BA TOOLKIT · PRACHIT PARIKH

Requirements AI agents can actually build

An 8-point checklist for business analysts, product owners and anyone who writes specs for AI coding agents.

Prachit Parikh · Business Analyst · Requirements, SQL data validation, UAT

THE SHIFT

AI agents build exactly what you write.

At machine speed, and they rarely stop to ask what you meant. Spec-driven tools like GitHub Spec Kit and AWS Kiro now ask you to write the spec before the agent builds anything.

So a vague requirement no longer costs a meeting. It costs a confident build of the wrong thing.

1

CHECK 1 OF 8

One behavior per requirement

"Validate, save and notify" is three requirements, not one.

ONE BLOB

The system validates the order, saves it and emails the customer.

THREE REQUIREMENTS

REQ-1 validate the order
REQ-2 save the order
REQ-3 email the customer

2

CHECK 2 OF 8

Trigger, condition, outcome

When X happens, if Y is true, the system does Z.

```
WHEN an order is submitted, IF its total is over
the customer's credit limit, THE SYSTEM SHALL set
the order status to HOLD.
```

3

CHECK 3 OF 8

Numbers, not adjectives

"Fast", "easy" and "secure" can't be tested. Numbers can.

ADJECTIVE

The search should be fast.

NUMBER

Search returns results in under 2 seconds for 95% of requests.

4

CHECK 4 OF 8

Named data

Say which field and which values. Agents fill gaps with guesses.

VAGUE NOUN

Check the customer status.

NAMED FIELD

`customer.status`, one of Active, On Hold, Closed.

5

CHECK 5 OF 8

Unhappy paths written down

The happy path is the easy part. Write down what happens when things go wrong.

- Blank or invalid fields
- Timeouts
- Duplicates
- No permission

6

CHECK 6 OF 8

At least one concrete example

Input in, output out. One real example clears up more than a page of prose.

$12,500 to a beneficiary added 3 hours ago → held. The same payment to a beneficiary added 30 days ago → released.

7

CHECK 7 OF 8

A test you could run

If you can't say how you'd prove it, it isn't finished.

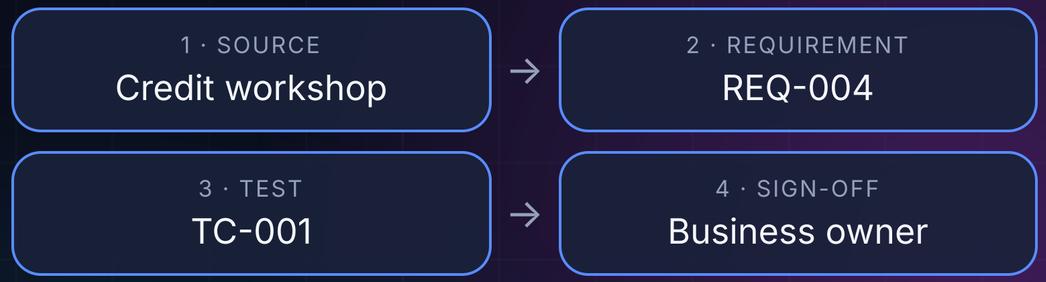
```
GIVEN customer C100 with a $50,000 credit limit
WHEN an order for $60,000 is submitted
THEN the order status is HOLD and the credit team
is notified within 5 minutes
```

8

CHECK 8 OF 8

Traceable

Every requirement links back to where it came from and forward to the test that proves it.



EARS NOTATION

Give every requirement a fixed shape

Event-driven	`WHEN [trigger], THE SYSTEM SHALL [response].`
State-driven	`WHILE [state], THE SYSTEM SHALL [response].`
Unwanted behavior	`IF [condition], THEN THE SYSTEM SHALL [response].`
Optional feature	`WHERE [feature is included], THE SYSTEM SHALL [response].`
Ubiquitous	`THE SYSTEM SHALL [response].`

BEFORE AND AFTER

BEFORE

"Flag suspicious transactions for review."

AFTER

`WHEN` a payment over $10,000 is created for a beneficiary added in the last 24 hours, `THE SYSTEM SHALL` set review_status to PENDING_REVIEW and block release until a user with the Reviewer role approves it.

Plausible code → the right code, plus a free test case.

BEFORE YOU HAND A SPEC TO AN AGENT

Five questions

1. What should happen when the data is missing or wrong?
2. Who is allowed to do this, and who isn't?
3. What does "done" look like in numbers?
4. Which existing behavior must not change?
5. How will we know, with data, that the agent built what the business meant?

KEEP GOING

Read it, watch it, use it

READ

AI agents can write the code now. The bottleneck is the requirements.

The full article on Medium

WATCH

The 3-minute animated explainer

youtube.com/@PrachitParikh1

USE

The free BA Toolkit, with this checklist

github.com/prachitparikh/ba-toolkit

Prachit Parikh · Business analyst. Requirements a team can test, data checked with SQL, changes seen through UAT.

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