USE CASE LANGUAGE CHECKLIST QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

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HOW TO PHRASE USE CASE STEPS

- ✓ **Use active voice**. "Is" often indicates passive voice.
- ✓ **Use present tense**.
- ✓ **Eliminate business process details**. (Essentially anything a user might do that the system cannot be aware of.)

WORDS TO AVOID

- ✓ **And** – When used to separate verbs, typically indicates multiple steps.
- ✓ **Or** – When used to separate verbs, typically indicates multiple steps or alternate flows.
- ✓ **If** – Typically indicates an alternate or exception flow.
- ✓ **After** – Typically indicates multiple steps or a missing step.
- ✓ **Before** – Typically indicates multiple steps and an ambiguous ordering of steps.
- ✓ **Will** – Remove and ask questions if the action seems optional.
- ✓ **Must** – All steps in a use case must happen. Using "must" for some but not all calls into question whether other steps are required.
- ✓ **Can** – Often indicates a step that should be captured as an alternate or even a separate use case.

HOW TO CHOOSE TERMS

- ✓ Replace solution (specifically user interface terms) with clear descriptions. Double check for terms like the following:
  - o Click
  - o Button
  - o Radio button

- o Tab
- o Link
- o Drop-down

✓ Double check that frequently used terms – the nouns in your use case that would be included in a glossary or domain model – are used consistently.

✓ Double check that system actors are referred to consistently – either all as "system" or all as specific system names that are defined as actors in your use case.

✓ Double check that long lists of data elements are organized clearly.