

Technique	Pros	Cons	Recommended Use
Process Flows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May identify how aspects of a process contribute to a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be difficult to understand complicated process flows • May be too high level to help identify problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To analyze a process for the ways the current process contributes to a problem. • To document current and future processes
Affinity Chart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to understand • Helps to organize large amounts of data • Helps to focus your direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not “scientific” more “artistic” • Need to complete more analysis after complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there is a lot of “effect” data to sort through in order to define requirements
5 Whys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple technique • Easy to understand • Best for more simple problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More investigation required after complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the “effect” is known, and the “cause”, while not yet identified, is likely straightforward
Cause and Effect (fishbone diagram)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent for team building • Can analyze more complex problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can take a long time • Requires a lot of resources • More investigation required after complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the “effect” is known, but there are likely multiple “causes” which have not yet been identified
Inter-relationship Diagrams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visualizes complex problems • Can identify which causes are the primary ones producing a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More investigation required after complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When needing to visualize complex problems with many relationships among multiple variables.
Pareto Diagram	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for presentations to management • Illustrates the biggest bang for your buck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting accurate data might be difficult • Selecting the categories is challenging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs efforts to the biggest improvement area

Technique	Description	When to Use	Pros	Cons
Interviews	One on one meetings, either structured or unstructured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early in elicitation period • Few stakeholders or categories of stakeholders • Uncertain scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undivided attention of attendee • See body language & facial expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not get the desired results if questions are not phrased correctly • May apply too much structure and miss valuable information • Lack of experience of interview and interviewee
Surveys / questionnaires	Includes telephone, paper and electronic surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late in the elicitation period • Large number or geographically dispersed stakeholders • To confirm earlier requirements and/or unique stakeholder's requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly accumulate information from many respondents. • Able to collect information from a large group of a short period of time • Relatively small expense 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No opportunity for clarification, answers could be meaningless • Questions are often close-ended • Responses received may not be significant in quantity
Facilitated Workshops	A facilitated working session using a variety of techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce cycle time between discussion and resolution of design issues • Need to cultivate ownership/buy-in amongst stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good way to build trust and increase engagement • Quickly identify issues and resolve them • Synergies in ideas, stimulate new thoughts • Disagreements can be resolved as they occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be expensive to run • Those who are not invited or are required might attend. • Lack of attendance by those who do need to attend. • Facilitating and scribing may slow the process.
Focus groups	Facilitated discussion with carefully selected groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle of the elicitation period • Many stakeholders or types of stakeholders • Useful for obtaining external client perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free flow of ideas and building off feedback • Can watch body language, facial expressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group pressure to agree • May be expensive to run • Attendees may not show
Prototyping (including storyboards, mock-ups, etc.)	Creation of a visual sample of the end product (but lacking in actual functionality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle or later in the elicitation period • When very detailed requirements are required • When choosing between competing requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early feedback to address issues or obtain clarity on requirements • Client engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be throw-away effort, time and cost
Observation	Actually observing the end user performing their role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When interactive access to stakeholders is limited • To discover undocumented activities and workarounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides insight into detailed processes • Provides information and visualization together • Transfer of unbiased, objective information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People may act differently • BA may introduce bias or assumptions into results • Manager may not support the interruption