"Requirements and Specifications." Philosophe. N.p., n.d. Web. 04 Dec. 2012.

<http://philosophe.com/design/requirements/>.

Tran, Eushiuan. "Requirements & Specifications." Electrical and Computer Engineering: Carnegie Mellon

University. N.p., Spring 1999. Web. 04 Dec. 2012. <http://www.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/des\_s99/requirements\_specs/>.

Requirements vs. Specifications

Although the terms requirements and specifications seem to be basically the same term when referring to a project, there are many things different about them. A good way to think of it is that the requirements are the “what” and the specifications are the “how”. You need to determine requirements in order to produce corresponding specifications.

A requirement is “a condition needed by a user to solve a problem or achieve an objective” (Tran). A small group of workers usually sit down and discuss with the client what they want the end product to have, what their need is, and what their goal is to do with the product. Requirements consist of what the end product will do or be used for and the characteristics of what the user wants the product to have. One thing that is important in this meeting is to think of all possibilities of the project. This is because the requirements need to be specified as detailed as possible. If not, there will often be accidents that occur while building the project and might cause the workers to have to rebuild or start the project all over again. The requirements that often cause these problems are called ambiguous requirements, because they can be taken in more than one way. There are also optional requirements called preferences, which the user wants but it is not necessary. It is important to test the requirements to ensure that the requirements are correct.

A specification is “a document that specifies, in a complete, precise, verifiable manner, the requirements, design, behavior, or other characteristics of a system, and often, the procedures for determining whether these provisions have been satisfied” (Tran). They are used to help guide the workers in creating the product. Specifications are used to show how the requirements that were stated are going to be met. For example, in order to create the product, you must create steps of what to do and state specific things that the product needs in order to meet the requirements. These are often called the “rules” of the project. Specifications are often used to help determine the quality of the final product. This is because every “rule” that is stated provides something that can be tested to make sure it has and does everything it needs.