

Software brief template

A good brief describes the problem, not the solution. Answer each question in a few sentences. Short and honest beats long and polished.

1 Background

Who are you, what do you do, and how big is the team?

2 The problem

What is going wrong or taking too long? Say it in one sentence first, then add detail.

3 Who is affected

Which people deal with the problem (staff, customers, managers)? Roughly how many of each?

4 How it works today

Describe the current process, tools and spreadsheets as they really are, mess and all.

5 What good looks like

If this were solved, what would be different? Describe outcomes, not features.

6 Constraints

Any deadline, budget range, systems it must connect to, or compliance and data protection concerns?

7 Out of scope

What are you not asking for? This prevents scope creep before it starts.

8 What you do not know yet

List your honest questions. They show a developer where to dig.

A short, illustrative example

This is an invented example to show the level of detail that works well. It is not a real client.

Background

A twelve-person trades business.

The problem

We lose track of which jobs have been quoted and invoiced.

Who is affected

Two office staff, five people on the road, two directors.

How it works today

A whiteboard, a shared spreadsheet and text messages.

What good looks like

One place to see every job's status. Quotes go out the same day.

Constraints

Must work on phones. Needs to connect to our accounting package.

Out of scope

Payroll.

What we do not know yet

Whether our accounting software can be connected.

What to do with your brief

Send the same brief to two or three companies and compare how they respond. The best replies ask thoughtful questions before talking about price. If you would like to send it to us, email info@technocul.ie or use the form at technocul.ie/contact. A rough draft is fine.