



Lecture 17: Modelling System Interactions

→ Interactions with the new system

- ↪ How will people interact with the system?
- ↪ When/Why will they interact with the system?

→ Use Cases

- ↪ introduction to use cases
- ↪ identifying actors
- ↪ identifying cases
- ↪ Advanced features

→ Sequence Diagrams

- ↪ Temporal ordering of events involved in a use case



Moving towards specification

→ What functions will the new system provide?

↳ How will people interact with it?

↳ Describe functions from a user's perspective

→ UML Use Cases

↳ Used to show:

➤ the functions to be provided by the system

➤ which actors will use which functions

↳ Each Use Case is:

➤ a pattern of behavior that the new system is required to exhibit

➤ a sequence of related actions performed by an actor and the system via a dialogue.

→ An actor is:

↳ anything that needs to interact with the system:

➤ a person

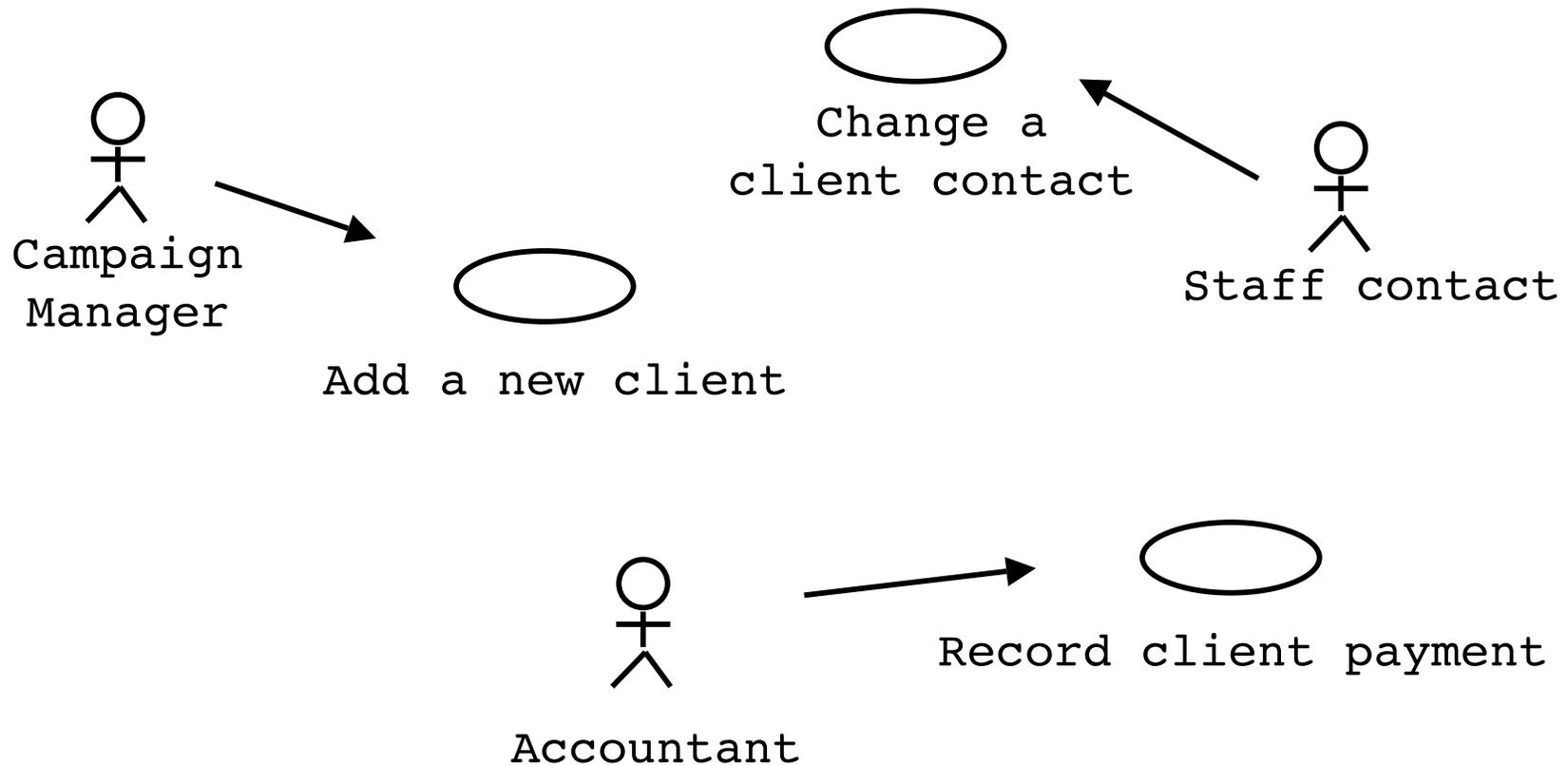
➤ a role that different people may play

➤ another (external) system.



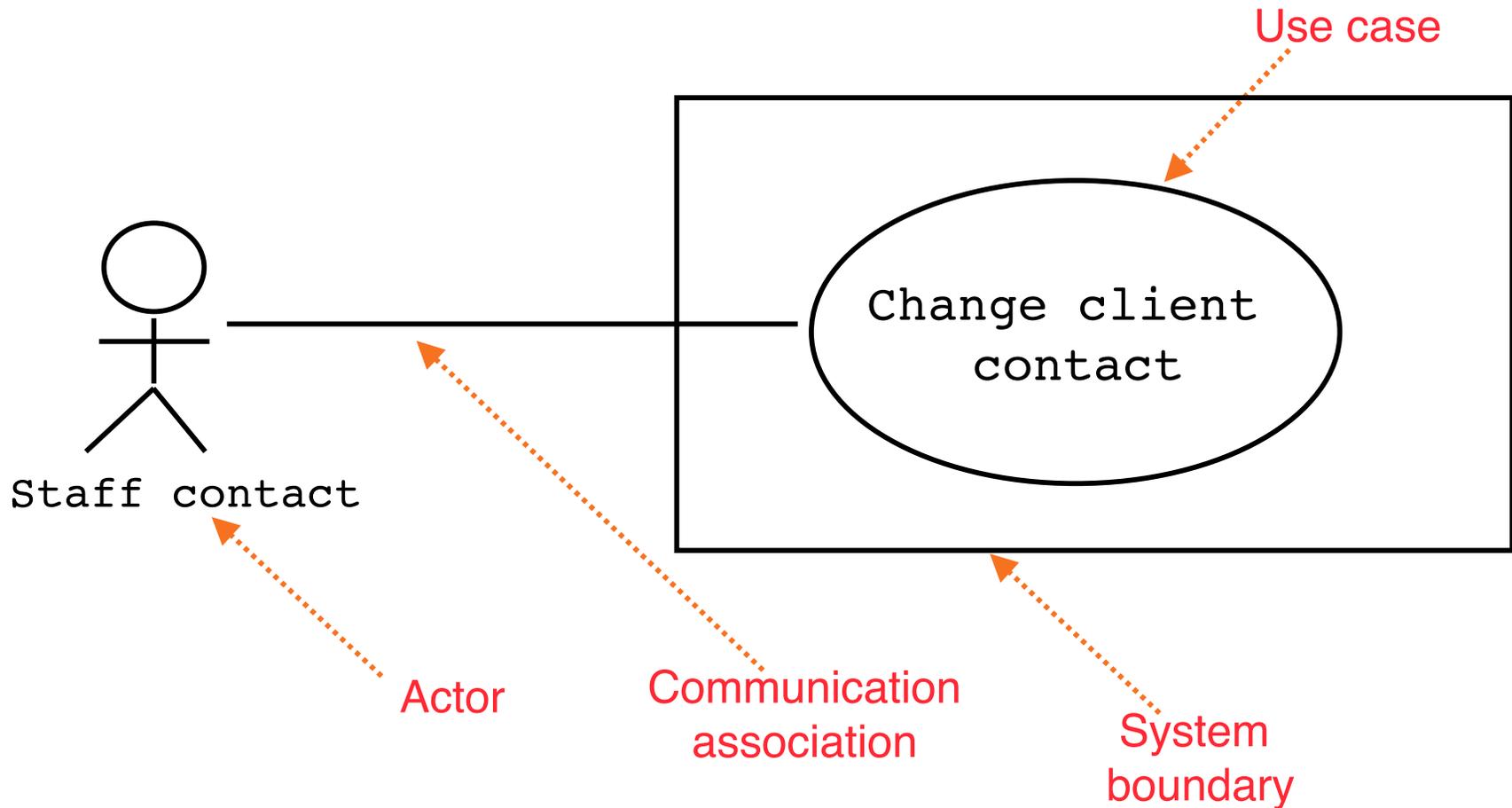
Use Case Diagrams

→ Capture the relationships between actors and Use Cases



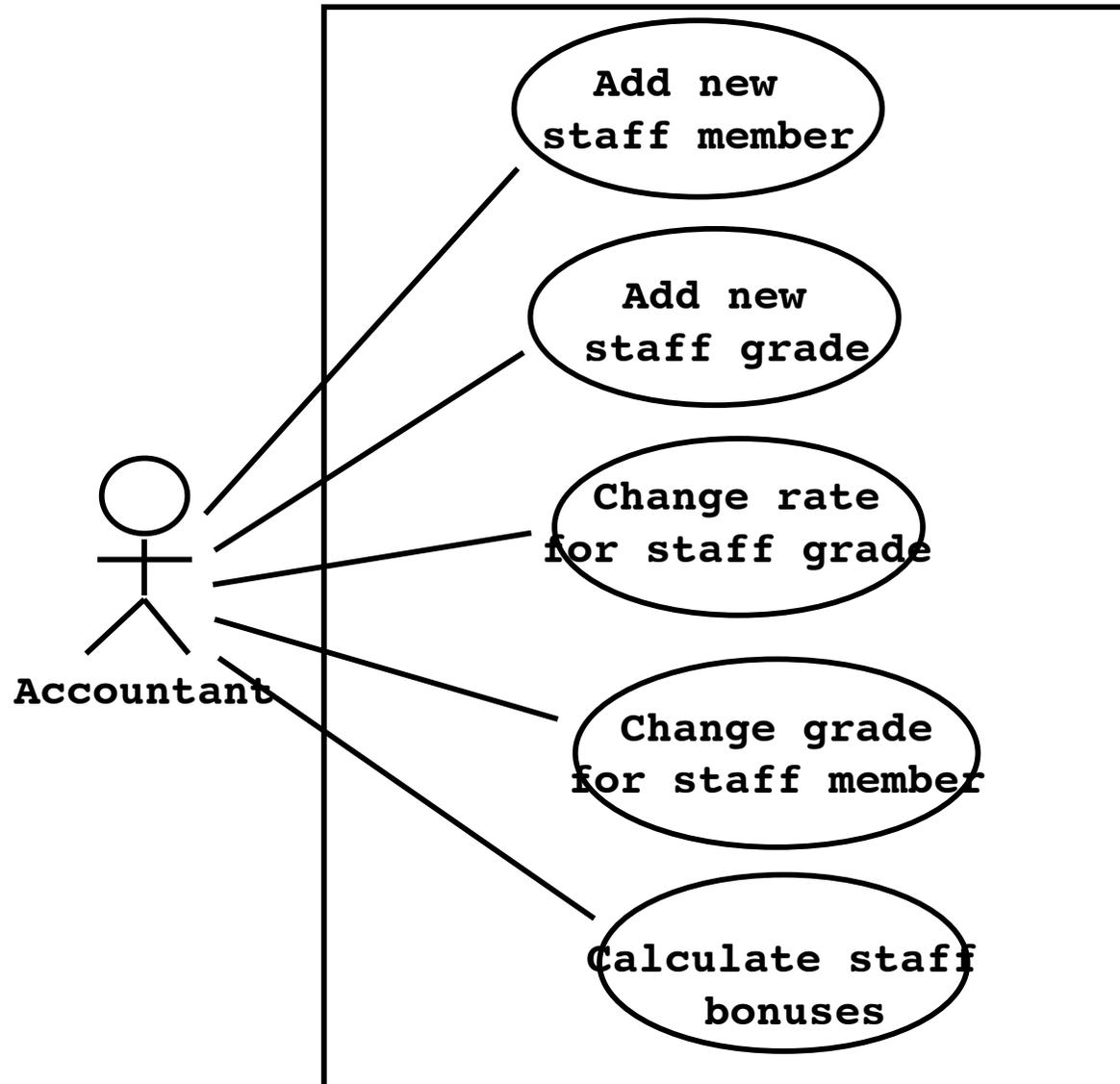


Notation for Use Case Diagrams





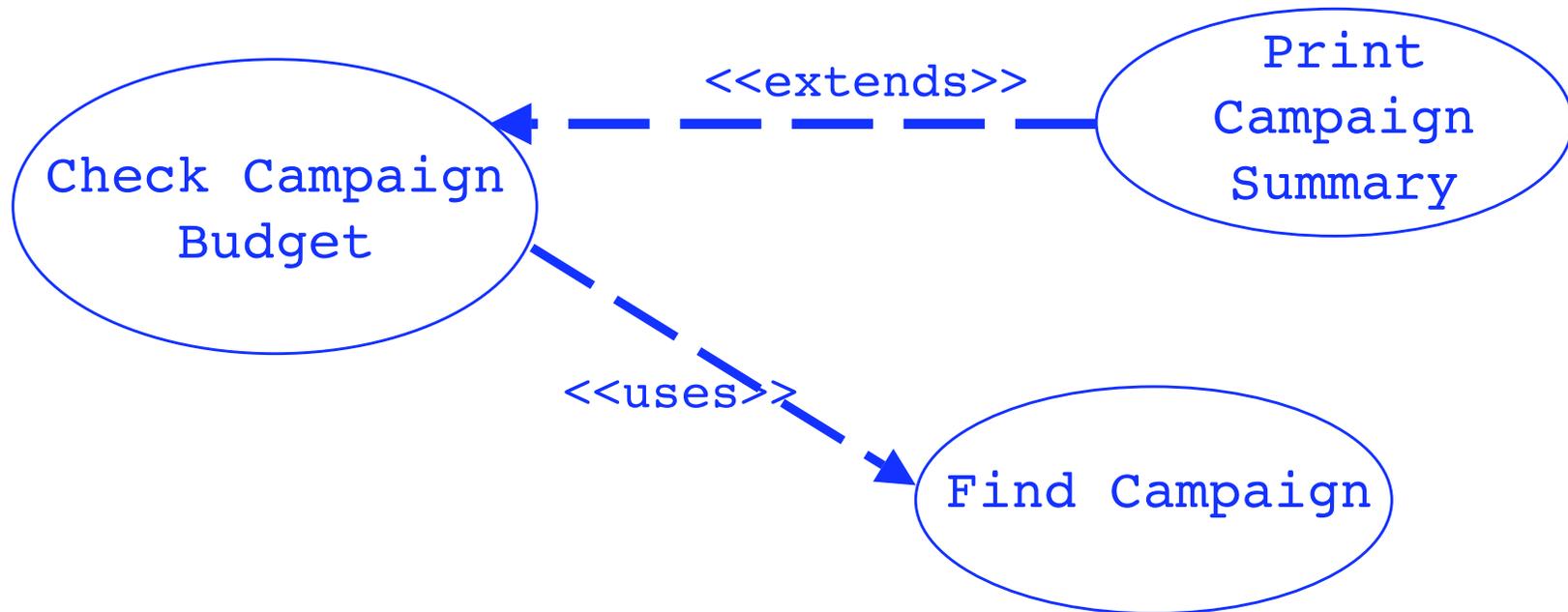
Example





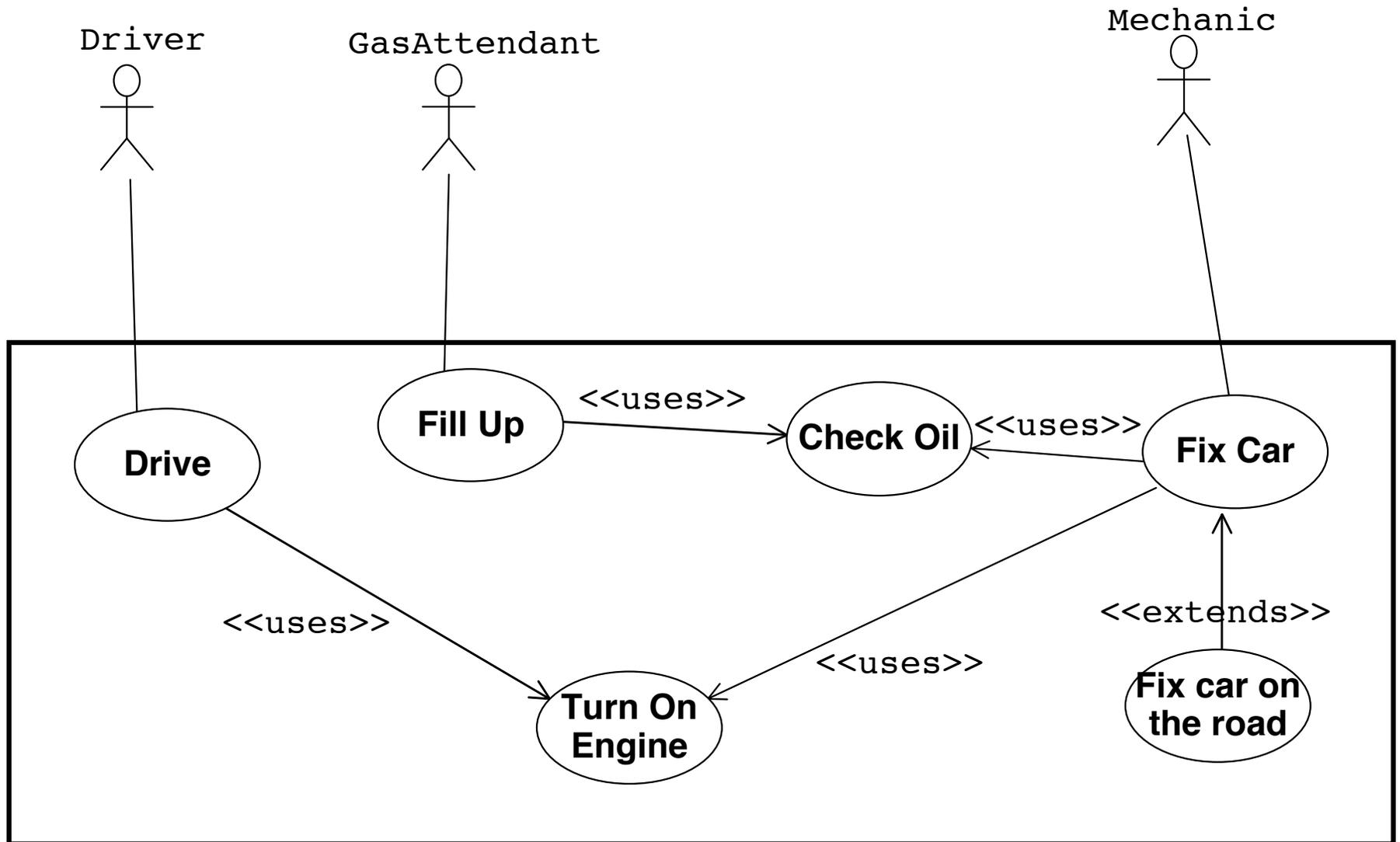
<<extends>> and <<uses>>

- <<extends>> when one use case adds behaviour to a base case
 - ↪ used to model a part of a use case that the user may see as optional system behavior;
 - ↪ also models a separate sub-case which is executed conditionally.
- <<uses>>: one use case invokes another (like a procedure call);
 - ↪ used to avoid describing the same flow of events several times
 - ↪ puts the common behavior in a use case of its own.



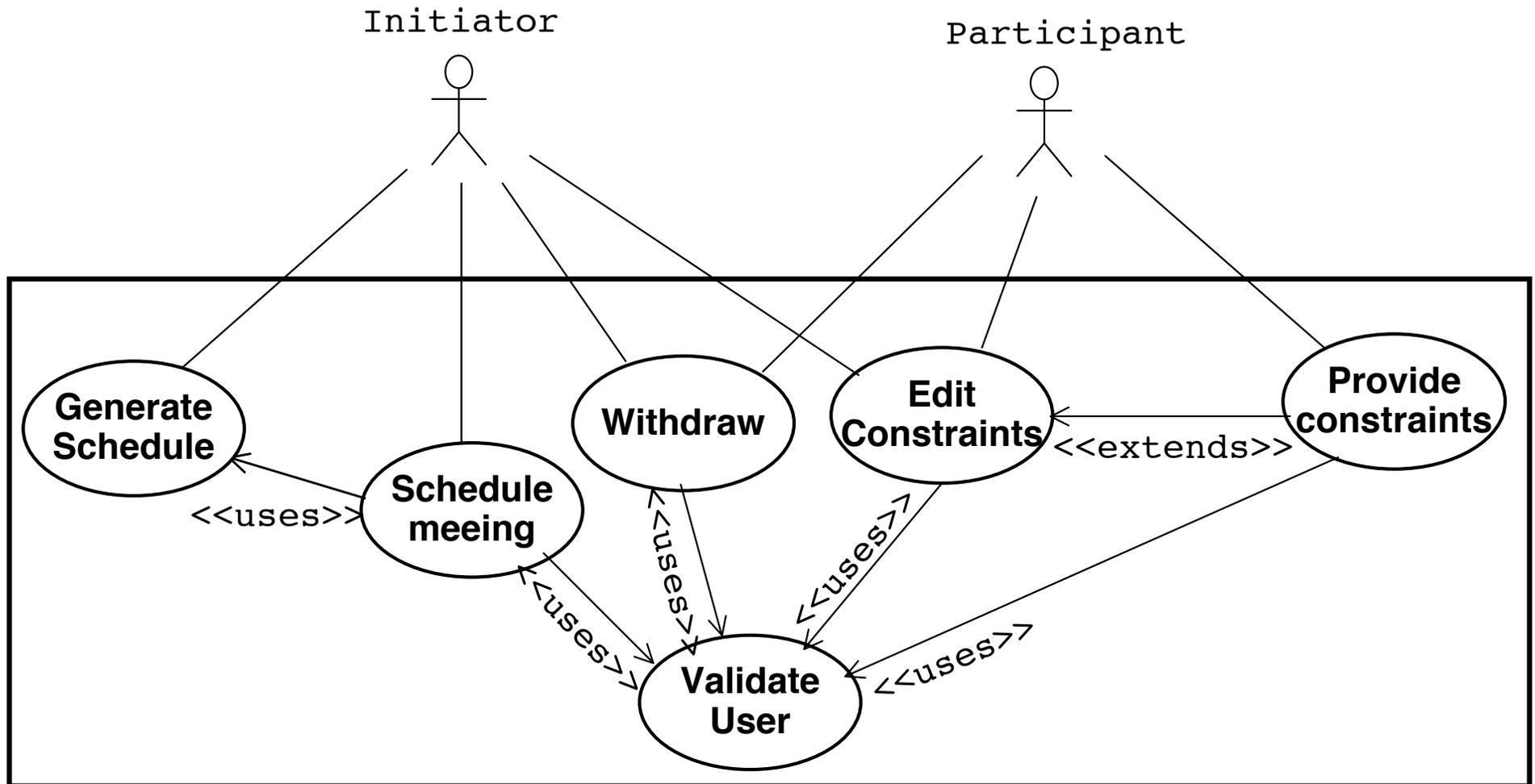


Sample use cases for a car





Meeting Scheduler Example



Generalizations

→ Actor classes

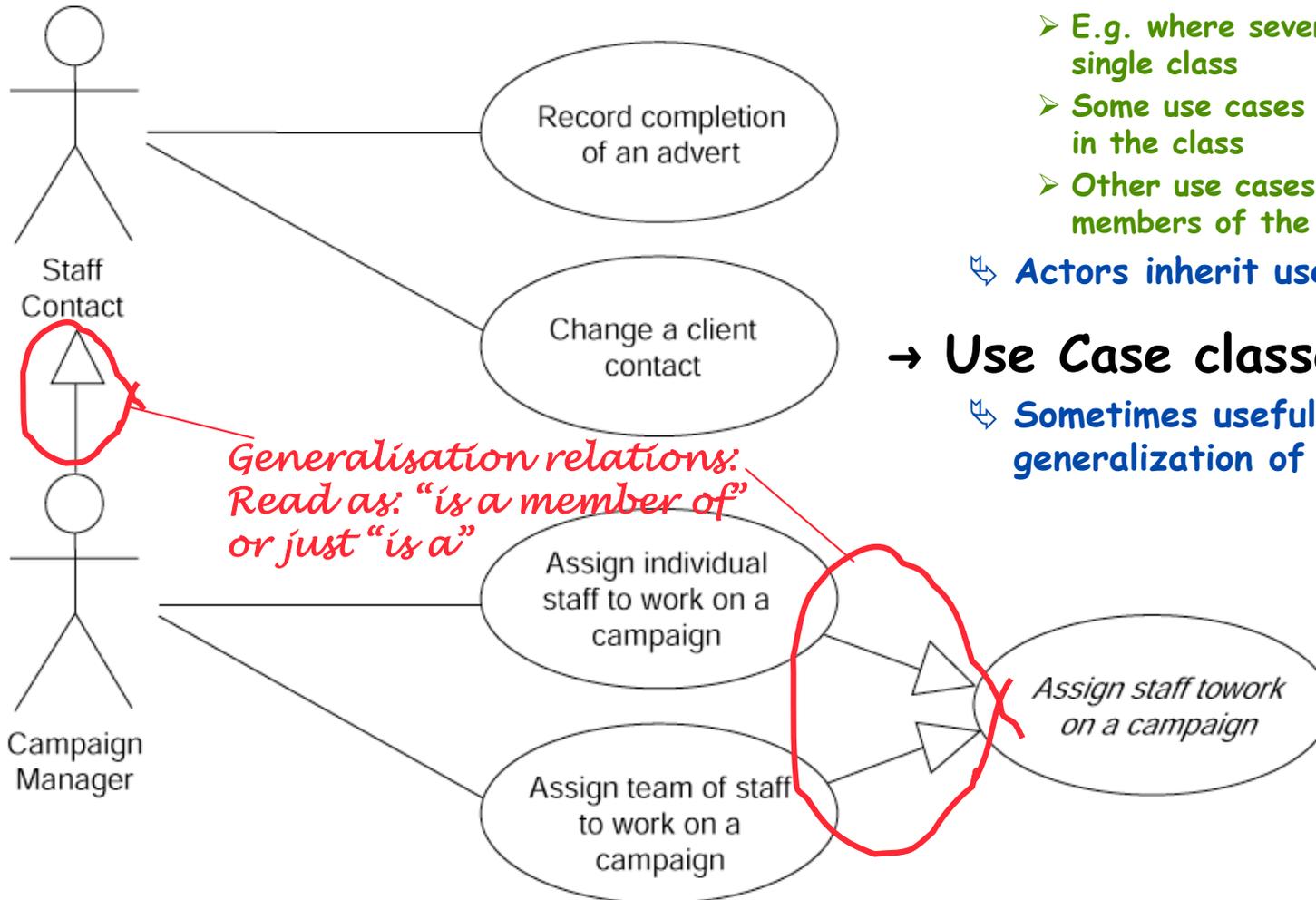
↪ It's sometimes useful to identify classes of actor

- E.g. where several actors belong to a single class
- Some use cases are needed by all members in the class
- Other use cases are only needed by some members of the class

↪ Actors inherit use cases from the class

→ Use Case classes

↪ Sometimes useful to identify a generalization of several use cases





Identifying Actors

→ Ask the following questions:

- ↪ Who will be a primary user of the system? (primary actor)
 - Who will need support from the system to do her daily tasks?
 - Who or what has an interest in the results that the system produces ?
- ↪ Who will maintain, administrate, keep the system working? (secondary actor)
- ↪ Which hardware devices does the system need?
- ↪ With which other systems does the system need to interact with?

→ Look for:

- ↪ the users who directly use the system
- ↪ also others who need services from the system



Finding Use Cases

→ For each actor, ask the following questions:

- ↪ Which functions does the actor require from the system?
- ↪ What does the actor need to do ?
- ↪ Does the actor need to read, create, destroy, modify, or store some kinds of information in the system ?
- ↪ Does the actor have to be notified about events in the system?
- ↪ Does the actor need to notify the system about something?
- ↪ What do those events require in terms of system functionality?
- ↪ Could the actor's daily work be simplified or made more efficient through new functions provided by the system?



Documenting Use Cases

→ For each use case:

- ↪ prepare a “flow of events” document, written from an actor's point of view.
- ↪ describe what the system must provide to the actor when the use case is executed.

→ Typical contents

- ↪ How the use case starts and ends;
- ↪ Normal flow of events;
- ↪ Alternate flow of events;
- ↪ Exceptional flow of events;

→ Documentation style:

- ↪ Choice of how to represent the use case:
 - English language description
 - Collaboration Diagrams
 - Sequence Diagrams



Modelling Sequences of Events

→ Objects “own” information and behaviour

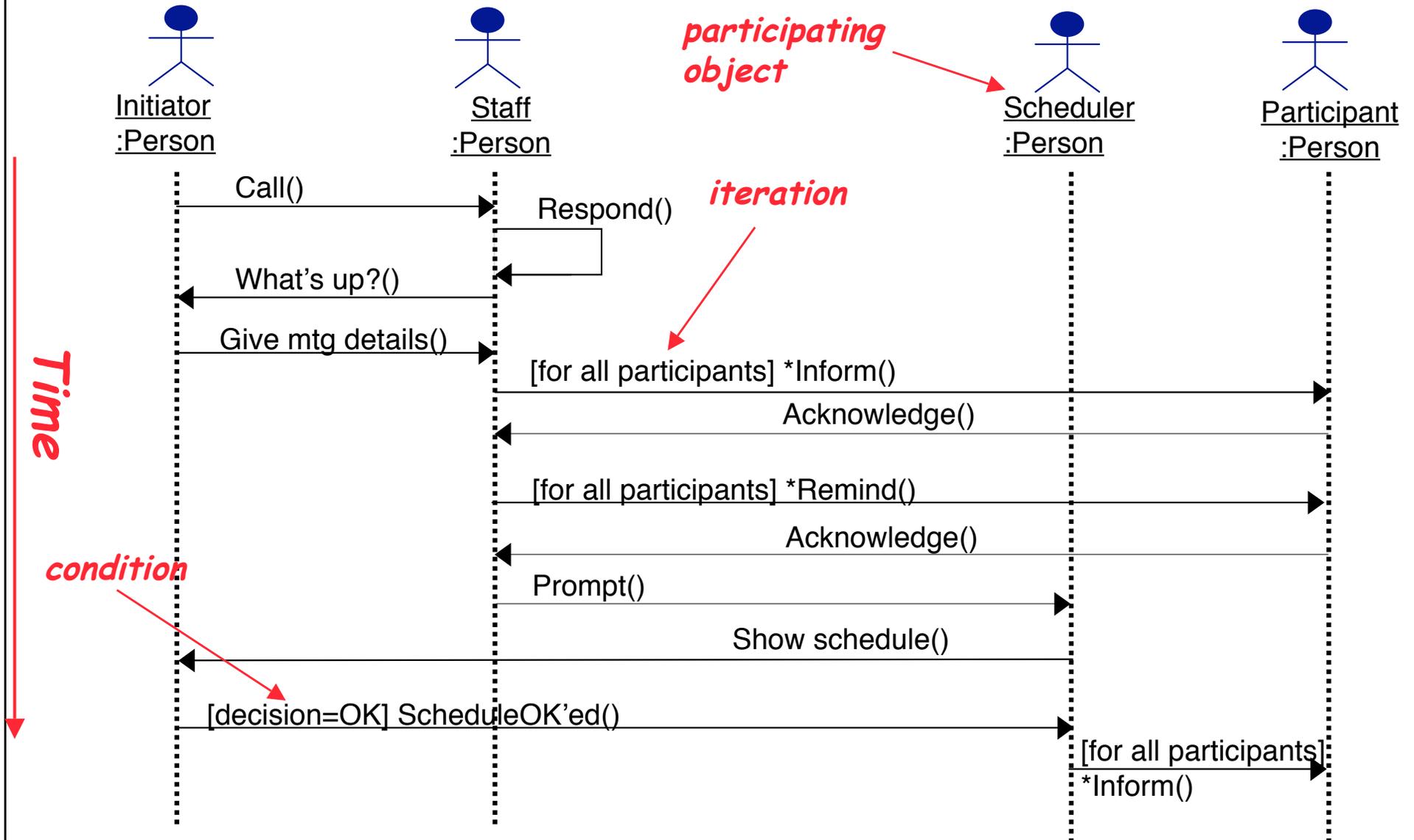
- ↪ they have attributes and operations relevant to their *responsibilities*.
- ↪ They don't “know” about other objects' information, but can ask for it.
- ↪ To carry out business processes, objects have to collaborate.
 - ...by sending messages to one another to invoke each others' operations
- ↪ Objects can only send messages to one another if they “know” each other
 - I.e. if there is an association between them.

→ Describe a Use Case using Sequence Diagrams

- ↪ Sequence diagrams show step-by-step what's involved in a use case
 - Which objects are relevant to the use case
 - How those objects participate in the function
- ↪ You may need several sequence diagrams to describe a single use case.
 - Each sequence diagram describes one possible scenario for the use case
- ↪ Sequence diagrams...
 - ...should remain easy to read and understand.
 - ...do not include complex control logic

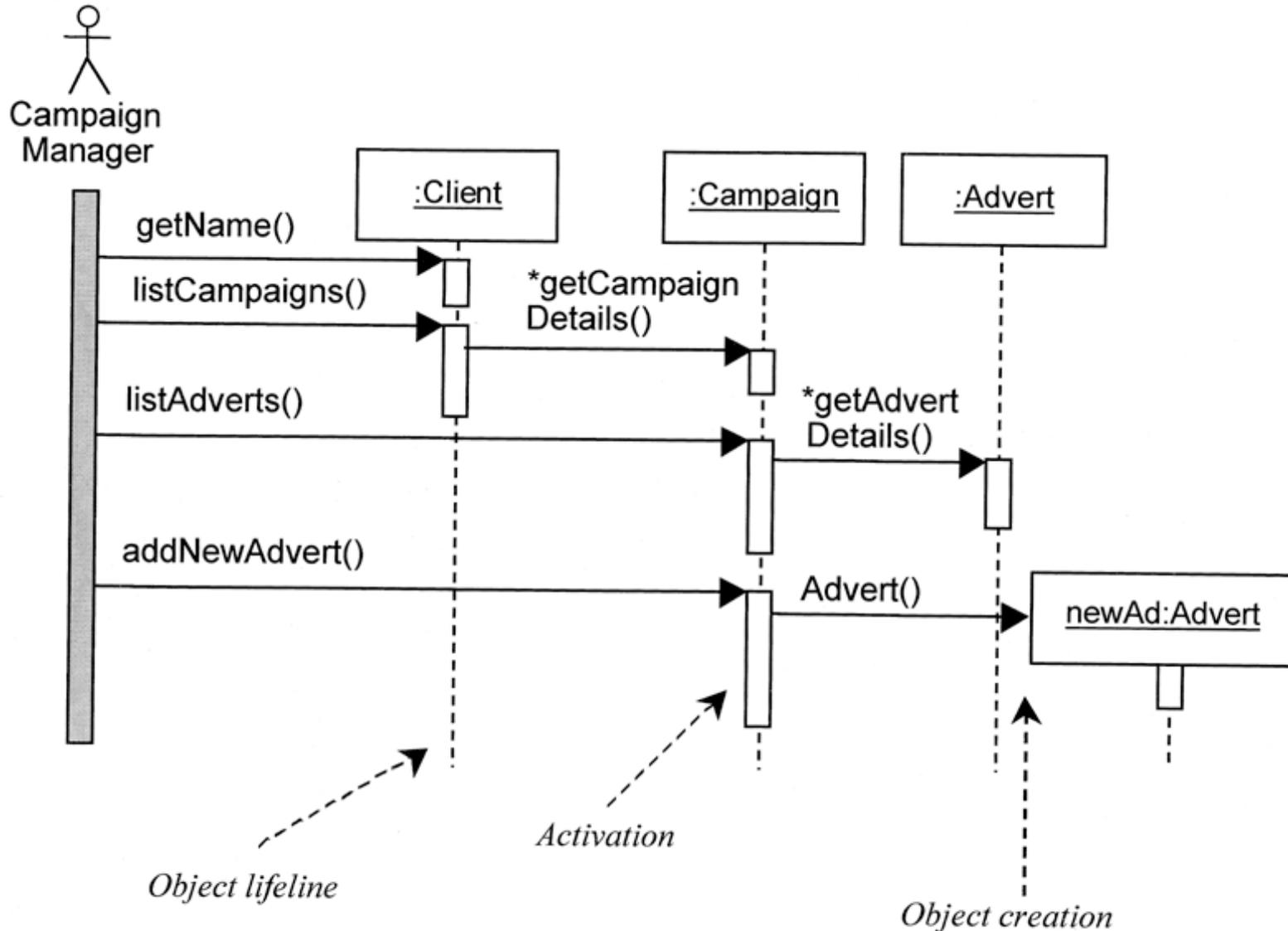


Example Sequence Diagram



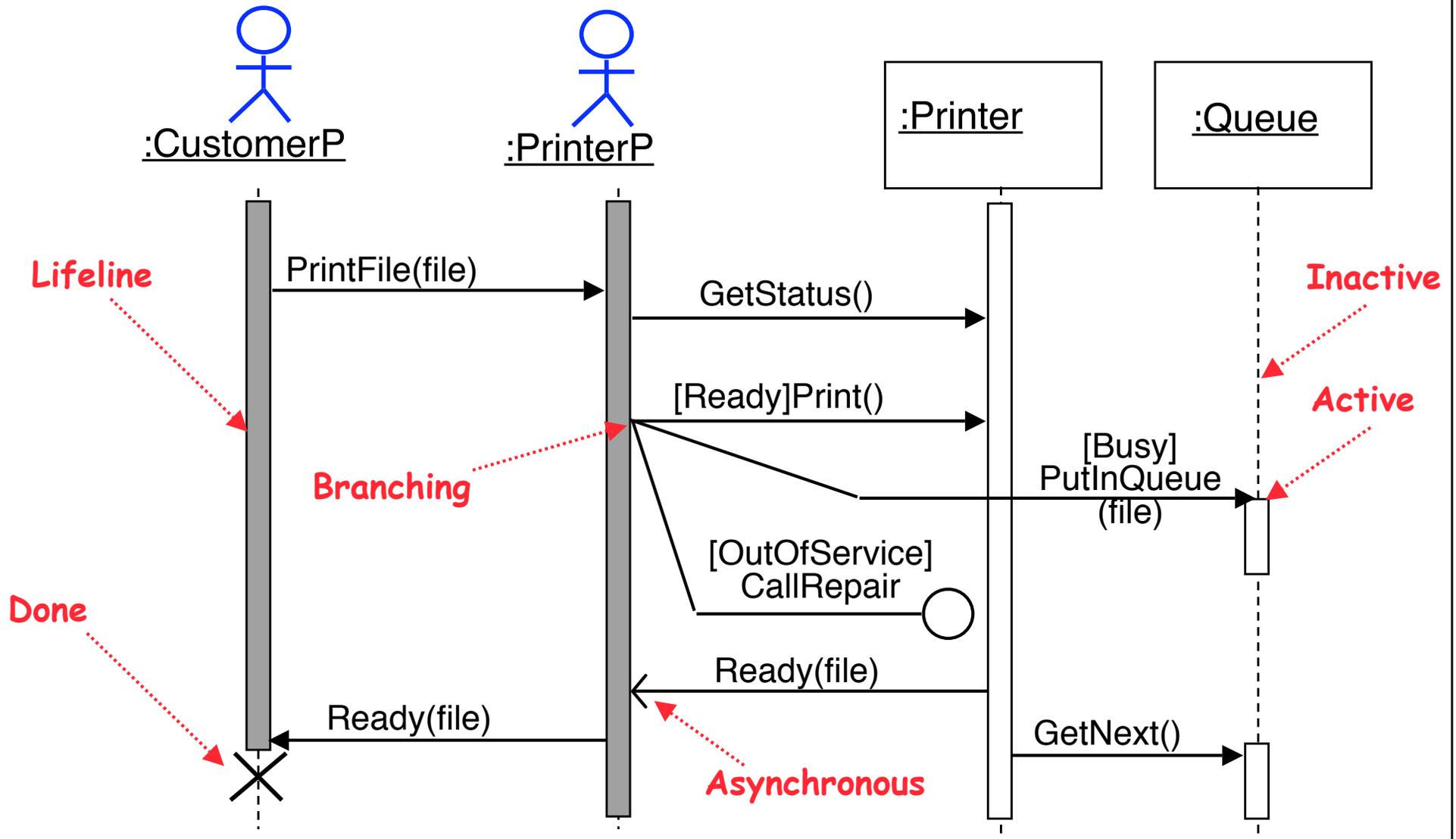


Another Example





Branching messages, etc





Don't forget what we're modelling

→ During analysis

- ↪ we want to know about the application domain and the requirements
- ↪ ...so we develop a course-grained model to show where responsibilities are, and how objects interact
 - Our models show a message being passed, but we don't worry too much about the contents of each message
 - To keep things clear, use icons to represent external objects and actors, and boxes to represent system objects.

→ During design

- ↪ we want to say how the software should work
- ↪ ... so we develop fine-grained models to show exactly what will happen when the system runs
 - E.g. show the precise details of each method call.