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Design of an Enterprise-Level Business System

There are several business information-gathering methods one can use to gather information one needs in order to do an analysis of a business. One method is a simple survey but when one uses this method one must be extremely careful about how the questions are worded. The wrong wording or a complicated question can return a bad result this is if the people in the corporation even return the survey. One can say the retuned survey is a valid survey only if about 30 percent of the sent surveys are returned. Another method for business information-gathering is interviews with everyone or just with key people in a corporation. The one large problem doing this method is time. This method is very time consuming. The other problem with this method is, people will tell you what you want to here or they will tell you how it all should be done according to them. When this happens one does not get accurate information but gets a story. The third method is gathering all of the standard operating procedures (SOP) and just using them to gather the information one needs to do an analysis of the system. The best method is probably a blending of all three methods into one large method. The method I have used in the past and still will use in the future is, a simple strait forward survey followed up by interviewing key people in the corporation and then going over the SOP of the corporation.

Identify which business process mapping method you recommend for use in design activity. In business process mapping there are several tools one can use to convey the information gathered in the information gathering stage. Depending on whom you are and whom you talk to you will be told one tool is better then another tool. It all seams to be what ever the tool of the month is. Some of the tools are; Microsoft Visio, Rational Suite, BPwin, ERwin, entity relationship diagram (ERD), object oriented diagram (OOD), flow charts, Hieratical process flow diagram. These are just

a few of the programs or methods one can use. For this system analyzer I have a preference of using a program to facilitate the uses of flow charts because I believe flow charts are the best method in representing how a process flows and what controls a process.

Requirements can be functionally allocated to human interface by using a simple program. The program is a graphical interface environment (GUE). There are several types of GUE programs out there along with different languages for each; Microsoft Visual Basic editor with Visual Basic, Microsoft C-sharp editor with C#, Jbuilder with C++ or JAVA, IBM JAVA builder with JAVA. The GUE environment allows the analyst to sit down with users and design the windows the end users will see. This method also allows the analyst to demonstrate the functionality of the prototype process he has developed. The benefit of using a GUE to design the windows users will see is large because once you have a end design an analyst can have the corporation sign off on the human interface and then the analyst can focus on the requested process under development.

The design methods of surveying, interviewing, and going over SOP, and tools like, Microsoft Visio, Rational Suite, BPwin, ERwin, entity relationship diagram (ERD), object oriented diagram (OOD), flow charts, Hieratical process flow diagram, can be useful in understanding the design. What the listed tools and methods allow the analyst to do is get an idea of the required process and environment the corporation expects the users of the enterprise-level business system to have and use. By using a GUE environment an analyst can get the corporation to sign off on the end users windows. Also the analyst can use a GUE environment to prototype the enterprise-level business system and get the corporation to sign off on the prototype.

There are several design trade-off issues within a final design. Some of the trade-off might be for cost or time to implement. The design might be so complicated the corporation decides to scale back because of time constraints or the constraint of cost of the final project. Also another

type of design trade-off might be the type of language used to write the modifications to the enterprise-level business system when one gets the program and the source code from the company who created the enterprise-level business system the analyses may find out it is written in a language the analysis or his programs are not familiar with. When this happens the analysis will have to make a choice either to train his programmers or to out-source the modifications to a company. Another type of trade-off is choosing the database associated with the enterprise-level business system. The analysis must look at the documentation which came with the enterprise-level business system and then make the best judgment in the type of database to use for the software. These are just a few of the example an analysis must look at when considering design trade-off for the enterprise-level business system.