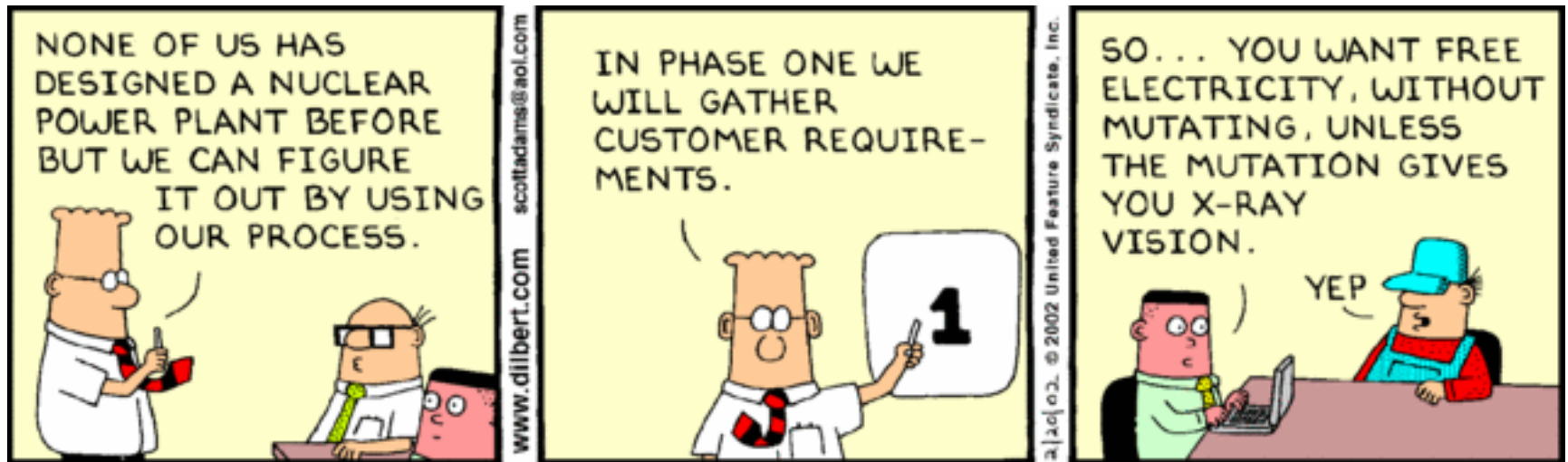


# Lecture 1b part 2

## Interviewing stakeholders



# Why interviews?

## Advantages:

- Direct contact with customer allows for
  - digging deeper; finding out *why* they have certain requirements
  - priority of requirements; what do they really care about?
  - unexpected requirements

## Disadvantages:

- Time-consuming
- Risk of bias

# Why interviews?

In the design project, Barchester City Council does not seem to know what management information they want

- It could be they roughly know what they want, but are hesitant to put it black on white.
  - Then an interview could help a lot.
- If they have no clue at all, an interview won't help
  - Other requirements elicitation techniques, e.g. a focus group, could be productive

# Skill 1: Listen and Understand

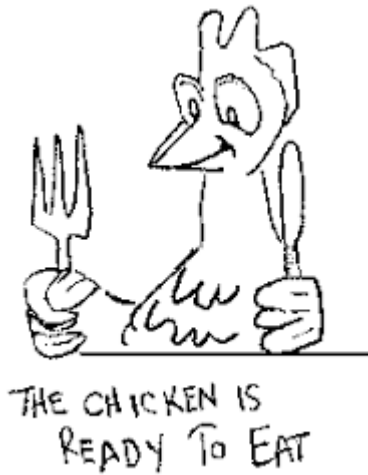
I saw a man on a hill with a telescope.

# Different meanings

**I saw a man on a hill with a telescope.**

- There's a man on a hill, and I'm watching him with my telescope.
- There's a man on a hill, who I'm seeing, and *he* has a telescope.
- There's a man, and he's on a hill that also has a telescope on it.
- I'm on a hill, and I saw a man using a telescope.

# Different meanings/viewpoints





# Different viewpoints Escher diagrams

# Listening Skills

- Google: “Listening Skills”, “Effective Listening”

You get in the order of 246.000.000 results.

Why?

**Good listening and interviewing is an art that needs to be learned and practiced!**

# 10 Steps To Effective Listening

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/womensmedia/2012/11/09/10-steps-to-effective-listening/#2283e7de3891>
- **Step 1: Face the speaker and maintain eye contact.**
- **Step 2: Be attentive, but relaxed.**
- **Step 3: Keep an open mind.**
  - Listen without jumping to conclusions.
- **Step 4: Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is saying.**
- **Step 5: Don't interrupt and don't impose your "solutions."**

# 10 Steps To Effective Listening

- **Step 6: Wait for the speaker to pause to ask clarifying questions.**
- **Step 7: Ask questions only to ensure understanding.**
- **Step 8: Try to feel what the speaker is feeling.**
- **Step 9: Give the speaker regular feedback.**
- **Step 10: Pay attention to what *isn't* said—to nonverbal cues.**
- **At the end: Summarize**

# Skill 2: Interview Skills

## 3 Phases

- Before
- During
- After

# Before

- Determine the goal
- Identify the participants
- Make a list of questions to ask (as far as possible) (you might consider sending high level questions to the interviewee, but be careful to not determine the interview and missing important aspects that you might get using open ended questions)
- Book a convenient place and time for all

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1RIhmf0III>

# During Interview

## i) Start

Pleasantries

Introduction

Agenda/Purpose of  
the interview

## ii) Main part

the 'real' questions

## iii) Closure

summary

follow-up



## i) Starting the interview

- Introduce yourselves - break the ice
  - to get acquainted, to build rapport
- Purpose (briefly)
  - to agree on the goal
- Explain how the interview will be conducted

## ii) Main part

- Ask the right questions - “pitch” (Use questions to drive the session, but keep a balance between structured (closed questions) and open ended questions. You might miss important information if you are too structured.)
- Listen actively
- Take notes
- Ask for clarifications – where appropriate
- Don’t be afraid to ask “why”
- Means
  - rephrase and ask for confirmation
  - have an open attitude, focus on interviewee

## iii) Closing the interview

- Summarize
- Confirm what happens with the results
- Offer to send a written summary of the main points
- Means
  - check non-verbal behaviour
  - Thank the participants, summarize, next steps



# After

- Distribute the summarized information for confirmation. (Send a summary, especially to the interviewee.)

# Important: Make a professional impression

- Know what you're talking about
  - you have done your homework
- Make direct contact with the interviewee
  - the person who does the talking does not hide behind a computer screen
- Be reliable
  - arrive exactly in time, well prepared
  - live up to any promises you make at the interview

# Important: Pitfall

- One of the mistakes interviewers make is formulating the next question in their mind instead of truly listening to what is being said.
- Repeat your understanding back to the interviewee to validate your interpretation of the requirements.

# *Summary: to remember LSD*

- ***Listening*** (let people talk; your body language should express interest)
- ***Summarizing*** (check whether you correctly understood what the interviewee wanted to say)
- ***Digging deeper*** (people often mention *symptoms* of a problem, because that is what they experience; try to get to the *underlying causes*)

# More resources

- Google “Listening skills” and “Requirements Interview Skills”
- Watch talk and interview shows, there are many on youtube  
Analyse them for listening and interviewing skills

## Some URLs:

- <https://requirementstechniques.wordpress.com/elicitation/interview/>
- <https://nuvemconsulting.com/blog/interviewing-tips-for-software-requirements-gathering/>

Funny Bloopers of how things should NOT be done!

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeGVeBWECu8>

***Success with  
your interview!***