Requirements Gathering (RRG) outline

A Rapid Requirement Gathering meeting is a massively parallel, collaborative, noisy, chaotic exercise to quickly elicit requirements from a diverse group of people with little preparation.

The meeting has a well defined and rigid high level structure. This structure takes the form of a set of timed, successive activities. At the lowest level, the meeting is ordered chaos. Indeed, the higher level structure is violated at the lowest level.

RRG meetings are FUN! If you don’t laugh, throw things, be sarcastic, play, or otherwise enjoy yourself, something is wrong. As you leave, the room should look like a tornado blew through it.

But in spite of (or because of) the fun and chaos, RRG meetings quickly pull a categorized, prioritized, and actionable list of requirements from a diverse group of stakeholders.

Here are the activities:

1. Intro and review
   • Announce goals and purpose
   • Provide examples of requirements
2. Enumerate items
   • Attendees write as many requirements as they can think of within a fixed period of time
   • One concept-sentence per note
3. Review items
   • Quickly read each requirement aloud and randomly stick it on the wall. Allow additions.
   • After this stage, the wall should look like this:

4. Associate items
   • Collaborate to arrange into affinity groups. Allow additions if needed. Don’t let people place category labels at this point.
   • After this stage, the wall should look like this:

5. Categorize items
   • Collaborate to label each affinity group with a meaningful “title”. Add or re-associate specific requirements if necessary.
   • After this stage, the wall should look like this:
6. Rationalize items
   - Remove duplicates. Simplify, clarify, rewrite, add or re-categorize concepts as necessary.
   - After this stage, the wall should look like this:

7. Prioritize items by category
   - Collaborate to stack rank by priority top to bottom. Any previous step is ok at this point.
   - After this stage, the wall should look like this:

8. Discuss results
   - Strictly limit discussion to the highest three or fewer priority items in each category.

9. Rank overall importance
   - Each person casts 5 cross-category dot votes for what they think is most important.
   - After this stage, the wall should look like this:

10. Final Review
    - Summarize the results and announce next steps.

When the meeting is over, the facilitator will remove and stack the results in priority order like this:

Put a rubber band around the stack **BEFORE** you drop it.
Enter each requirement into your favorite lifecycle tool from the top down (in priority order).
Facilities

- Appropriately sized room with tables centered in room
- Projector strongly recommended for presentation of goals
- Ample smooth walls (Plaster, drywall, glass or whiteboard ok)
- Ample space in room to congregate near the walls

Supplies

- Many pads of 3x5 yellow sticky notes
- Some 3x5 sticky notes of a different color.
- Sharpie marking pens for all participants
- One rubber band
What is the goal of this meeting?
- <Fill in your own description here.>

How will we do this?
- A Rapid Requirements Gathering (RRG) exercise

What is an RRG exercise?
- A meeting with rigid high-level structure, but nearly anarchistic low level structure.
- A meeting that takes lots of competing and diverse ideas and boils them down into what’s important very quickly

Why is an RRG exercise appropriate for this purpose?
- It’s fun. If this meeting isn’t fun, then we are doing it wrong. Nobody falls asleep in an RRG meeting. Make jokes, talk, shout, wad up paper and throw it at someone you want to make a point with. Generally, the room is a mess when we finish.
- Little preparation on anyone’s part is required
- We get quick resolution. We enter the meeting with our own opinions and leave with a consistent viewpoint of what is important and why.
- There is anonymity built in, so individuals can be more open in expressing their opinions.

What is the format of the RRG meeting?
These are the high level phases:
1. Intro and review
2. Enumerate items
3. Review items
4. Associate items
5. Categorize items
6. Rationalize items
7. Prioritize items by category
8. Discuss results
9. Rank overall importance
10. Final Review