

5 Factors Determining Use Case Form

Determining the form of Use Case for a project is a key planning step and is essentially a communication issue. Since each team member will have a different idea of what Use Cases are, clarity is required. This is necessary for organizing work teams, and provides a clear benchmark for quality management.

Focus **The purpose for developing the description, which is closely related to the scope of the description to be developed**

Process Level | To describe the overall process from end-to-end to enable scope discussions

Business Activity Level | To describe the process limited to a business activity that comprises a portion of the overall process to enable lower level estimations

Component Level | To describe the complete, unambiguous process descriptions to enable simple and accurate design

Style **The level of formality in presentation and rules for defining the Use Case**

Semi-formal | Textual, paragraphs or bulleted; A less formal application of rules or guidelines of Use Case modeling

Formal | 'Structured' Use Case format; Strict application of the rules for modeling Use Cases, and their Main, Exception, and Alternate Flows

Detail **The level of abstraction or granularity to which the process is described in the Use Case**

High Level | Simple structure; 'Actor-verb-entity' syntax; Typically short single sentence / bullet; Typically fewer steps per Use Case

Medium Level | The most common format; Typically adds conditional statements, outcomes and / or business rules to the high level 'Actor-verb-entity' statements

Detailed Level | A complete set of all steps in all variations, fully defined; A comprehensive description of each step in the Use Case; May require multiple sentences or paragraphs to describe the step; Typically a large number of steps

Visibility **The level of understanding of the internal behavior of the process**

Black Box | Not fully understanding the internal behavior of the process / system; e.g. no defining the details of a calculation that is required to be done

White Box | Understanding the internal behavior of the process / system; defining the calculations / algorithms

Type **The purpose for describing the Use Case – Business or System / Design.**

Business | To describe the business process that defines the 'problem' to be given to the design team

System / Design | To describe how the user could interact with a system to accomplish the steps defined in the Business Use Case – a 'solution'

Consider the Audience:

- Business, Developers & Architects, Quality Assurance / Testers, Technical Writers, Trainers, etc