it's a topic of interest. Also I have a reminder too that with some of the questions that we've put out to the group today - we do have the SACWIS listserv and you're certainly welcome to put the questions out to the list serve or to share your experience via that venue. So if we've got anyone who prefers not to talk on the phone today but maybe wants to take the chat over to the listserv, that's certainly a tool that you have for some of these bigger questions.

Gabrielle do we have anyone lined up?

Coordinator: No. I'm showing no questions from the phone lines.

Joyce Rose: Okay. Let's do - I think we've had a marvelous discussion and thank you to our attendees and our audience for submitting questions and hopefully you didn't stump the panel too badly. So let's figure out what we've accomplished today.

Today we've shared with you a basic refresher on the construction and purpose of requirements and have really set the framework leading into the

January webinar which is writing and evaluating an RFP which will feature Dave Jennings as our guest presenter. Further information regarding that webinar will be forthcoming and we hope all of you who have attended this webinar found it to be informational and a valuable resource as you define requirements whether for a procurement effort or simply in your day to day activities.

So if you have any questions or would like to contact our guest participant, please do not hesitate to contact me at the email listed above. Again this webinar has been recorded and will be made available online. When it is complete and posted we will send the message via the SACWIS manager listserv with the link.

So I want to thank you. I want to again thank Mary Kernander for an excellent presentation. Thank you, Mary.

Mary Kernander: Thank you Joyce.

Joyce Rose: And of course I would be remised if I did not wish everyone happy holidays to you and yours. Thank you for attending and goodbye.

Coordinator: And with that we will conclude today's conference. Thank you for your participation. You may disconnect at this time.

END