

Business Rules and Decision Analysis Masterclass

Ronald Ross

Overview

If your processes don't always produce the correct or consistent results, then you probably have a decisioning problem. You need the right techniques to fix these decisioning problems – process models, use cases, data models and other business analysis tools just don't do the job.

Decisions are day-to-day, minute-to-minute decisions in running the business. Generally, the decisions are made within some business process, which might or might not be formally organized by a model. The important thing about these operational decisions is that they are highly repetitive – they might be taking place hundreds or thousands of times per day, per hour, or even per minute. They are predictable and fairly well structured in terms of the kinds of outcomes they produce. You want such decisions to be consistent and traceable across platforms, channels and organizational units.

Business Rules are the criteria for making these decisions. Business rules should be treated as a first-class requirement so they can be validated, managed and changed as easily and as quickly as possible. For that, you need to know how to express business rules, and organize them into decision tables wherever possible.

This hands-on workshop gives you the essential tools you need to achieve order-of-magnitude improvements in your company's capacity to manage decisions. The result is simpler, smarter process models and a huge boost in business agility. Learn applied techniques from the recognized world leader in the field.

Learning Objectives

- Conduct smarter, more effective business analysis
- Identify and analyze decisions in business processes
- Organize effective projects to harvest business rules
- Write clear, business-friendly rule statements
- Create robust decision tables
- Know what technique to use, and when
- Validate decision logic with business people
- Identify anomalies in decision logic and correct them early
- Perform concept analysis and develop a structured business vocabulary
- Develop appropriate visualizations, including fact models, decision structures, and dependency diagrams
- Develop smart Q&A dialogs as part of system design
- Establish comprehensive traceability for your business rules
- Develop a pragmatic rule management approach

Seminar and Workshop Outline

What Business Rules and Decision Analysis Are About

- Why business rules
- What business rules are, and are not
- How decision analysis fits in
- What skills you need to capture business rules effectively
- Business rules vs. business processes
- What every business analyst needs to know

Rule Reduction

- Basic principles for rule analysis
- Rules vs. facts
- Policy and governance to deployable rules
- Traceability for the business - not just IT

Expressing Your Business Rules

- What to avoid and why
- Business policies vs. practicable rules vs. automated rules
- Eliminating ambiguity
- Guidelines
- Addressing exceptions

Concept Analysis

- What do terms really mean
- How you figure it out
- Why it really does matter
- Guidelines for definitions
- Do's and don'ts
- What every business analyst should know

Fact Models: Developing a Structured Business Vocabulary

- Guidelines for definitions
- Visualization
- Developing facts - case studies
- Using rules for current business practices
- What to avoid
- Facts from rules

Challenging Your Rules

- Validation and verification
- Forms of redundancy
- Equivalences, subsumptions, conflicts and other anomalies
- Rule quality

What Decisions and Decision Logic are About

- Business process rules vs. business know-how rules
- Understanding your problem space
- The techniques you need to know

Decision Analysis

- What decision analysis is
- The elements of decisions
- Identifying cases and criteria
- Identifying outcomes
- What's the question
- How to establish scope
- How to refine scope
- How to handle exceptions
- How to keep the decision logic as simple as possible
- Slim decision logic

The Structure of Decisions

- Independent sub-decisions
- Diagramming decision structures
- Decision dependencies
- Shaping and refining the question
- How business motivation shapes the question and outcomes
- Metrics

Decision Tables: The Basics

- Boxing the decision
- How to set up the table
- Revisiting business processes
- How you can test if the decision logic is complete
- How facts and the fact model fit in
- Defaults
- Restrictions on criteria and outcomes
- Missing criteria
- How do you wrap it up
- Best practices

Decision Tables: Advanced Analysis Skills

- Alternative formats
- When you should use the traditional format
- Completeness, subsumption and conflicts
- Dangers of the traditional format
- General rules and single point of change
- Pre-emption and dependencies

Audience

- Business Analyst
- Systems Analyst
- Decision Support
- Enterprise Architect
- Business Architect
- Information Architect
- Change Management
- Business Improvement Manager
- IT Manager
- IT Consultant
- Project Manager

and all IT Professionals responsible for achieving order-of-magnitude improvements in their company's capacity to manage decisions.

Special Features

- Taught by the author of 3 of the most popular books in the space:
 - *Business Rule Concepts (Second Edition)*
 - *Principles of the Business Rule Approach*
 - *The Business Rule Book*
- All delegates will receive a free copy of Ron Ross's book *Business Rule Concepts (3rd Ed.)*, 2009
- The most up-to-date ideas and hands-on best practices in business rules and decisioning
- Bridging business vision, technical innovation and practical experience

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Presenter



Ronald G. Ross is a Principal of Business Rule Solution. Mr Ross is also Co-Founder

and Executive Editor of www.BRCCommunity.com home of the Business Rules Journal. Mr. Ross is the author of a half-dozen professional books. His newest works on business rules are *Business Rule Concepts (3rd Ed., 2009)* and *Principles of the Business Rule Approach (Addison-Wesley, 2003)*. He is Chair of the annual Business Rules Forum Conference. He was a charter member of the Business Rules Group in the 1980's and editor of its two landmark papers, "Business Motivation Model" and the Business Rules Manifesto. He is also active in the OMG Business Rules standards development. Mr. Ross is internationally recognized as the "father of business rules."

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Seminar Timetables

08.30 – 09.00 Registration (first day only) 09.00 – 12.30 Event
12.30 – 13.30 Lunch 13.30 – 17.00 Event

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