

Designing An Approach to Analysing and Managing User Requirements

It is my opinion that there is a common set of skills, knowledge and competences but the focus needs to be different for different applications. I will illustrate this briefly;

Underpinning Content:

- Requirements Management processes. A number of fields address different aspects hence a range of tools, technique and processes suitable for different applications can be drawn from these areas. For example:
 - IT Requirements Management
 - Sales and Marketing; User requirements. Specific tools include Quality Function Deployment – probably overkill, but the principles transfer

Also, where negotiation is needed to agree scope and priorities, there is valuable materials in best practice in

- Consulting skills; including Influencing & negotiating skills

This is an area where the required aptitude is difficult to acquire

To develop skills it is necessary to draw (only) on best practice in the area. Best practice in most areas is invariably underpinned by a systematic approach, harnessing the learning from repeated experience to develop repeatable ways of doing things better than with no process. Added to particular tools and techniques from different areas, I believe that the skills set of systematic working is a valuable underpinning skill.

- Systematic approaches

I also recommend the 7 Management & Planning Tools (sometimes called the 7 new Quality Control Tools) as they are useful in understanding complex issues and breaking down complex problems or projects into manageable steps.

The environment is characterised by many stakeholders and huge degrees of interdependency. Few products or services are discrete but are part of wider offerings delivered by a number of other organisations. It is a crucial requirement that IA staff work with other people to ensure that things are scoped appropriately and fit together so that a valuable-whole is delivered to the ultimate customer. Hence I recommend two additional skills into the underpinning skill set, as follows:

- Scoping
- (Systematic) Collaborative working. Eg 'Team-based Planning'

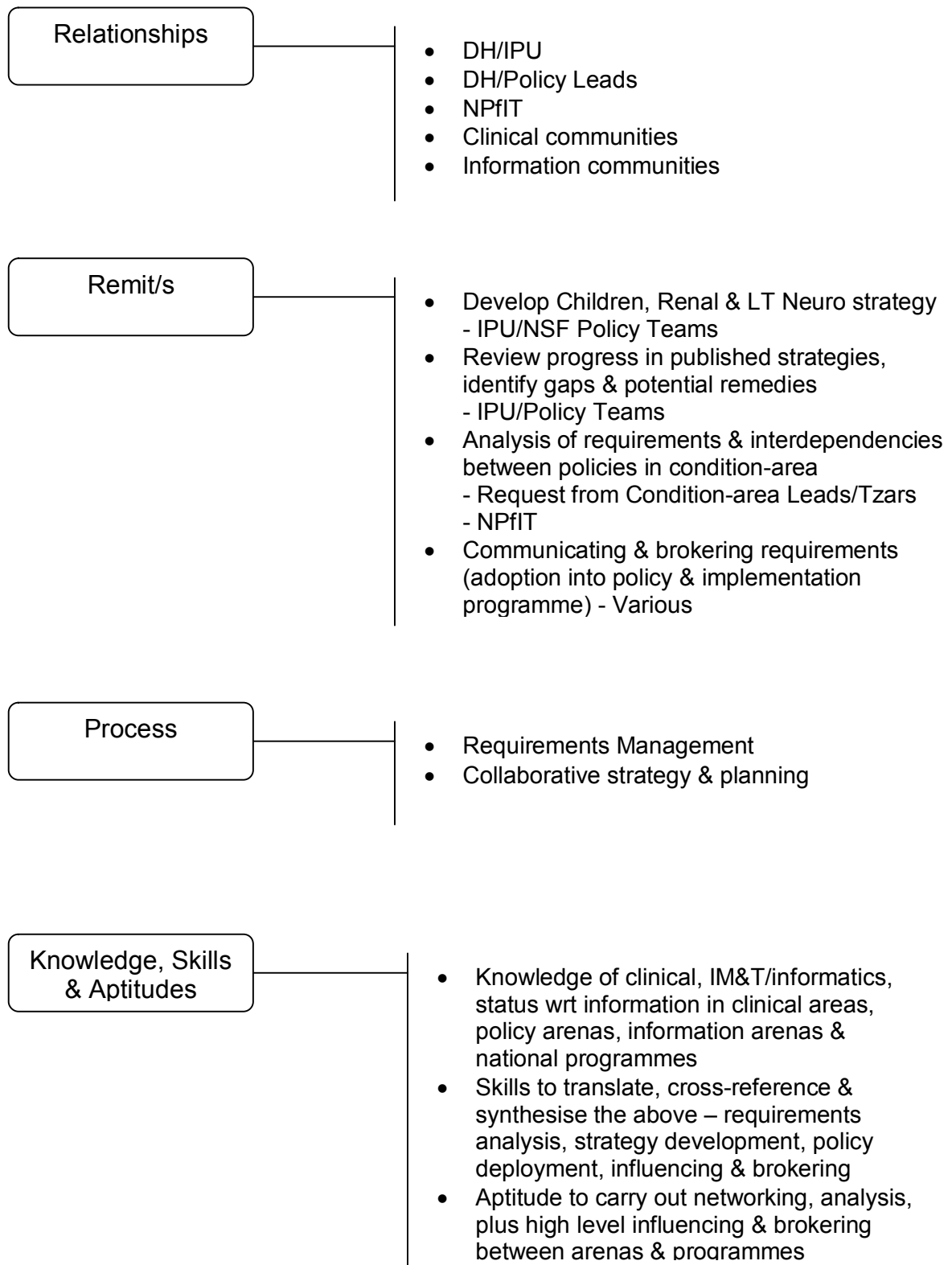
Requirements Analysis & Management Applications

Here are some initial examples of specific applications and two minutes of reflection on each.

- General information strategy development, eg writing an IS for BUPA
- Requirements analysis for a work unit. With particular requirements for units responsible for information services (as needs to be underpinned by understanding of the interdependent nature of the environment and the architecture of information solutions).
Features: Focus on user needs analysis plus specification of discrete products and services. Can draw on information requirements management processes as used in IT world, also user requirements processes as used in sales and marketing. Lesser application of strategic planning approaches
- Requirements analysis for an organisation (similar to above but requires more focus the overall 'market' and less detail on individual products)
Features: Picks up part of strategic planning & analysis of the environment. Focus on user needs analysis.
Draws on processes used in marketing & strategic planning. Plus information architectures where in an information-based environment.

Appropriate profiles and requirements models could be developed for each these.

Profile of NSF Information Strategy Programme



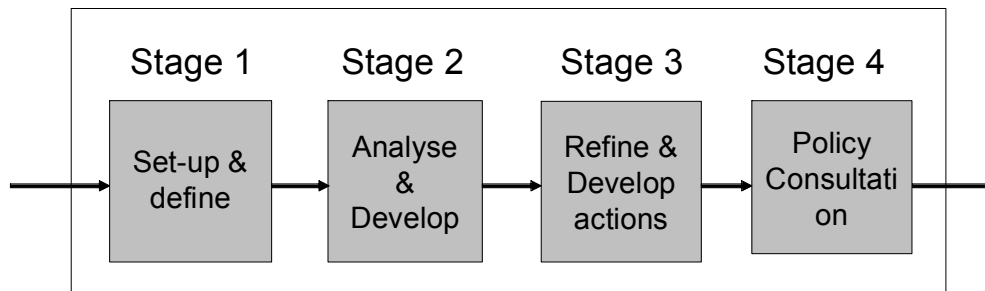
**Managing Requirements for
NSF Information Strategy Development
- Skills Set**

	High	Medium	Can/Could do it	Potential
Clinical needs analysis	Clinical co-ordinators / Leads Martin			
Facilitation of clinical needs analysis	Andrew Esther	Martin		Raj Richard
Relationship brokering / Networking	Martin Andrew	Esther	Richard	Raj
Requirements Management process	Andrew	Esther	Martin Raj Richard Rod	
Technical brokering	Andrew	Esther		Martin Raj Richard
Workshop Facilitation eg Advisory Group	Esther	Andrew	Martin	Raj Richard
Analysis				
Analysis; structuring, analysis & presentation		Richard? Raj? Rod?	Martin	
Scoping & design of analysis	Andrew Esther	Richard	Rod Raj	Martin
Drafting requirements	Rod Richard? Andrew	Raj Esther	Martin	
Presentation of analysis/policy documentation	Andrew	Richard Martin		Raj

This matrix is specific to the nature of the work for writing requirements to support policy initiatives. A related but different set would be appropriate for other situations.

Requirements for Information Strategy Development By Stage of Work

Template Used to At Set up Of Information Strategy Team (Prior to Development of the formal Requirements Management Process)



	Stage			
	1	2	3	4
NHS (Context)				
1 Understanding of clinical discipline	L	H	H	L
2 Knowledge of service area	L	H	H	L
3 Credibility & contacts (& clout) in clinical discipline/service area	L	H	M	H (L time)
4 Knowledge of working with DoH	H	M	H	H
5 Ability to effectively work with different professional groups		H	M	
Technical				
6 Experience with current information systems in NHS		H	H	
7 Understanding of future development of info in NHS		H	H	H
8 In depth understanding of information systems		H	H	H
9 Outcome-driven consultation	M	H		
10 Research		H	L	
11 Report writing/ (technical) authoring	H	H	H	H (L time)
Process				
12 Project management; planning, organisation, controlling, motivating	H**	H	H	H (L time)
13 In depth understanding of strategy design & development	H**	H	M	H (L time)
14 In depth understanding of information strategy design & development	H**	H**	H**	H
15 Information systems analysis & design (methodology)	H	H	H	L
16 Facilitation	H	H**	H	L

Requirements for Information Strategy Development

Template Used to At Set up Of Information Strategy Team (Prior to Development of the formal Requirements Management Process). This could be updated to take into consideration developments since that time.

Skills & Knowledge Required for Information Strategy	Project Stage				Sherin	Tony	Esther	Peter	Kate	Martin
	1	2	3	4						
NHS (Context)										
1 Understanding of clinical discipline	L	H	H	L						
- Children									3	1
- Renal									3	1
- LT Neuro Conditions									1	2
2 Knowledge of service area	L	H	H	L						
- Children							1	1	3	2
- Renal									3	1
- LT Neuro Conditions									1	2
3 Credibility & contacts (& clout) in clinical discipline/service area	L	H	M	H(L time)						
- Children					1			1	3	2
- Renal					1			1	2	1
- LT Neuro Conditions					1			1	1	2
4 Knowledge of working with DoH	H	M	H	H	2			2	1	2
5 Ability to effectively work with different professional groups		H	M		1-2		2	2	2	2
Technical										
6 Experience with current information systems in NHS		H	H		1		1	1	1	1-2
7 Understanding of future development of info in NHS		H	H	H	2-3					
8 In depth understanding of information systems		H	H	H		2	2	2		
9 Outcome-driven consultation	M	H			1-2	1	3	3	1	1
10 Research		H	L		2		2	2	2	1-2
11 Report writing/ (technical) authoring	H	H	H	H(L time)	1	1	2	3	1	2
Process										
12 Project management; planning, organisation, controlling, motivating	H**	H	H	H(L time)	2	3	3	3	1	1
13 In depth understanding of strategy design & development	H**	H	M	H(L time)	1-2	1	3	3	2	2
14 In depth understanding of information strategy design & development	H**	H**	H**	H	1-2	1	2	2	1	1
15 Information systems analysis & design (methodology)	H	H	H	L		2	2	1	1	
16 Facilitation	H	H**	H	L	1	1	3	3	2	2