

Requirements and Specification, ESOF 328, Spring 2022
Risk reduction through prototyping, Chapter 15
Feb. 9

Prototypes used to:

- Clarify, complete and validate requirements
- Explore design alternatives
- Create a subset that will grow into the ultimate product

Prototypes help resolve uncertainties early in the development process. Don't prototype the whole system, focus on high-risk areas or known uncertainties.

Be clear about:

- why you are creating the prototype
- what you expect to learn from it (will it focus on the user experience or is it a proof-of-concept)
- what you'll do with it after people have evaluated it (is it throw away or evolutionary)

Risks of prototypes:

- May confuse expectations - stakeholder may get the mistaken opinion that the product is almost done, alternatively, stakeholders may just want developers to finish up the prototype when the prototype was meant to be throw-away
- May confuse what is relevant – users become fixated on an aspect of the prototype which wasn't relevant
- Too much effort is put into prototype

To avoid confusion explain:

- Scope of the prototype – is it a mock-up, focusing on the user experience, or a proof-of-concept, exploring the soundness of some technical idea
- Future use – is it throw-away or evolutionary
- Form – paper or electronic