

# Tailoring Options

## Performing Tailoring in Appraisals

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### Clarification of options found in the SCAMPI Tailoring Checklist

The SCAMPI Tailoring Checklist has been a regular feature in the SEI/CMMI Institute’s appraisal plan template since the release of SCAMPI v1.3 in 2011. While the majority of Lead Appraisers now use it in their plans, reviews performed by CMMI Quality Analysts have revealed that some elements of the checklist have, at times, been misunderstood or misapplied.

Frequently, we find that LAs have not updated their plan templates to incorporate the newest version of this checklist. When the SCAMPI Method Definition Document (MDD) Version 1.3a was released in 2013, it unified the SCAMPI A, B, and C methods into one book. It included an updated SCAMPI Tailoring Checklist that incorporated the approved tailoring for each type of appraisal. When Version 1.3b was released in 2014, it introduced the Action Plan Reappraisal (APR). With this new feature added to the method, the SCAMPI Tailoring Checklist was revised to provide the option of delivering an APR (please refer to Appendix H of the MDD). Updating your appraisal plan template to incorporate the newest version of the tailoring checklist is advised, as it can equip an LA for performing SCAMPI B and C appraisals, as well as APRs.

For a SCAMPI A, tailoring for Activity 1.3.2 (“Prepare Team”) provides options for assembling and training a team. The first of these occurs when an LA delivers SCAMPI Appraisal Team Training to more than one team in a single event. Before carrying out such a strategy, however, the LA is required to contact the CMMI Institute Quality Team ([quality@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:quality@cmmiinstitute.com)) to request a waiver. The tailoring checklist also offers LAs the option to use an Appraisal Team Member (ATM) who has less than the minimum-required two years of field experience. Please note that, though this option states “no field experience” in the checklist, that wording is misleading. The inclusion of an ATM with anything less than two years of field experience should be documented in the plan as tailoring.

The tailoring options that affect the starting date for Phase 2 have proven to be the most commonly misinterpreted in the SCAMPI Tailoring Checklist. Primarily, options for tailoring MDD Activities 2.2.1 (“Examine Objective Evidence from Artifacts”) and 2.2.2 (“Examine Objective Evidence from Affirmations”) have caused confusion for some LAs.

The first of these describes a situation wherein artifact review—that is, review of the Organizational Unit’s (OU) documents to determine how their content supports model practice implementation—is performed prior to the onsite period. When this happens, the Conduct Appraisal phase officially begins, and the plan and SCAMPI Appraisal System (SAS) record must document the Phase 2 start date consistently. Please note that characterization is not necessary for this tailoring to have occurred. The act of reviewing, itself, is enough to trigger the start of Phase 2, and the 90-day timeframe in which the phase must be completed.

One of the tailoring options for Activity 2.2.2 is very similar, and is performed when the appraisal team collects affirmations prior to the onsite period. These affirmations can come in the form of interviews, demonstrations, written depositions, etc. Again, please note that characterization does not have to be performed for Phase 2 to have begun; the act of collecting the affirmations is, itself, enough to begin the Conduct Appraisal phase.

Characterization does come into play, though, when looking at tailoring for Activity 1.5.1 (“Perform Readiness Review”). This section of the method has three options on the tailoring checklist, the first of which involves characterization during a readiness review. It’s worth noting that the SCAMPI Tailoring Checklist states that this tailoring option also causes Phase 2 to start; however, as explained earlier, Phase 2 begins well before characterization occurs. If you perform characterization during the readiness review, you have also performed the tailoring to either 2.2.1 or 2.2.2. This inconsistency should have been amended sooner, and we apologize for any confusion it may have caused.

The second tailoring option for Activity 1.5.1 has often been misunderstood. It addresses using a class B or C appraisal as a readiness review for a subsequent A. This is not to be confused with performing a B or C appraisal as a gap analysis; when used for a readiness review, the Phase 2 data collection activities done during the B or C also serve as data collection for the SCAMPI A. For instance, the appraisal team may deliver a Class C as a readiness review for an A, during which they review the OU’s artifacts. When the A appraisal onsite begins, they may then tailor it by letting that earlier artifact review stand as the SCAMPI A’s artifact review, and move directly into collecting affirmations. As with the aforementioned 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 tailoring, the day this tailored evidence review begins for the Class C must be identified as the Phase 2 start date of the SCAMPI A in both the appraisal plan and SAS record.

Tailoring is a key aspect of the SCAMPI method, and helps maintain flexibility for LAs, who often encounter unique organizational contexts when working with their customers. Clearly and consistently documenting tailoring decisions in an appraisal plan is important to ensure the LA, appraisal team, sponsor, and CMMI Institute have a common understanding of the appraisal’s parameters. As a companion action, please remember to document any risks and mitigation strategies that may result from the tailoring decisions that have been chosen.

Questions regarding this Quality Tip can be sent to [quality@cmmiinstitute.com](mailto:quality@cmmiinstitute.com).