

(C) 2005 Thomson/West. No Claim to Orig. U.S. Govt. Works.

3/1/05 SOFTWAREQPROF 36

3/1/05 Software Quality Prof1 36  
2005 WLNR 4359150

Software Quality Professional  
Copyright 2005 American Society for Quality

**March 1, 2005**

Volume 7; Issue 2

Requirements by Collaboration

Duncan, Scott

Requirements by Collaboration Ellen **Gottesdiener**. 2002. Addison-Wesley (<http://www.awprofessional.com>). 339 pages. ISBN: 0-201-78606-0. GSQE Body of Knowledge area: Software Quality Management

The book's preface states that it "explains how to plan and hold workshops to meet two essential needs: efficiently defining user requirements while building positive, productive working relationships." It goes on to say that it "focuses on the essential tools you need for planning and leading requirements workshops. It integrates user requirements modeling, including use cases, business rules, and collaborative techniques." So the book is about "facilitating a requirements workshop" more than it is about the technical aspects of requirements definition and validation. Indeed, as it says later in the book, the techniques and approaches described could be used to facilitate almost any kind of workshop. Even the material on modeling, though related specifically to requirements, could be used in contexts other than a workshop.

Having attended a workshop given by **Gottesdiener** on the subject of facilitation at the Agile Development Conference last June in Salt Lake City, I can say that the advice related to facilitation is quite good. Of course, seeing someone facilitate a workshop as a way of demonstrating the kind of advice in this book is more effective than reading about it. I can say, however, that the ideas and advice in the book can work well in practice. Indeed, in Chapter 1, **Gottesdiener** notes how approaches in the book "are a modern-day variant of joint application design, also known as joint application development."

To cover the material, the book is divided into three parts:

- \* Three chapters of "Overview," which provide a "high-level overview of the various models that are the primary deliverables of a requirements workshop" and describe "the elements you need to achieve success with a requirements workshop."
- \* Six chapters of "Framework," which discuss having a common goal, what roles people play, workshop ground rules, workshop products, meeting place/time logistics, and how the workshop should flow.
- \* Three chapters of "Design Strategies," which cover "navigation" (for example, breadth-first, depth-first), some case studies, and making "workshops a best practice."

The topic of quality assurance, though, is dealt with in about four pages that list some "tools" to apply to check the quality of the already elicited requirements (for example, checklists, walkthroughs, matrices). So this is not a book about requirements traceability, testability, and so on. It does, however, do a good job of facilitating workshops with requirements elicitation as its major application example.

AUTHOR\_AFFILIATION

Reviewed by Scott Duncan

[sduncan@tsys.com](mailto:sduncan@tsys.com)