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A Whale of a Book on Analysis and How to Make it Work

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THIS IS A BOOK FOR ANYONE WHO FINDS OBJECT-oriented anything a concern or an interest. It might even benefit those who don't, because it represents a valid thought process regardless of paradigm. The book seems to have two basic intents: First, describe object-oriented development and the requirements-determination process therein; second, hammer home the importance of determining the correct requirements.

The method the authors use to achieve these intention is to describe an approach named ORCA — object-oriented requirements capture and analysis. However, this is by no means an ORCA text! Rather, the authors say, "this book presents and explains a set of ideas about analysis, together with ways of using these ideas." ORCA produces and permits the analysis of models. It also helps you decide what type of analysis to use in various situations.

ORCA AND MORE. Part I introduces the ORCA approach, describing most of its features and illustrating how it works with a simple case study. Part II uses a more realistic example to demonstrate the full thought process. It moves through understanding the customer's world, locating information sources, selecting the analysis process, building situation models, and developing organizational and IT changes to answer the customer's business needs. Part III discusses modeling languages. It also differentiates between the application of *purposive* models — what we do and why we do it — and *behavioral* models — what we do and how we do it. Part IV introduces how to tailor the ORCA process to fit different scenarios.

The balance of the text concentrates on ORCA. The basic ORCA process includes:

♦ preliminary analysis and information gathering,
♦ analysis process design,
♦ modeling the purpose and behavior of the existing situation,
♦ determining what's wrong and what to change,
♦ modeling the desired situation and prescribing the path to achieve it, and
♦ developing IT solutions and the transition to them.

I liked this book for a couple of reasons. First, it concentrates on understanding both the existing business situation and the development of the desired alternative. They also show the critical importance of requirements analysis and expression (one of my hot buttons).

Second, they introduce object-oriented information clearly. Very little of the typical "OOD is the answer to everything for everybody" hype is present. Rather, their approach is more "OOD is used because it applies to this situation."

Analyzing Systems: Determining Requirements for Object-Oriented Development by Roy MacLean, Susan Stepney, Simon Smith, Nick Tordoff, and David Gradwell, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1994, pp. 294, $48. **READER SERVICE NUMBER 53**

■ **more book reviews on page 122**

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