

#REtalk



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How did your adventure in Requirements Engineering (RE) started?

Kind of by accident (or fate, you might call it!). I was sent to a project in Turkey as a Technical Consultant - my background at the time being mostly as a developer - and arrived to find that the BA Lead had been delayed by several weeks due to passport issues. After dinner with the Project Manager and the Solution Architect, I suddenly found myself filling in in that role - and the rest, as they say, is history...

What are the most important lessons you've learned about RE, Business and Leadership?

My RE-training first requires me to point out that there are three different, though overlapping, concerns in that question ;-) ...and I'm unqualified to say very much about two out of the three! With regard to lessons learned in RE, however: one thing that does seem to be true is that instincts regarding the areas of a problem that do not seem to be sufficiently understood at the start of a project usually turn out to be justified in the long run. The second thing I have learned is that you need to be pretty cautious about how and to whom you address questions about those issues, as lack of knowledge can be a sensitive subject!

Which work/person in the field of RE has personally changed the way you see RE?

IREB definitely helped me to see RE as a discipline and career path in its own right, as opposed to just one skill among many in the field of software engineering.

Why do you think companies need Requirements Engineering professionals?

Companies who are implementing software-intensive systems - which is to say, most companies - need professionals who are capable of handling the complexities of that task. That is, people who can understand the goals and business processes of the organization as well as the capabilities of technology to automate those processes, not to mention the limitations of technology where some tasks are better left to human beings. Whether or not those professionals are actually called Requirements Engineers now or in the future depends on particular organizations, but it seems to me those are exactly the skills we offer.

What are the biggest challenges RE faces today?

The challenges RE faces today, I think, are both new while in some ways the same as they always were: new in the sense, for example, that AI will require us once again to justify our existence when shortcuts to the RE process (or the software development process as a whole) will seem to be on offer; the same as always in the sense that the challenge with RE has always been to persuade people of the value of careful and methodical thinking, when the temptation is always there to rush forward regardless...