

Developing Use Case Descriptions

Iterations

1. Assign use cases to various iterations, based on priority, complexity, and dependency.
2. You will most likely write your use case descriptions over multiple iterations.

Flow of Work

1. Determine the use case's goal.
2. Write a brief description for each identified use case.
3. Review and agree on brief description.
4. Work with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and develop the use case descriptions for that iteration.

Things to Consider When Writing Use Case Descriptions

1. Before writing use case descriptions determine the actors' flow of work when interacting with the system.
2. Always challenge yourself and ask "Am I describing a something that has meaningful / observable value for the business?"
3. Ask yourself "What is it the actor is really trying to do?"

If you have use cases like "Find Order," "Search for Index," or "Locate Carrier"

– ask yourself –

Why am I trying to "Find an Order," "Search for an Index," or "Locate Carrier."

This simple question may help you level set and see that your use cases were too granular.

You may find that you are really trying to "Place an Order," "Manage an Index," or "Assign Load to Carrier."

4. Again, think meaningful / observable value for the business and the actor.
5. Stay away from technology, screens, or simply focusing on screen flow.
6. Leverage a *Use Case Template*, but if the template isn't capturing the information you want or it's difficult for you to work with than modify it.
7. Describe the workflow in the use case template and use indenting to aid readability.
8. On your first pass **ignore** reusable logic. Focus on describing the business process.
9. Do **not** focus on <<include>> and <<extend>> relationship.
10. Use a simple class diagram or glossary to help in writing.

Last But Not Least...

1. Review use cases with subject matter experts (SMEs) and stakeholders to gain consensus.
2. You may wish to develop screen snapshots or even a simple prototype for each use case.
3. Adjust the class diagram & glossary as necessary.
4. Whether or not you actually develop formal, essential use case descriptions I've found it's the discussions with the SMEs to be of the most value.
5. Be pragmatic!!!