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BA DIGEST

- The Customer Is Not Always Right
- Breaking into Business Analysis
- Spreadsheets – Friend or Foe
- Information Security
- And much more …



Your regular round-up of useful BA content

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Welcome

I was recently asked a pertinent (but tricky) question: "What is the purpose of BA Digest?". It occurred to me that we've never talked about the underlying vision of this quarterly magazine, so I thought it was about time that we did!

BA Digest was born in 2016 as an email newsletter. Its aim was to provide a handy reading list for busy BAs, and to build connections between adjacent disciplines. After all, as BAs, we spend a lot of time speaking to other BAs… however there is a lot we can learn from other professions too. In 2020, initially as a free gift for virtual conferences, we pivoted to a PDF magazine—and this is where the reach and impact of BA Digest started to grow far faster than we ever imagined! The vision now is to provide an open-access, truly free, quality, curated magazine that is informative and accessible to the widest group possible. This is why we offer it in a downloadable format. We encourage you to download it, pass it on, talk about it… the more people that see it, the better.

But it isn't just about *readership*. The idea is to create a community platform *anyone* can write for. A place where information flows easily—and *freely*—across organisations.

Remember, if you have an idea, you can easily submit it to us. Think how awesome it would feel to see your work (and your name) in a magazine that is distributed to thousands of your peers…

I hope that you enjoy BA Digest. If you do, I'd ask two things of you:

1. Please pass it on: Share the link (or the PDF) with your colleagues. The more people who become aware of BA digest, the better!

2. Consider a (free) subscription: If you're not already subscribed, head on over to www.badigest.co.uk — by subscribing you'll be automatically notified when BA Digest is published (and you'll receive invites to webinars and other events too).

Finally, as always, I'd like to say a massive *thank you* to everyone who has written for this edition of BA Digest. Be sure to reach out to anyone whose article you've liked to say "thank you". Also, a massive thank you to our advertisers. Be sure to support them, as they are showing their support for the BA community, and what could be more awesome than that?!

Until next time,

Adrian

Adrian Reed

Principal consultant, Blackmetric & Editor-In-Chief, BA Digest

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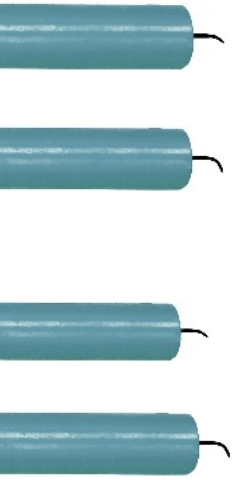


Four Candles Or Handles for Forks? Being Clear in Your Communications



Pip Hall

Not all of you reading this will be old enough to appreciate the humour in this title, but regardless of whether you continue reading with the image of the Two Ronnies in your mind, the message remains the same. Say this out loud:

"Fork handles"

"Four candles"

See what I mean? Unless it is:

- written down, and / or
- in context, and / or
- your domain knowledge, and / or
- your experience, and / or
- explained to you

it would be very easy to be confused about the intended content, to misunderstand it or, indeed, both.

This article encourages you to look at why we need definitions and what they *actually* are; why are they so important and what purpose do they serve?

Ambiguity Within A Domain

Imagine a situation where the same acronym is commonly used in multiple domains, each with its own definition. All participants appear to understand the conversation and contribute to the workshop. In time, they all agree to the same output / outcome based on their own understanding of the acronym. All good? What a good job we have done, another successful outcome is on its way. Or is it? Imagine then that some, if not all, express concern or surprise that the final product, service or improvement is not what they were expecting and so does not deliver what they want, what they need or the benefits that formed part of the business case. The





project is not looking quite so successful now, even though we followed the correct processes, involved the appropriate stakeholders, and got agreement for the outcome.

Definitions fuel expectations and frame requirements, so we need to use words and phrases, just like body language, deliberately. This situation is clearly very contrived, and so the reason for this is clear, but sometimes it is not so obvious.

Imagine that you are now assigned your next project. The scope of this assignment is to examine First Honolulu Bank (FHB's)'s performance against published industry metrics, with particular reference to SMEs. How many ways could we interpret that scope, and what impact could these differing interpretations have?

You are working for *First Honolulu Bank* and one of their target markets is lending to *Small and Medium-sized Enterprises* to help them purchase their own premises, so the scope, as it stands, seems clear. However, having learned from last time, you gather the stakeholders together and ask each participant to give their understanding of the project they are involved in. It turns out the scope is to examine *First Home Buyers'* performance against published industry metrics, with particular reference to *Systems Maintenance Engineers*. Hmmm. So the scope is really quite different from that which it initially appeared to be.

Again, this is exaggerated silliness (although some of the acronyms are real) to illustrate the importance of definitions in our work.

Similar instances arise regularly in many other circumstances, for example, commonly used words (that are not domain-specific) whose interpretations can differ between people; or their meaning might depend on the content, structure and style of the project documents or artefacts. Take, for example, "communication" and "engagement". Lots of people use these words interchangeably but are they the same thing?

In my experience, when someone asks for a "Communications Plan" they are not looking for a plan that details all knowledge transfer channels and activities from the project out to stakeholders that is in one direction only (my own, personal definition of "communication") but a plan that details all the opportunities where stakeholders will input, react, review, inform and otherwise get involved as part of the project. This is what I, personally, define as an "Engagement Plan" and in the absence of any agreed definition, not only are our expectations not aligned but it would not become apparent until time, money and effort had been spent.

Leading by Example

I recognise the need for clear definitions as one of my fundamental principles, and I remain alert to this throughout my





work, whomever I am engaging with, whatever the reason and whenever doing so. In my opinion, we need to lead by example and constantly question – and listen – to understand; we are forging common threads and relationships between different disciplines, different characters and personalities, people operating at different levels of an organisation, all of whom need to share a common language to be able to fully participate in the project and deliver the best outcome for the organisation.

I am conscious to include "normal" conversations in my approach – I currently work in a position where I have both business and domain knowledge and so easily slip into the familiar and comfortable shorthand language, but with what impact? Acting as an SME myself (SME? Subject Matter Expert or Special Minister of the Eucharist or Sausage McMuffin with Egg?!) I run the risk of excluding other stakeholders from the conversation whose contribution is equally important. This is exactly the opposite of what we are trying to achieve; my role is, at least in part, to break down the barriers to engagement, not reinforce them.

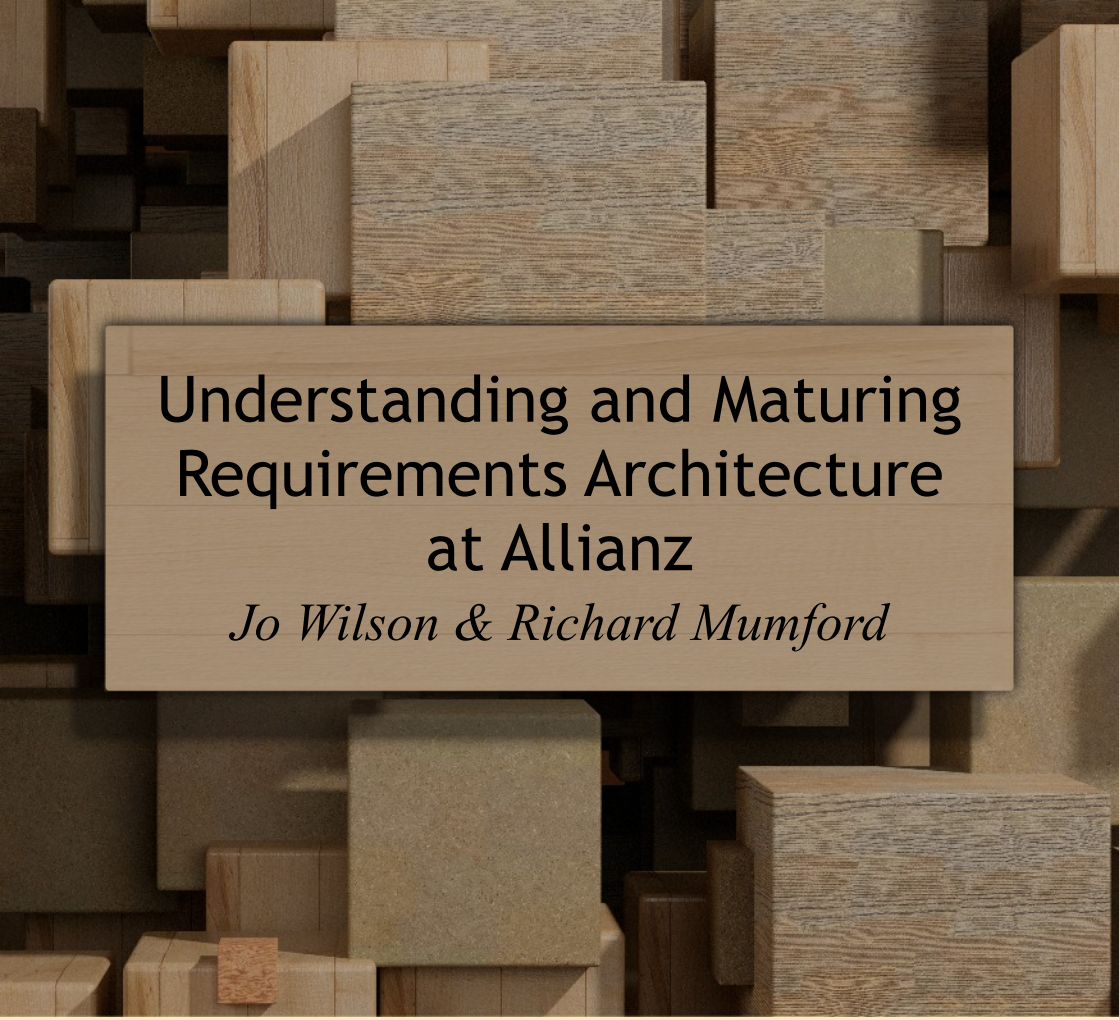
A Practical Step: The Project Dictionary

Being able to access and refer to these agreed definitions is also incredibly important, particularly where stakeholders change, the project is complex or undertaken over a long period of time, or the project is otherwise challenging. I ALWAYS create a project dictionary. Is it more than a glossary of acronyms or abbreviations, requiring definitions and descriptions to allow it to be placed in context, to transfer a common understanding into other spheres of knowledge and confidence and activity.

I own the document, review it regularly and am responsible for keeping it up to date, but it is a shared document that allows contributions from multiple stakeholders, Wikipedia-style. This provides an immediately accessible, single source of truth for definitions and so becomes the necessary reference point whilst allowing stakeholders to add words, phrases or acronyms that they are unfamiliar with and so prompt associated definitions to be offered by others. The entry of multiple definitions prompts discussion and decision, and the absence of definitions alert me to gaps for investigation. The document itself forms part of the suite of project governance documents, giving it authority in disagreements; it is a powerful document. It provided the 5 bullets at the top of the article. For me, it is critical to a successful project.

Do you agree?

Pip Hall is a business analyst at Telent Technology Services Ltd. She is passionate about delivering outcomes, driving continuous improvement, and challenging assumptions that hold individuals and organisations back from embracing change. You can contact her via LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/pip-hall



Understanding and Maturing Requirements Architecture at Allianz

Jo Wilson & Richard Mumford

What is a requirements architecture? The BABOK defines it as:

"The structure of all the requirements of a change. A requirements architecture fits the individual models and specifications together to ensure that all of the requirements form a single whole that supports the overall business objectives". (IIBA, 2015)

Within the Allianz Insurance BA Practice we have begun a journey to understand how this might be a useful tool for our Business Analysts in the early stage of a project, prompted by BA Digest's very own editor-in-chief Adrian Reed. We'd like to share our experience in this article and would welcome hearing from anyone also interested in this topic.

It all started when a few of our BAs were lucky enough to attend a course by Adrian, where he explained the concept from the BABOK. This prompted the

question afterwards 'why don't we do this at Allianz?'. In the course, he described the requirements architecture as providing "structure to the requirements set… The requirements architecture ensures there are clear linkages between these different artefacts, and that the artefacts work together to provide a consistent view of the business need". This got us thinking about our internal ways of working; what we expect and encourage our BAs to do and the guidance provided to them to do so. As a practice we already had a mature business analysis approach, with an expectation that our BAs define the outputs they would produce on their piece of work. In answer to the question, 'how does this all hang together?' some of our BAs occasionally grouped these into diagrams and tried to show the connections. Without even knowing it they were on the road to creating a requirements architecture. How could we, as a practice, mature our thinking and understanding of artefacts to become a single whole, rather than a list of discrete items?

Initially we brainstormed what it meant to us, and how it might be applied to the Allianz ways of working. In a sort of lightbulb moment we realised we had been asking people to articulate what their artefacts were, but we needed to develop an understanding of how we could define how they all hung together – where were the *linkages*? The BABOK definition worked well for our community, but the name wasn't quite right for us, and we needed to consider how to tailor it for our BA community. As a practice, we used the broader term of 'analysis' artefacts, rather than 'requirements', this broader definition encompasses the current state and future state analysis our BAs do; while 'requirements' implies future state. To align with internal and established ways of working we settled on the title 'Analysis Artefact Map', and our working definition became: 'The analysis artefact map should illustrate how requirements and models interact with and relate to each other, and show how the parts fit together into a meaningful whole'. Our assumption was that this would be useful not only to the BA trying to understand what they needed to produce, but also enable them to explain how everything would fit together, for the benefit of other project members, to our BA analysis assurance approach, and most importantly to our stakeholders!

Following this revelation we tried to come up with a generic example. We spent probably far too much time identifying icons to use as our various artefacts but eventually started to map them out, in the same way we might have tackled a process map. We explored relationships between key artefacts in a waterfall and agile approach; for example we drew an arrow from the business case to the traceability matrix, related personas to actors, to use cases, and requirements catalogues. Then for agile: epics, features, user stories, and how other artefacts can support them, for example wireframes, data dictionaries etc. We were trying not to map out traceability, but more concentrating on how one item would inform another. We used a virtual whiteboard to collaboratively help us map this out

with lots of lovely icons and arrows. We were very pleased with ourselves. We then stepped back and thought…. this feels a bit false, like we're trying to throw everything at it. We realised that the best way to evolve our thinking was to harness the power of our BA community.

After developing the concept theoretically, the next logical step on our journey was to test and learn with some of our BAs on pieces of change. We started with a project which was aiming to decommission one system and replace it with another. Although already progressing, we thought we could learn a lot from mapping out the artefacts which had actually been produced. This demonstrated that it was possible to do, and could concentrate on only the necessary artefacts (including some non-standard ones specific to the project, which we hadn't thought of in our generic model). Whilst this didn't uncover any missing artefacts it really brought into focus for the BA how everything fitted together, which would help to explain it to the stakeholders. They had their own lightbulb moment! After creating the first artefact map we realised we were on to something. We moved on to different BA guinea pigs (or eager volunteers) working on change to implement an off the shelf system, and even looked at a piece of work primarily focussed on organisational change. Each time we took on board the learnings of what worked and what didn't, to evolve our thinking and improve the next model.

Some of the key learnings:

- A useful starting point is to think about all the BA outputs (artefacts), mark them down and then draw the connections, moving things around on a virtual whiteboard
- It is useful to illustrate one to many relationships, where multiple artefacts may form part of a hierarchy or multiples will be produced to articulate a whole e.g. process maps
- Each artefact map fits into a broader change architecture, so it can be useful to show artefacts being produced by other change teams. This helps to articulate the context of the BA work, and the inputs we're dependent on
- Artefact maps can be used to show non-standard BA artefacts e.g. 'how to guides' which the BA may define
- Distinguish between analysis artefacts that are linked because they relate to each other as part of a cohesive piece of analysis because they are offering different levels of details, and artefacts that are linked because of traceability

So what's next? We're still on a journey, and looking for volunteers across our BA team to help evolve our thinking. Each artefact map will look different and depend on the piece of change undertaken, but we want to define some guiding principles to support our BAs. This should help them clarify their thoughts and clearly articulate to stakeholders how all the artefacts fit together and with it, who knows, maybe even demonstrate just how jolly clever and

important us BAs are to co-creating value with our business colleagues. We're also looking to firm up our definition of 'linkage' and also considering how to align an artefact map with a SIPOC model.

If you have embarked on your own journey of requirements architecture in your BA community we'd love to hear from you. We pride ourselves on successful knowledge sharing sessions with other organisations and would love the opportunity to share key lessons to improve the quality of business analysis in the UK or worldwide! Please get in touch with us at the links below.

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A special thank you to Allianz BAs Gayatri Rahul, Jane Wade, Steve Barnes, Ali Turner, Ricky Dulay, Zoe Jenkins, Danielle Harley for helping us on this journey.

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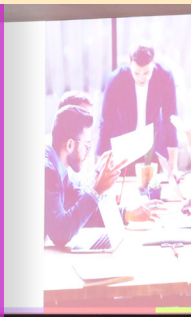

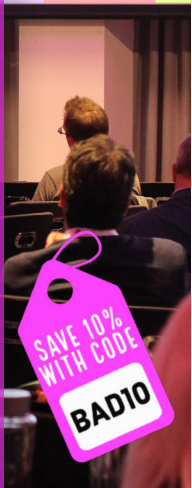



Do You Realise That Relationships Are BAs Bread and Butter?

Tom Henricksen

Working as a developer for over twenty years I have noticed that developers tend to lack certain social skills. Now I know you are shocked! You probably spilled your coffee when you read that.

As a business analyst, you may take your social skill prowess for granted. As Epictetus said, “It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows.” Let us revisit those skills now.

Re-Focus on Relationships

It can be helpful to review these skills periodically else we risk falling into the trap of complacency. Here are a few basic questions that will help to evaluate your progress.

1. Who are my most important business relationships?
2. How am I investing in these relationships?
3. What value am I bringing to this relationship?

Similar to the agile retrospective we can have a relationship retrospective. This involves checking in with the most important stakeholders and seeing how things are.

Occasionally things can seem fine at the surface even when there are deep-seated problems. It is only by digging beyond the surface-level that we will find something different. Perhaps the relationship can be strained, or the person may feel you are taking advantage of them.

Overlooked

My mother was a teacher for many years and would often dispense wisdom when I was growing up. One pearl of wisdom that particularly sticks with me is that: "secretaries make things happen."

As a kid, many people would overlook the school secretary. Using my mother's advice I made sure to stay on the good side of our high school secretary, Mary. After all, she could put in a good word for you if you were to find yourself in trouble. That may have happened to me a few times, and when it did, Mary was a life-saver!

Are there any professional relationships you are overlooking? Perhaps you need to patch things up with some of the testers. Team harmony is vital to a smooth project.

Have a plan

A few years ago I was fortunate to work with a transformational leader, John, who led a technology team.. He saw the potential to change the way his team worked.

John brought me into his office. He said to me, "Tom technology people can be a bit transactional. They get asked to fix a problem and they do as they have been told. Similar to the way a bank teller gets a cheque and deposits the cheque."

"Yes, I see that, but how is that an issue?" I said to John.

"Bruce just visited our biggest data centre. He upgraded the two servers and got on the plane to go back home. A day later the community director called me and asked why he didn't complete the upcoming maintenance patching. Bruce never spoke to him."

"Tom I want my team to be more like financial planners. A financial planner builds relationships. Then they can anticipate needs. I want you to help change my team to think like financial planners."

John then shared with me a plan on how we could transform his team. He outlined how each time his team members travelled they would talk to the community directors.

This would help them build relationships instead of just fixing the problem. John wanted his team to build in time to connect. Have a plan for relationships.

In summary, as Business Analysts we should not overlook the fundamental aspect of relationships. Don't leave them to chance, have a plan. **Keep them in focus as they are your bread and butter!**

Tom Henricksen is a problem-solving technology professional. He has worked in various roles in technology for over twenty years. Tom has learned how to solve the challenging issues in technology and lead technical teams. He can help you develop those skills too! Contact Tom on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/tomhenricksen/

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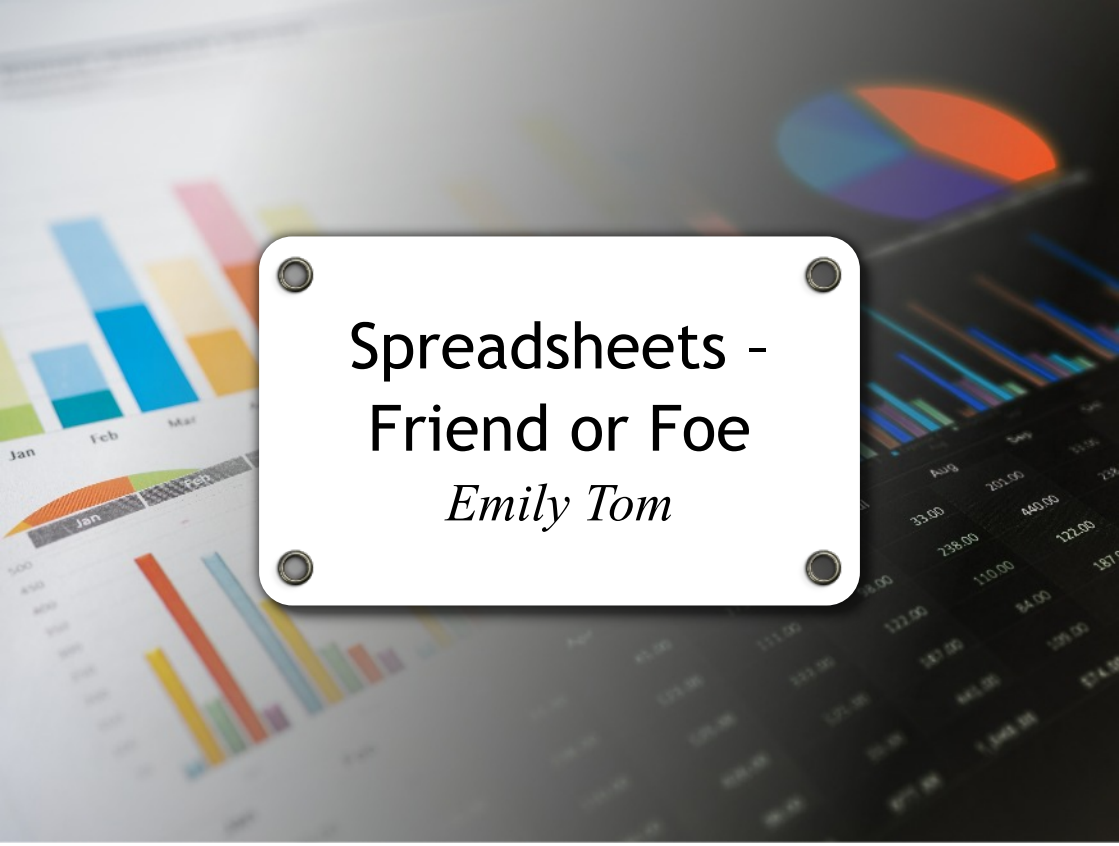

Spreadsheets – Friend or Foe

Emily Tom

Intro

As a consultant, I'm often parachuted into different organisations to do business analysis work. While every client is different and every business problem is different, I often see a common behaviour: overuse of spreadsheets to manage important business data.

It brings to mind the quote by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "Water, water, everywhere, And all the boards did shrink; Water, water everywhere, Nor any drop to drink."

This quote is about water being all around us but is not clean or safe to drink. What if you were in an environment where there's data, data everywhere in many different spreadsheets, but you couldn't trust any of the data?

Observations

I'm sure you've seen similar situations where there is:

- Decentralisation of data
- Many different spreadsheets all over the organisation
- Static data in spreadsheets becomes stale

- Lack of knowledge transfer of the business rules in spreadsheet formulas

- Ambiguity of purpose of the spreadsheets

While you may not be able to fix all of these situations, it's important to make these observations and understand the root causes.

Root Cause Analysis

I have observed some common root causes:

- **People use what they know**

  Most of us have a working knowledge of how to use spreadsheets. That's why spreadsheets are in our comfort zone. We don't have to learn any new skills to use a spreadsheet and a spreadsheet gets the job done. When we share spreadsheets with other people, we don't have to expect them to learn how to use them. But spreadsheets become limited in their function because they are a generic tool to capture data and run calculations; they don't support a specific business function through business rules. So… people start plugging in fancy formulas to model the business rules. And then their colleagues can't tell how the spreadsheet works.

- **People don't plan for the long-term viability of the spreadsheet system**

  Have you ever seen a team just dive right into their work (capturing data in spreadsheets) without planning how they will manage the information that is used to perform the work? Over time, the number of spreadsheets in an organisation grows and data in disparate spreadsheets becomes unmanageable.

- **People didn't think to invest in a more robust solution or couldn't afford a more robust solution**

  All business organisations have some office automation tools (spreadsheets, word processors, presentation software) as part of their official software. Organisations need to consider their long-term needs in order to decide where to invest additional IT money. For example, there may be a need to invest in accounting software, customer relationship management software, etc. depending on the type of business that the organisation runs. At some point, spreadsheets just won't suffice anymore.

- **Nefarious causes**

  Here's one that may be unstated, but does exist in some organisations. Have you ever seen a situation where multiple teams need to work on the same data but one individual is being a gatekeeper? It's awful when this happens. Sometimes an individual insists on using spreadsheets in order to control the flow and access to data.

Consequences

As a result of these root causes, everyone from senior management down to the operational level workers and customers gets frustrated.

- When spreadsheets multiply in an organisation, no one knows which version is the latest and whether to trust the data. Data in static spreadsheets become stale really quickly.
- People then don't understand the formulas or the data contained in the spreadsheets, so they go create their own "correct" versions of the spreadsheets.
- Business rules are not easily supported or visible in the spreadsheets.
- Senior management starts to wonder why it takes so long to produce accurate reports.

Horrible, right?

So, What Is a BA to Do?

Before we tell senior management that they need to replace their spreadsheets with real business software, like an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) package, it's worth doing some business analysis to see whether the status quo is good enough and what impacts/risks they raise. Is the spreadsheet approach they are using a friend or a foe?

We can do some cost-benefit analysis, risk analysis and even process analysis to understand whether spreadsheets are adequately supporting the process. We can also do some force field analysis:

To do force field analysis, we would assess the forces "for" change and the forces "against" change (fictitious sample below for illustrative purposes):

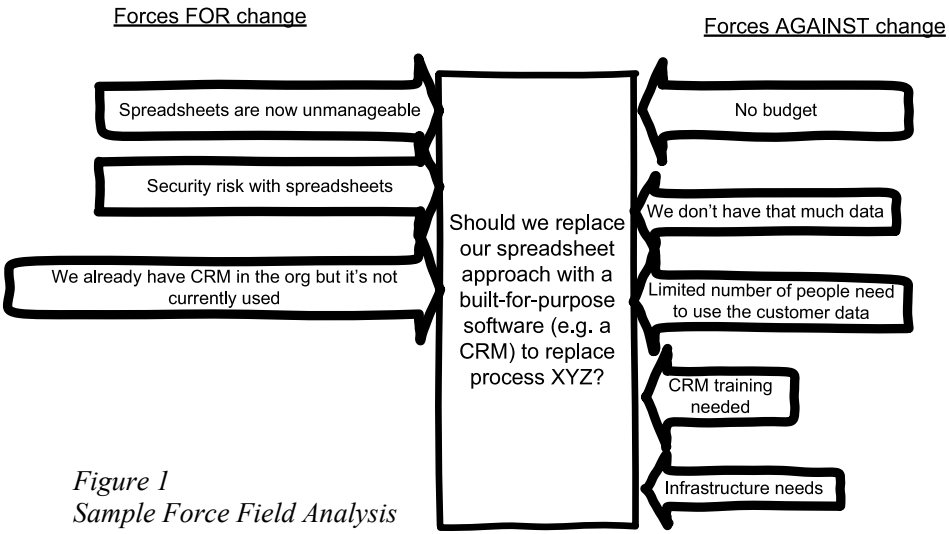

Figure 1
Sample Force Field Analysis

You can assign point ratings to each of the arrows or use arrow sizes to understand whether there is a greater set of forces for or against a change. The force field analysis is a quick and simple way for you to visualise the pros and cons of a change. But you will likely need more analysis and documentation to support your recommendation to senior management. You can start to look at making a business case to support implementing a new system to replace spreadsheets.

Approach Options

In general, there are three approach options when thinking about what to do with spreadsheets:

Option 1 – Status quo. You may want to recommend this option when you are ok with static data, when the number of people who need the data is small or if the use of a spreadsheet is only temporary to capture data.

Option 2 – Spreadsheets plus additional data governance policies. Sometimes spreadsheets are good enough to support a business process, but you can add some data governance to the process. This would mean identifying who owns the data, how it is updated, what are the business rules that a spreadsheet supports, who should have access to it and how the data in it is defined. In this option, you are not necessarily adding any new technology but you are adding some rigour to how the data will be used.

Option 3 – Implementing a new software to replace a set of spreadsheets. In this case, you are looking to replace many loose spreadsheets with a more robust software that is built-for-purpose (typically a commercial off the shelf tool). Lots more business analysis to follow!

Conclusion

As a business analyst, you have the skills and the knowledge to recognise when a spreadsheet is a friend or a foe to the business process. Understanding why an organisation is swimming in spreadsheets and what to do about them is a worthwhile exercise. Hopefully the data, data everywhere becomes useful data.

Emily Tom, CBAP is an independent consultant based in Ottawa, Canada. She is also the Regional Director IIBA Americas Northeastern Region, supporting 18 IIBA chapters. She is passionate about promoting the business analysis profession and supporting fellow business analysts.

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BA to PO: Taking the next Leap in Your Career



Melissa Metz

Are you feeling like you need a challenge or just looking to take the next step in your career? Then a career as a Product Owner (PO) might be an option that you want to pursue. Business analysts often play the role of a product owner by proxy, but many of us work under a product or project manager. The roles have a lot of similarities that you might not be aware of, which we'll explore in this article.

According to the IIBA's Agile Extension to the BABOK Guide, the definition of a product owner is "the role on the team that represents the interests of all stakeholders, defines the features of the product, and prioritises the product backlog." (IIBA, 2020). The BABOK defines Business Analysis as "…the practice of enabling change in an enterprise by defining needs and recommending solutions that deliver value to stakeholders." (IIBA, 2015). One of the other things the BABOK states is that a business analyst is any person regardless of job title that performs business analysis tasks. It's very possible by that defini-

tion, that you might already be performing product ownership tasks in your BA role, which may make the transition to a product owner role the right move for you. It is valuable to compare the roles in more detail.

Let's start with what a product owner does:

1. Defining the vision of the product

As a PO, you will spend a great deal of time communicating with stakeholders and the development team, as you are the key person for the product. Being the key person, you will have a high level of knowledge of product goals, the business goals and/or objectives those product goals are trying to solve, and a strategic product vision to communicate the product roadmap. You will also spend time keeping the stakeholders aligned with the product vision, and ensuring that the product can continue to evolve and adapt in an agile development cycle.

2. Product backlog management

The product owner is responsible and accountable for the product backlog. To be successful as a PO, you need the ability to come up with backlog items that align with business goals and objectives, prioritise these items based on strategy and vision, identify dependencies and risks for backlog items, and ensure that the backlog items can be developed in the most efficient order for product releases.

3. Prioritising product needs

When prioritising the needs of a product, a product owner weighs each work item based on objectives, needs, risks, and under time, scope, and budget constraints. POs must work closely with development teams to ensure development timelines can be adhered to with minimal slippage in the delivery of deliverables. POs also work closely to ensure the development progress and the product development is evaluated and inspected at each iteration. By continuously inspecting and evaluating the status of the product, a PO can continue to drive meaningful value and adapt to changing needs as they arise.

4. Oversight of the development stages

The product owner plays a vital role in development events, as they need to be accessible, collaborative, and provide oversight in the development process. The PO is actively involved in the development process from being available for planning, backlog refinement, and sprint demos, to production release.

Let's discuss what a business analyst does:

A business analyst can operate on a strategic, tactical, or operation level based on the nature of the initiative they are involved in. Business analysts have quite a variety of duties/responsibilities in which they play a role.

1. Understanding the enterprise problem(s) and/or goals

As a BA, you will spend a great deal of time planning, monitoring and understanding what the business requirements are. To provide valuable solutions to help satisfy the business problems or goals, you will have to be very aware of the current state as well as the future state. This allows for the ability to detect risks and potential impacts that could result in use cases being missed or that the solution will not meet the business needs.

2. Analysis of business needs and solutions

When a BA is analysing the enterprise problems and/or goals, a holistic view is needed to ensure that the prioritisation of requirements meets the needs of the business. BAs need to be aware of the inputs and outputs of the project to ensure business, stakeholder, and solution requirements are in alignment with each other and a solution that provides business value based on requirements can be built and delivered. This analysis includes tracing requirements, maintaining those requirements, prioritisation of requirements, requirements change analysis and approving of changes to requirements. Strategy analysis is the process of turning potential value into actual value. A BA may capture strategies in many ways which can include strategic plan(s), product vision(s), business case(s), product roadmap(s), or other project-related artefacts.

3. Strategy Analysis

Strategy analysis focuses on defining the transitional and future states needing to address the business needs and/or goals. This often includes brainstorming or whiteboard sessions on potential solutions, which will enable more value to be delivered back to the stakeholders and the business. Business analysts often leverage business analysis, change management, leadership, project management, and program management in strategic analysis.

4. Enabling and driving change

There's no doubt BAs are change agents. This is done by defining business needs and recommending valuable solutions that support enterprise and business needs and/or goals. BAs decompose, analyse, consider possibilities, and engage with stakeholders. Due to the nature of the business analyst's work, they often are instrumental in providing operational, technical, and quality requirements that drive future innovations within the organisation.

5. Stakeholder communication and collaboration

A business analyst plays an integral role in elicitation and collaboration. Often a BA engages with stakeholders to gather requirements through the use of

workshops, meetings, research, experiments, focus groups, surveys, or other planned or unplanned activities. Business analysts collaborate with stakeholders that range in authority, influence, and role. A BA must be aware of all relevant stakeholders and ensure that participation with the various stakeholders occurs at the right time by the appropriate stakeholder. BAs must also communicate with stakeholders to ensure the free flow of communication is frequent, bi-directional, and engaging. A business analyst needs to maintain genuine, transparent communications with stakeholders to promote effective resolution of setbacks and ensure expectations of the project are being met.

As you can see there are a lot of grey areas, which is a good thing as it indicates the natural overlap of the roles. Both BAs and POs are heavily focused on stakeholder engagement, communication and feedback management, decision making, understanding the problem, and understanding the process. While a lot of what they do has areas of overlap, together they can make a powerful partnership. Together they can co-create high-value products for customers, , and incrementally deliver effective solutions that are scalable for the future needs of the organisation. You might be more ready for the move to product ownership than you realise.

Melissa is currently a product owner for an analytics solution in the healthcare space. She is passionate about getting businesses to leverage the data they have and utilise it to drive business transformations and products. Feel free to reach out to her:
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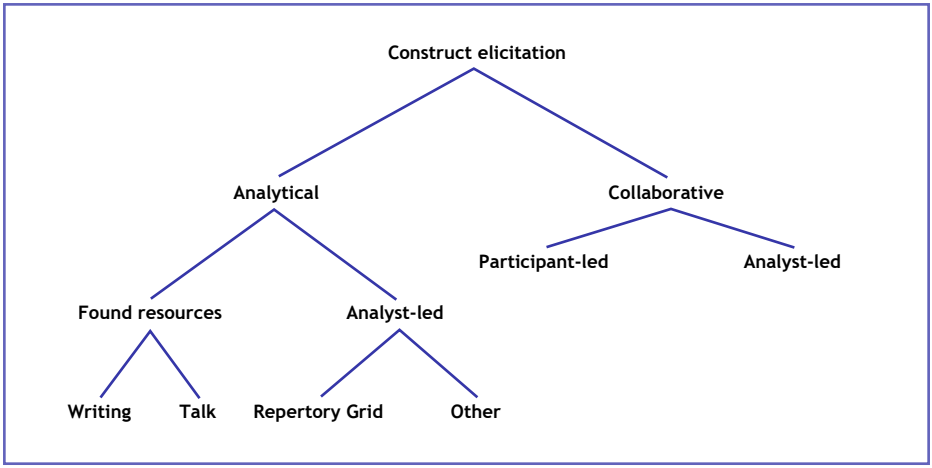
GCA in Practice – Analytical Construct Elicitation Styles

Nick de Voil

Until now, this series has focused mainly on theory. It's time to start looking at how we can enhance our effectiveness as business analysts by putting the theory into practice.

I've described previously how a deeper understanding of each individual stakeholder – and their attitude towards business situations – comes from appreciating their personal construct system. We've also seen how construct systems can be mapped using diagrams. Now, how exactly do we go about gaining that appreciation, so that we can draw these diagrams?

The first part of the answer is that there's a range of activities available for us to use, each of which has its strong points and weak points. These *construct elicitation styles* are summarised in the following illustration.



Construct elicitation styles

Let's go through the key features of the styles. I'll be using the term *participants* to refer to the stakeholders being studied.

Analytical Versus Collaborative Elicitation

Analytical construct elicitation activities are carried out by the analyst on the basis of information provided by the participant(s). *Collaborative* elicitation activities involve multiple participants interacting with each other as a group.

Found Resources

Activities based on *found resources* involve "mining" written or spoken "texts" for constructs. A text is anything whose meaning we can explore – it doesn't have to be written down. For example, a photograph or an advertisement can be a text. But the most common and useful types of text are written documents and transcripts of people talking.

The key advantage of found resources is that we don't need to make any extra demands on the participant's time in order to acquire these resources. We can use documents that have already been written, or transcripts of conversations that would have happened anyway. Almost any interaction with a stakeholder can yield a text whose meaning we can mine for constructs.

Each text has its own characteristics; for example, each has a particular level of formality. Comparatively formal texts, such as documents that have been written for distribution to multiple readers, are often useful sources of higher-order relationships between constructs, for example causation (see article 3 in this series), sequence and composition (see article 2). Informal texts, such as transcripts of conversations or meetings, can give us clues about simpler relationships, such as ranking, resemblance and inheritance (see article 2).

Analyst-Led Analytical Activities

Studying found resources is a good place to start and will help you to grasp the most striking elements of a participant's construct system. Once you've established this basic level of understanding, though, you'll want to take a more active role. This means interviewing the participant and asking them questions which are specifically designed to increase your understanding.

The most basic type of question is a *descriptive* question – this is where we ask the participant to identify relevant things, people, places and events. You may recall from article 4 that these are the "nouns" of the situation and provide the basic factual constructs around which you'll start to develop your model.

You'll also want to ask *structural* questions. These are questions which reveal key aspects of the construct system by probing for relationships between constructs. Having established the existence of a construct X, for example, you can ask:

- Inheritance questions. What are the different sorts of X? What sort of thing is X?
- Composition questions: What are the different parts of X? What is X part of?
- Ranking questions: What's bigger than X? What's smaller than X? What happens more often than X? What happens less often than X?
- Resemblance questions: What is X like? What is X unlike? What is like X? What is unlike X?
- Causation questions: What's the reason for X? What makes X happen? Why would you want X? Why would someone else want X?
- Sequence questions: What comes before X? What comes after X?

Each of these can be asked as a one-off question to establish the adjacent construct to X, or alternatively one particular question type can be made the theme of a more extended conversation, to pursue the chain of relationships from X forwards through Y to Z, and backwards through W to V. As a business analyst, you're quite likely to be familiar with this idea already: the "Five Whys" technique is an extended conversation based on causation, and a business process walkthrough is basically an extended conversation based on sequence.

The answers to these questions will typically bring to light many new constructs, which need adding into the model.

The example question templates listed above are relatively factual and objective. It's a good idea to start off by trying to keep the conversation as neutral as possible. However, what you're eventually looking for is the participant's "value system". This will start to emerge in the answers to these questions, and you can follow that up by asking questions which call for more explicitly evaluative answers, such as:

- What's more important than X? What's less important than X?
- Which is more important, X or Y?
- What's better than X? What's worse than X?
- Which is better, X or Y?

We can further probe the relationships between the newly identified constructs by asking *contrast* questions. This type of question is harder to work into a typical semi-structured interview. An interview, or a section of an interview, based on contrast questions will be at the more structured end of the spectrum, and can include the use of questionnaires. George Kelly (see article 1) invented a type of questionnaire technique called a *repertory grid*, which is based on contrast questions.

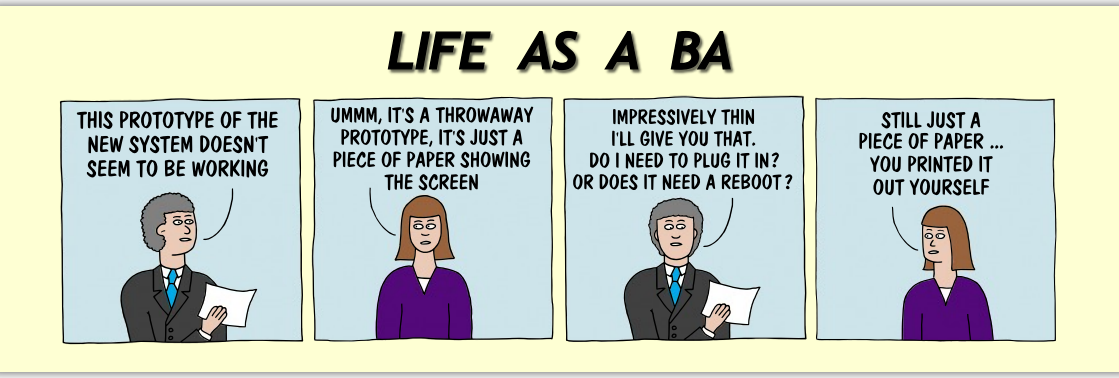
Here are some examples of contrast questions:

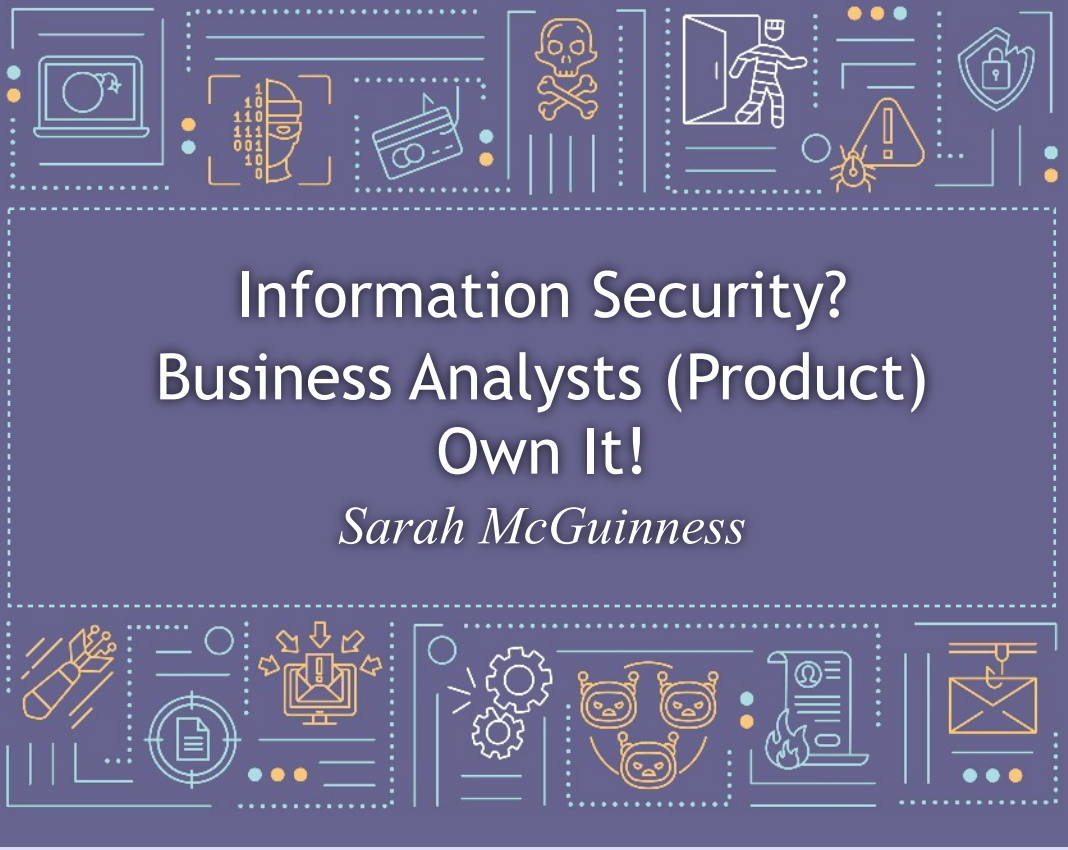
- Is there any difference between X and Y?
- What's the difference between X and Y?
- Of X, Y and Z, which two are similar and which is different from the other two?
- Please arrange the following set of items into groups.

The third example here is an "odd-one-out" question. These often form the basis of a repertory grid questionnaire. The fourth is an example of a *card sorting* exercise. This technique is described in my book "User Experience Foundations."

We'll look at collaborative construct elicitation styles in a future article.

Nick is a director at De Voil Consulting. He specialises in helping organisations create people-oriented systems, products and services. He has trained thousands of professionals in business analysis, user experience, systems design, project management and agile development. Nick is author of the book "User Experience Foundations". Contact Nick via LinkedIn





Information Security? Business Analysts (Product) Own It!

Sarah McGuinness

In 2015, cybercrime cost the global economy an estimated $665 million. Now, the global cost of cybercrime has risen so dramatically that it is now estimated that if it were a country it would be the 4th largest economy of the world. It is not just cybercrime that is driving the necessity for information security. State nation attacks are a very real and ever present threat.

Security defences will include physical and application controls as well security education and awareness. This article is a call to arms to business analysts to add your skills and experience to protect your organisation (and potentially even your country).

It is essential that security is not seen as limited to a pre-implementation checklist and that products are secure by design. Security should be considered in the requirements and the user stories. And this is, of course, a key deliverable of the business analyst. Business analysts can use applicable laws, standards and security lessons learned from previous projects to form security requirements. Elicitation should encompass threat modelling where security threats are identified and rated according to severity and probability.



The business analysis toolkit is so much more than requirements and user stories. The latest edition of Business Analysis Techniques describes 123 essential business analysis tools. Many of these techniques can be applied in an organisation's cyber defence.

Root cause analysis of security breaches identify time and time again the need for better process design. An effective patch management process would have protected against the Wanna Cry ransomware attack in May 2017. It has been reported that Wanna Cry adversely affected a third of all NHS trusts, 19,000 appointments had to be cancelled and the total cost to the NHS was over £90 million.

Process design has made a significant contribution to ensuring compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Processes define the creation, use, storage, archive and destruction of Personally Identifiable Information (PII). Processes are required for the internal management of time limited GDPR requests that will span across many different functions of an organisation.

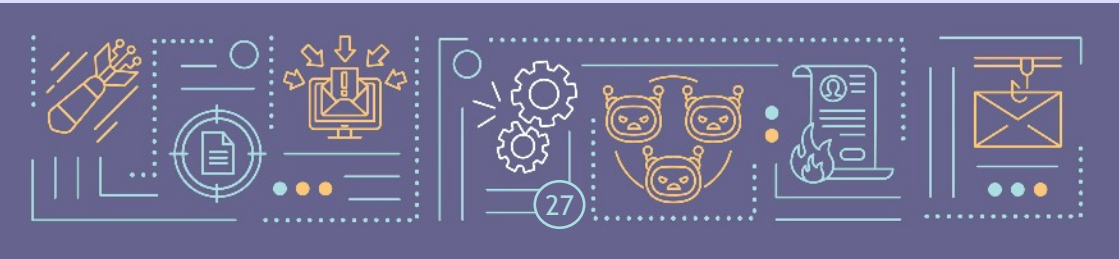
A business analyst can not only provide process design, with methods such as BPMN, but can also give the necessary holistic, across the organisation lens.

A Data Flow Diagram (DFD) is another business analysis deliverable that benefits an organisation's GDPR posture. By defining all PII in an organisation, further analysis can then determine whether the data is encrypted or resides with third parties that are outside of the EU.

The business analyst, through defining data stores, processes and entities, creates a data flow diagram. The DFD then becomes a valuable input to threat modelling as it scopes out the data attack surface.

It's estimated that nearly half of all cyber incidents are caused by people internal to an organisation. These people, also called threat actors, can act intentionally or internally. They could be ineffective, careless, have a grudge against the organisation or be driven by self-gain.

Personas are another business analyst deliverable that can bring great insight





to information security. The persona can be used to identify and understand the different threat actors of an organisation. Using personas can help to draw out the different motivations and methods, rather than considering a generic attacker. This then gives the organisation the education to identify all the necessary security countermeasures.

We've established the value that business analysts can bring to security by their expert application of traditional techniques such as requirements elicitation and documentation, process design, data modelling and the creation of personas.

Business analysts are also well placed to add the security technique OSINT, to their toolkit. OSINT, Open Source Intelligence, is the collection and analysis of publicly available sources of information for actionable intelligence.

OSINT is a valuable technique for military intelligence. Recently, a heatmap of phones connected to the Russian mobile network in Ukraine has given an indication of the Russian troop presence in this country.

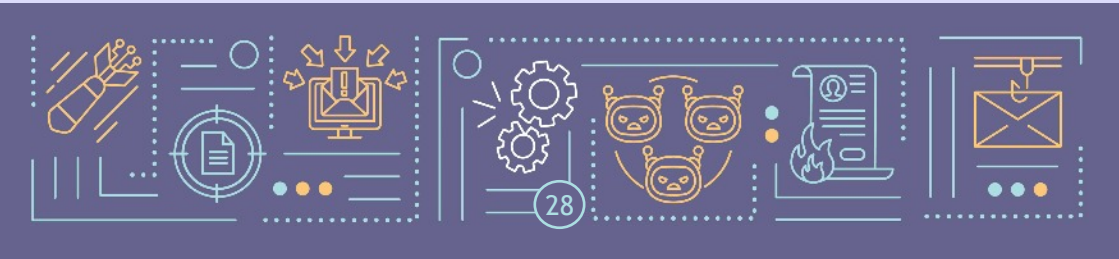
OSINT also has practical applications in industry. Business analysts aligned to the fraud function of an organisation could build offender profiles. The business analyst would apply their analytical skills and critical thinking to understand the offender through data posted in Facebook, TikTok, Tinder etc.

The threat of cybercrime and state nation attacks isn't diminishing. Physical security, technical controls and colleague education have their part to play. Business analysts, with their behaviour skills and qualities, business knowledge and techniques have so much to contribute.

Your country and your organisation need you.

Sarah McGuinness is Head of Security Education and Awareness at DWP. She also works for the British Computer Society as an assessor for the International Diploma in Business Analysis.

Want to hear more about the vital contribution that BAs provide to security? Sarah's speaking at the 2022 European BA Conference.



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Breaking into Business Analysis

Jamie Griffin

Breaking into business analysis from a non-technical background can seem impossible. Many junior business analyst roles require some form of prior BA experience or similar.. This can make the transition very difficult for people with no prior experience.

Two years ago, I was one of those people, looking for a break into business analysis. I came from a chemistry background at university and had been working in the technical department of a waste management company. It was a far cry from being a BA.

Upon graduation, I had no idea what business analysis was. It wasn't until speaking with a relative that I became aware of the profession. I went off and researched the BA profession, the types of roles, the techniques used and how to get into a BA role. After consuming countless hours of videos and hundreds of pages of websites, I felt like I was set on becoming a BA and threw myself into job boards to look for junior roles. My excitement was cut short after only a few days searching. Trying to find a junior role that didn't specify as a requirement that experience was needed proved very difficult. Nevertheless, I applied for roles with hope that they would see potential and enthusiasm, however I didn't hear back from any. Over the next few months, I routinely checked job

boards for BA roles I could apply for with limited success. Eventually, my luck changed and a suitable role cropped up. I applied for a role with hybrid working where the hiring manager was looking for enthusiasm and was willing to provide full training. The application process tested me, I had never been through an interview process that consisted of multiple phases and definitely not one that required giving a presentation. Thankfully, I managed to pass each stage and get a job offer!

I knew the hard work wasn't over after getting the job, this was just the beginning of learning a whole new set of skills. I remember on one of my first days being at the daily stand-up and hearing acronyms like SFTP & API being casually thrown around and I was feeling very out of my depth. The first few months I was routinely questioning my decision and began to wonder whether I was good enough to succeed as a BA. However, like all skills, the best way to become proficient is through practice and experience. As the months went by, I was getting more and more confident in my ability with things such as writing requirements, holding refinement sessions and talking in a technical way to developers. Since then, I have moved on to my second BA role and I am loving the variation of work and the skills I have picked up.

Here are some tips on breaking into business analysis from non-traditional backgrounds:

- Apply for jobs even if they are asking for more experience than you have. You may not get the job, but you may get an interview which is great experience for when the right role comes along.

- Put yourself out there and get involved in webinars or meetups etc. Not only are they a great source of information but they are a great opportunity to network.

- Connect with recruiters and industry professionals on LinkedIn. Look at jobs they are posting and work out which skills frequently crop up and work on them.

- Ensure you understand the core role of a BA. The BA job title is broad and depending on the organisation and industry the role is in, will vary the work required. With that said, most BA jobs will have roughly the same roles and responsibilities within an organisation.

- Take free or paid courses online or in person. I took many Udemy courses prior to becoming a BA and this gave me a great background into what being a BA is like. You could also get industry recognised qualifications such as ones offered by BCS or IIBA. They have beginner courses which assume little to no prior experience as a BA and can help you stand out.

Jamie Griffin is a business analyst working in marketing and communications. You can find him at www.linkedin.com/in/jamie-griffin-683b3412a/.



Anna Rajander

Business analysis, on its own, does not deliver any value.

This is an uncomfortable fact for many business analysts, as well as for others in business change orchestration roles, much of whose work is also on its own devoid of value. After all, those requirements, models, plans and other deliverables require a lot of time, effort, and skill. The idea that alone they are of no value is confronting. Yet, it is a fact.

If we accept that business analysis does not deliver value, what is its point? This article explores the relationship between business analysis, business change, and how organisations create value.

Understanding Value

Value creation is key for any organisation. It involves organisations developing consistent products and services that offer benefits to specific customer groups when consumed (O'Malley, 1998). The consistent creation of value involves establishing and maintaining a sustainable business model that describes the rationale of how an organisation creates, delivers, and captures value (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010).

Successful organisations will have a clear business model. For organisations operating in more 'traditional' sectors, such as retail and manufacturing, the business model may be described using a technique such as Porter's Value Chain. Porter's Value Chain draws a clear distinction between primary functions that directly and sequentially contribute to the creation of value (i.e., logistics, operations, sales etc.), and supporting activities that underpin primary operations (i.e., HR, ICT, Finance).

While the concept of a Value Chain may be relevant for organisations operating in more 'traditional' sectors and/or where primary functions are organised around a sequential process, it's not as useful for diverse and/or service-based organisations. For these organisations, the Business Model Canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) may be a more useful technique for articulating how an organisation creates value. The Business Model Canvas describes an organisation's value proposition —the products and services that create value for specific customer segments —alongside the key resources, partners, capabilities, and channels required to sustain the proposition.

Irrespective of the type of organisation, its business model, or the technique used to describe it, a successful organisation will be able to:

a. Articulate how it uses its business model to create value for its customers, and

b. Relate every business-as-usual role back to its business model.

Value Creation and Business Analysis

At this point, we have established:

- Business analysis does not deliver value on its own
- An organisation's business model is key to the consistent creation of value
- Every business-as-usual role is connected to an organisation's business model and, thus, plays a part in the creation of value.

This raises the question: *How does business analysis relate to value creation*? Business analysis is generally not considered a business-as-usual function.

To help answer this, we can turn to the definition of business analysis in the BABOK v3:



"Business analysis is the practice of enabling change in an enterprise by defining needs and recommending solutions that deliver value to stakeholders. Business analysis enables an enterprise to articulate needs and the rationale for change, and to design and describe solutions that ***can deliver*** *value."* (IIBA, 2015)

Reading between the lines, we see it is not business analysis, but instead the **successful implementation of beneficial business change** that creates value. When a business change is implemented in an organisation, something in the organisation's underlying business model also changes. It may be a small change, such as the improvement of a process activity, or a larger change, such as the release of a new product resulting in a raft of changes across the organisation, impacting its *people, processes, organisation and information technology*. Regardless of the size of the business change, it's very likely that the business model will change in some way, impacting the way the organisation creates value.

The Potential of Business Analysis

It is important to recognise that value cannot be delivered but is realised from the use of a product or service (Paul & Lovelock, 2019). Applying this logic, we see that business analysis only realises value when it leads to the successful implementation of change that positively impacts an organisation's ability to create value. Any increase in value should be measurable, allowing some value to be ascribed to the business analysis that enabled the change.

In this sense, business analysis deliverables can be compared to energy. In science, there is the concept of potential and kinetic energy. Simplistically, potential energy is stored energy, while kinetic energy is the energy of an object in motion. For example, a charged battery in a toy car has potential energy. The battery's energy is released as kinetic energy when the toy car is turned on and starts moving.

Business analysis is much the same: Business analysis — in and of itself — has potential value. When analysis leads to the successful implementation of a beneficial change the value of the analysis is realised *at that point and not before*. The realised value of the analysis, therefore, is strongly correlated with any increase in the organisation's ability to create value.

This idea holds regardless of delivery methodology. Business analysis conducted in an agile environment has potential value just the same as business analysis conducted in a waterfall environment. However, just like a battery degrades and loses its charge over time, the potential value of business analysis degrades over time. The quicker analysis leads to the implementation of a successful business change, the more of its potential value will be realised.

Of course, there is always the exception that proves the rule. There are times when business analysis leads to an organisation abandoning a business





change initiative or choosing the status quo over other available options. This is usually due to analysis showing that the cost and/or risk associated with business change is deemed high compared to any increase in the organisation's ability to create value. In these cases, an argument could be made that business analysis did realise its value by virtue of being used in the decision-making process and helping prevent the cost/risk.

Conclusion

To have any hope of creating value, business analysis must lead to the implementation of a beneficial business change. Without change, business analysis is just analysis for its own sake. Understanding the relationship between business analysis, business change and organisational value can help Business Analysts ensure a high proportion of the potential value of analysis is realised, and avoid the accumulation and degradation of analysis with unrealised 'potential value'.

Anna is a Certified Business Analyst Professional with around 20 years' experience in Australia and the UK. She resides in Perth, Western Australia, where she's an active member of the IIBA Australia Chapter. She occasionally puts her thoughts and opinions about business analysis to paper.

Connect with Anna on LinkedIn.

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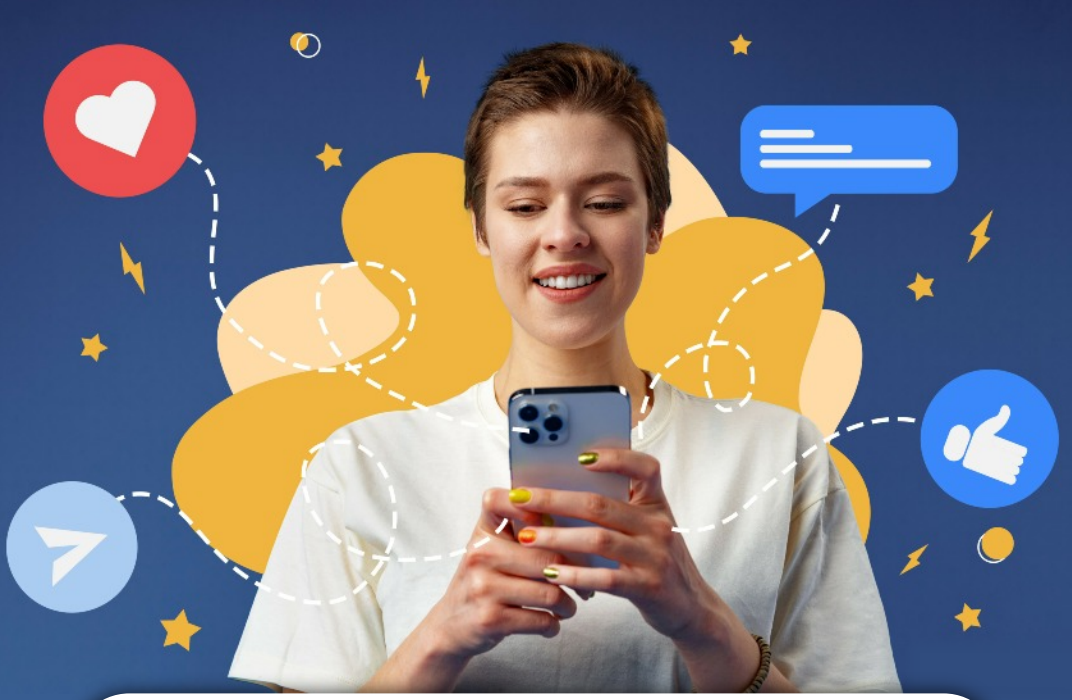

VIEWPOINTS

Would you like to respond to an article you've read in BA Digest? Or perhaps you have an idea that you'd like to float with the BA community? Or maybe you'd just like to give a 'shout out' to a friend or colleague on their good work.

Also keep an eye out on our social media pages for a 'burning question' we would like your views on.

Submit your viewpoints at: overto.link/viewpoint@digest. We'll publish as many as we can in the next edition!

I would like to give a shout out to the Senior Business Analyst, who has been amazing helping me settle in and always being there when I needed her the most. As my first professional job and as an apprentice to the BA world she has advised me at every corner given me well-constructed feedback that has helped me. So really Thank you ever so much. You work so hard all the time to ensure I have everything I need throughout my working day, and I wanted to thank you on here as you also recommend me this resource to increase my knowledge.

Sofia

On social media, we posed the question
"What do you think is the most underused business analysis technique, and why?"

Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?

The "**five Whys**" is a simple and effective technique to get to the bottom of a problem or opportunity. When the questioning pauses at a point less than five times, this technique falls short of being fully utilized. The outcome of the shortcut is a superficial interpretation amongst the team members about the root cause identification.

Example:

Problem: Joined a meeting 15 mins late and cannot follow the conversation

Why? I missed the meeting reminder

Why? Not in front of my computer

Why? Stepped away to complete a chore

Why? Deadline drive chore

Why? The chore scheduled at the same time as the meeting (root cause identified)

While on the surface, the chore seems to be the root cause for missing the meeting, instead it was the timing.

Divya Kishore

The **Context Diagram** is such a valuable tool to understand the scope and interactions of the 'change' area. It is one of my favourite go-to's when starting a new piece of work, but it seems it's not used much these days. When explored with stakeholders in a workshop, it helps everyone understand the extent of change impact, as well as potential issues that could occur if change management is not performed effectively. As it also shows high level data flows, it illustrates what data and interfaces need to be analysed as part of the change.

It's simple. It's easy. And it really helps set the scene for the work we are doing to enable change.

Kathy Berkidge

Observation (or job-shadowing). Because I feel that BAs rely on what customers dictate during interviews or after analyzing data, rather than performing their own critical analysis to the process.

(Also) **UML**. During the analysis, I think BAs feel they are required to use UML only by following the correct notation (ie, thoroughly following the rules from the standard) and to use always the full diagram package. Thus resulting in huge specs. Rather, UML is still great basis for sketching , even if only using some of its properties.

Nuno Santos

The Evolving Role of a Business Analyst in Agile - Doing Just Enough!!

Shaily Malik



Often when we talk about agile, we think of constant change and relentlessly rapid development with short deadlines and a distinct lack of analysis. This can become overwhelming and disconcerting, especially when you have been working as a business analyst for years. As a business analyst, we are used to doing detailed analysis and getting to the root causes of problems. We may feel that our responsibility is to cover every possible scenario and come up with a perfect explanation. This may lead some to conclude that agile is an awkward fit with traditional business analysis.

However, the real question to ask is "how can a business analyst be agile and get enough time to perform appropriately thorough analysis?"

Unfortunately, this is not easy to achieve for practitioners who may be more used to working in a linear waterfall context. It's necessary to shift focus towards adaptation and flexibility instead of following plans. But this does not mean analysis is not required in agile or there is no place for a business analyst. We are in a constantly changing environment where everything comes with a short timeline, and this is where we need to

learn to identify actions that are 'just enough'.

There are four core statements in the Manifesto for Agile Software Development

- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
- Working software over comprehensive documentation
- Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
- Responding to change over following a plan

The manifesto goes on to state, "That is, while there is value in the items on

the right, we value the items on the left more" (Beck et al, 2001)

Personally, I find 'Individuals & Interactions' and 'Customer Collaboration' the most useful values of agile to achieve the required agile mindset as they help to prioritise and focus on what is important. In a non-agile environment BAs tend to be focussed on completing detailed analysis up front which is then passed on to other members of the team. This is time consuming and since there isn't always the opportunity for early feedback it increases the risk of requirement modification. This highlights that analysis requires the contribution of the team and not just the BAs, and collaboration and interactions are key. The more we interact with the individuals in the team and understand their point of view, the greater the chance we will identify the correct action items at the right time. To understand the requirements from the perspective of a customer, developer or a tester throughout the business change lifecycle reduces the probability of unplanned or expensive late changes. Regular collaboration helps ensure that the right thing is achieved at the right time with the help of the right people. Also, it is important to note that being agile is not something that happens overnight. It is a gradual process of learning and with every project and delivery the concept of agile becomes clearer because we can see the value it gives to our organisation in the end.

A simple real-life example of this scenario could be the grocery shopping planning. Imagine going shopping without asking the rest of your family what they want or need. You might end up buying something which isn't needed or miss buying the items that were important to others. This would waste your and their time, money and most importantly it would waste effort. But if the whole family sits together and plans the shopping list, the risk of waste is reduced.

We need to understand that the values and principles of agile are not rocket science. It can be implemented in both our professional and personal lives too. It is quite likely that we unknowingly follow these concepts every day, like prioritising our work based on the relevant deadlines and focusing on what actions provide early value.

The misconception today is that business analysis is not required when working

in an agile context. In fact, it can be said that the role of a business analyst has become more challenging and advanced than before. Many teams that implement an agile framework for software delivery find it useful to have a business analyst on board. BAs perform the deep diving on problems and provide options while supporting the product owner and development team by facilitating prioritisation based on business need. A key challenge for BAs is that they need to learn to adapt and understand not just the template of the artefacts that need to be produced (e.g. epics and user stories) but also the spirit of the agile methodology.

Finally, we need to accept that agile is not a business analysis process but a practical way of developing and delivering valuable working software or a solution to the business. Together, agile practices and business analysis deliver enormous value to organisations. Therefore, there is no question that business analysts are valuable in agile!

Shaily Malik is a Business Analyst at Close Brothers Invoice & Speciality Finance and you can contact her on LinkedIN at www.linkedin.com/in/shaily-malik

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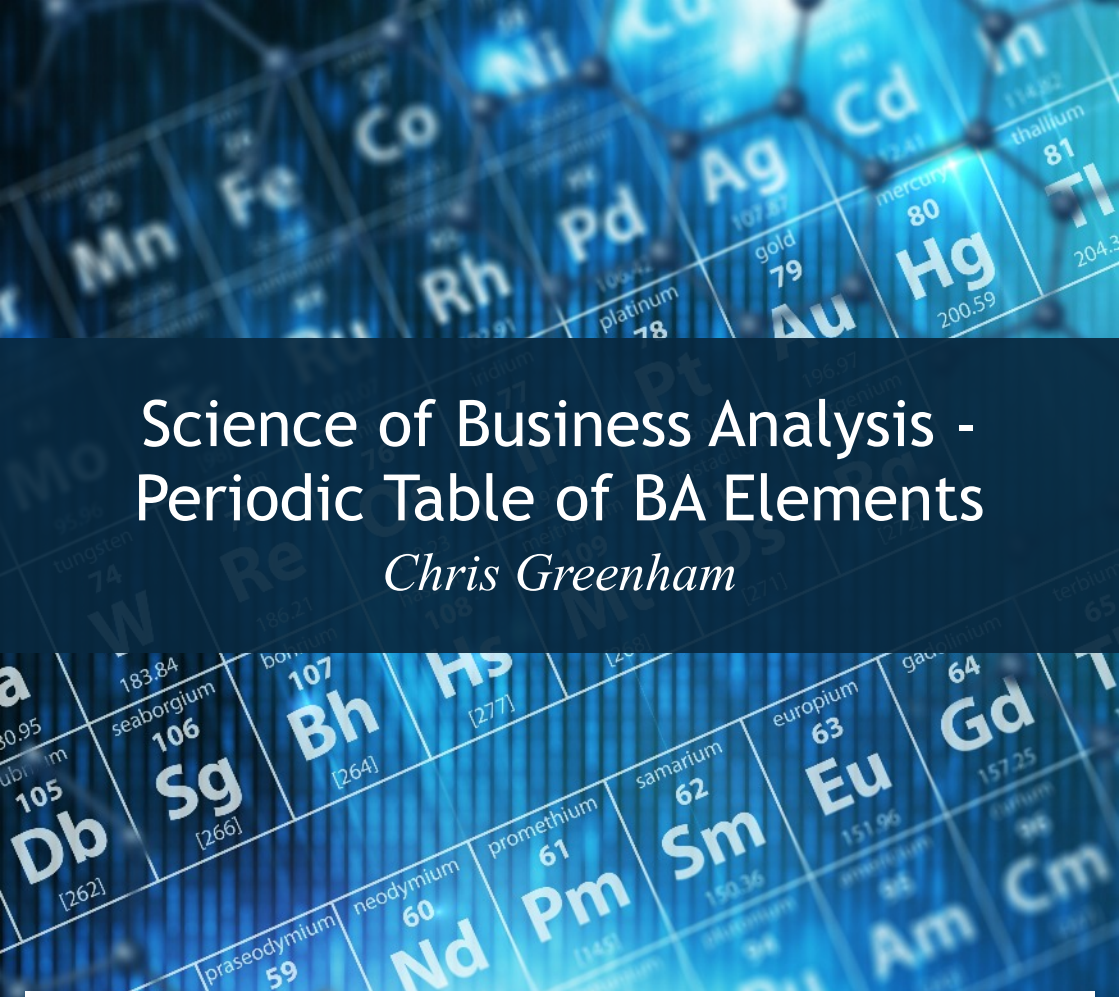

Science of Business Analysis - Periodic Table of BA Elements

Chris Greenham

Albert Einstein famously said: "In theory, theory and practice are the same. In practice, they are not."

As a Business Analyst you learn that business analysis is not a difficult thing to do in theory but putting it into practice is often difficult. It demands knowledge and application of business analysis techniques for stakeholder management, requirements elicitation, process, and data modelling…etc.

On top of that you need business domain, product, and system knowledge, before you can 'talk the talk' with stakeholders from the business, and IT. This is before you complete any provable ANALYSIS, which means TIME AND THINKING —on projects, these are often both in short supply. So long as the analysis is provable in your method/approach it doesn't matter what approach you use.

One of the challenges for those learning business analysis is coming to grips with

the numerous BA disciplines, techniques, or frameworks, and knowing which one to use, when to use them, and how to use them in their business analysis engagements. Some of these BA disciplines, techniques, or frameworks may never be used in an individual practitioner's Business Analyst career. Like the various metals, non-metals, gases, and liquids in the Chemical Periodic Table, a good Scientist still needs to know about all the elements, as to their construct, use, and effect.

The BA Body of Knowledge V3, identifies 50 main types of BA techniques and has mapped these to different BA tasks. There is also a BCS publication Business Analysis Techniques which identifies 123 essential techniques.

On reading the BABOK, and Business Analysis Techniques, it made me wonder if other bodies of knowledge had a similar list of techniques, and disciplines. On review of SEBOK, PMBOK, BIZBOK, and BPM CBOK, all had references to some of the techniques from the BA world in addition to several other techniques, notations, and frameworks. By mapping out all these Body of Knowledge (BOK) techniques, disciplines, notations, and frameworks, and removing the duplicates there are well over 140 business analysis techniques in total. You may be aware of others on top of this too!

So now how do you present this wide range of techniques, notations, and frameworks in an easy way, for a Business Analyst to learn? Before we get into the Periodic Table construct.

First let us consider what is business analysis? - It could be argued that it is a science on the analysis of four elements: *People, process*, *technology*, and *information*. These four elements form a pyramid for *business strategy*, where *people*, *process*, and *technology* form the pyramid base, and *Information* the pinnacle of the pyramid. Just as Aristotle identified the four elements earth, water, air and fire, over time these four elements became famous in the chemistry world, which later became the foundation of the Mendeleev Periodic Table.

Theory and Definitions

The Theory of Business Analysis is:

Business Analysis equals Enterprise Analysis to Enterprise Architecture (**$BA=EA^2$**)

One possible definition of a Business Analyst is:

Noun, [biz-nis-an-l-ist]

Someone who practices the science of business systems analysis from 'enterprise analysis to enterprise architecture' using a hypothesis to explain the observations of how change can be delivered through the four elements people, process, technology, and information.

Period Table of BA Elements

The layout of the Periodic Table of BA Elements groups a set of analysis disciplines into one of six categories each with a colour code.

- Enterprise Analysis
- Traditional Analysis
- Agile Analysis
- Product Analysis
- Change Analysis
- Business Architecture

Each category contains a set of Tiles identifying each BA discipline for various techniques, notations, or frameworks that are associated with a given discipline. Each group of elements is identified as best suited to a business analysis phase, to address stakeholder needs.

The top of the table identifies the common domains of BA elements, for enterprise strategy, traditional analysis (i.e., waterfall), and agile analysis. Within the common domain there are key elements, which link to three secondary domains for product analysis, change analysis and business architecture, which typically falls under enterprise architecture.

Learning BA Elements

The BA Periodic Table acts as a simple and effective learning and evaluation tool, where each business analyst can add content, and project examples, to collaborate with their peers. It also assists with the planning of project engagements.

This tool can be replicated to allow business analysts to create a personal profile/portfolio or resume of one's BA skills and experience. The rich colour of the element tiles can be graded to visually show level of experience or annotated with hours of practical experience. Business analysts can further add hyperlinks to show how they have applied the element with referenceable content. The table is also a great tool to publicise Business analysis as a service to the broader business and showcase project examples and depth of BA experience within the team.

I hope you enjoyed learning the Periodic Table of Business Analyst Elements, as much as I have enjoyed learning, and developing this into an effective business analysis learning tool. You should find that the Periodic Table of BA elements, covers a range of concepts, approaches, and techniques for effective E2E Business Analysis.

Practicing Business Analyst for 30 years, Chris has the nickname 'Sensei' to the Business Analysts he mentors, for his practical application of Business Systems Analysis and Design. 'Magician' to business clients for making their problems disappear. Chris's recent work includes defining Business Analysis, and Enterprise Architecture 'as a Service'.

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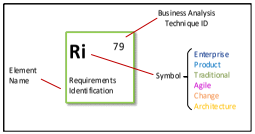

Enterprise Analysis

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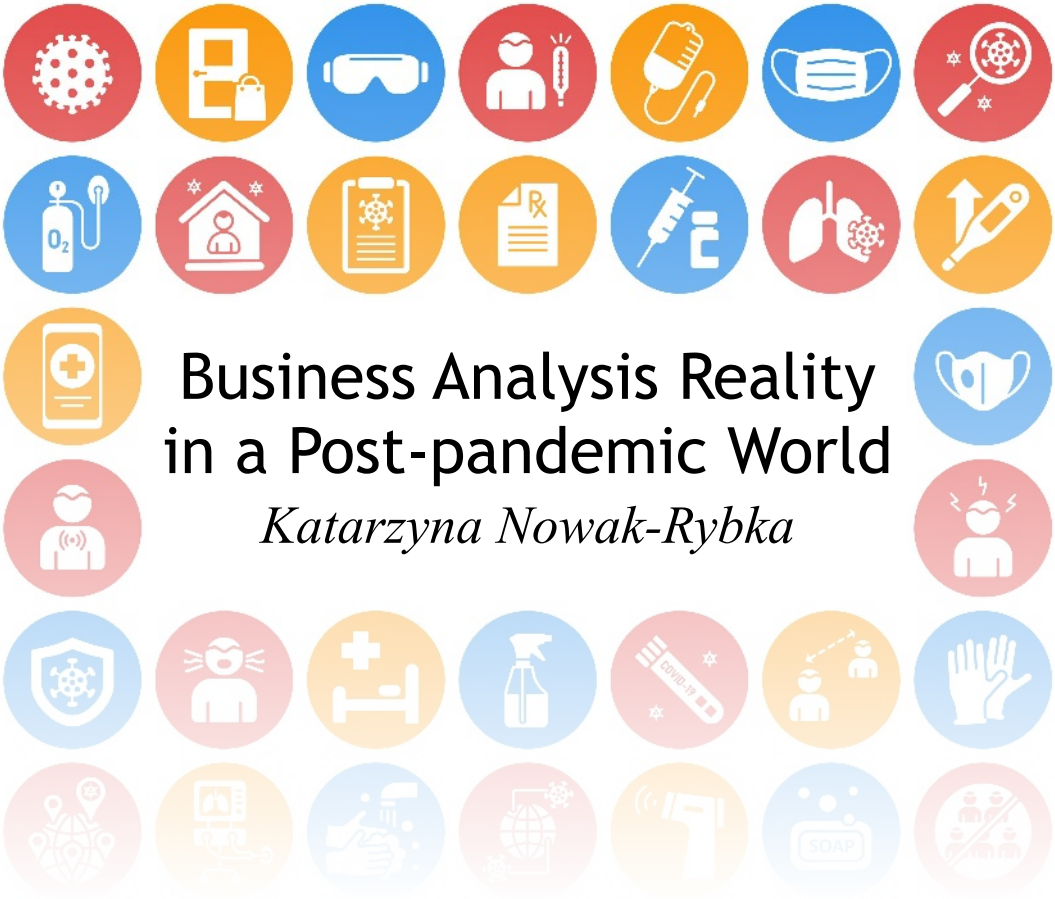

Business Analysis Reality in a Post-pandemic World

Katarzyna Nowak-Rybka

The phrase "New Normal" is not just a buzzword anymore. It's not a forecast or a trend but it's the reality we live in. It's the change we all have experienced, even though thankfully for many of us Covid is in retreat.As the Head of a business analysis unit, I see a few post-pandemic ramifications in reference to both the daily BA activities and the opportunities this profession will encounter.

1. BA in the spotlight

Lockdown forced many companies to embrace digital transformation, and the role of business analysis became increasingly desired and seen as valuable. BA professionals performed the roles of advisors for those who needed to adapt quickly to a new digital reality. This applied mainly to non-IT companies, but also to other sectors where clients sought help on their digital journey. As the digitalisation process is not something that can be done overnight, we can observe growing demand for business analysis or advisory roles.

2. *Shifts in the ways of working*

a. Demand for Agility

Adoption of new processes or new software to keep pace with the market requires flexibility and a mindset of failing fast and learning fast. Agility has become more prevalent in the IT area and has impacted BAs' ways of working. It does not mean that the water-fall approach will disappear, but definitely many organisations have embraced agile approaches and are seeing the benefits. Agility has become a desired skill and a coveted mindset seen in many job adverts.

b. More/fewer Contractors

A recent Gartner report states that:

"The economic uncertainty of the pandemic has caused many workers to lose their jobs and exposed others, for the first time, to non-standard work models. Many organisations responded to the pandemic's economic impact by reducing their contractor budgets, but there has been a shift," .

Some BAs prefer to choose this flexible employment model, and more and more companies are open to flexible forms of cooperation. So, with the global job market open for any particular role, it is a model that attracts interest. Unfortunately, there is little credible data in this area yet, but it is an area to watch with interest.

c. Digital tools in place of physical location

According to McKinsey, lockdown showed that the need for business travel or usage of office spaces could be replaced with the right tools. Remote collaboration became a standard and, in some cases, expanded our possibilities to elicit deliverables with new methods or with different stakeholders that weren't available offline.

Remote collaboration forces organisations to use new tools, or at least to adopt them quicker. MSTeams, Slack and other communication channels have slowly pushed emails to the second position in team cooperation. Mural, Miro and other tools dethroned white-boards and flipcharts.

For many of us, it has also been a shift from paper notes to digital alternatives (Todo lists, Wiki spaces etc.)

The shift to those tools has not only impacted our effectiveness and expanded cooperation within internal teams, but it has also affected our clients. Many of the tools mentioned above became enjoyable spaces for workshops and serve as communication channels for busy product owners and PMs.

d. Relations at risks

In many companies, BAs were not just part of the team but used to sit with the team in one room. Covid changed that, altering the ways of working and communication, team spirit and team integrity. During our daily work,

relationships became remote and more difficult for new team members.

Such a situation forced companies to change their onboarding process. What's more critical, project teams needed to adjust their teamwork, onboarding and integrity standards to suit the hybrid mode cooperation.

e. Demand/Popularity of hybrid work model

The completely remote working model is a new standard, however some companies and BAs prefer to be in the office to maintain their business activities and company culture. Others want to have the opportunity to visit the office as they do not have the luxury of a home-office. According to McKinsey remote and virtual modes are likely to continue, albeit less intensely than at the pandemic's peak.

To strengthen relationships and restore some of the BA methods (i.e. observation method), we need to consider embracing an appropriate hybrid model. Organisations will have to adjust their practices to market demands, i.e. candidates who prefer to work from a different city or those who specifically ask for a desk in the office.

3. Adapting to a new reality - Career and development

As the ways of working have changed, our skills and tasks are also evolving. Some BAs need to expand their skills to fit the new reality (i.e. Agility). Lockdown and the online mode forced us to participate in conferences remotely, where networking is more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, many of us are granted the space to learn and grow through a growing number of webinars and online conferences (unattainable before because of the travel cost).

4. Open Global Job Market

The IT industry has become a more popular and more stable work environment for many. Therefore, many non-IT people used this opportunity to switch their profession to IT. Many perceive the business analyst job as an interesting one and used the opportunity to certify in this area.

Moreover, remote collaboration opens up markets and job opportunities when it comes to working locations. Many companies decided to go "remote only" as they could hire candidates outside their local areas or outside the countries they had operated in before. For business analysts who work in multiple languages, it's a huge advantage to be able to work for more international companies or change the company but with no need for relocation.

On the other hand, changing one's job is now more competitive, as more candidates are interested, since job offers are now reachable to a broader audience.

5. Invest in/take care of Personal well-being

Without relocation, but with the possibility of working for an organisation

outside your country, it becomes a tempting option. Business analysis professionals can use this leverage as many companies even allow "workations". Doing the job during working hours and exploring the world and culture in your free time constitutes a work-life balance benefit for many. Employers also see workation as a benefit, as it allows them to maintain project continuity, and keep employees motivated and engaged in the project.

Other perspectives can be observed in interviews and network discussions when candidates are less interested in business travels. The home environment and rearrangement of family obligations we did during lockdowns are now seen in a more positive light and have become our "new standard". In addition, the Covid situation is still not fully resolved in many countries, therefore people are still afraid to travel.

On the other hand, building a relationship through face-to-face conversation in this profession can never be overstated, so no-flight policies will likely loosen. We will try to use new tools for certain tasks and travel for a shorter period of time.

Summary

The pandemic period constituted a shift for our profession in many fields. Advantages can be observed in many areas: our relevance and stronger business involvement, news skills, new tools, and new opportunities. Nevertheless, we must see the disadvantages of those changes: less non-online human interactions, less relationship building, difficulties in using well-known (and effective) methods of work, more online distractors, more competitive job market.

Business analysts should be pragmatic about the market conditions in the coming months, as any IT disturbance may affect us again, and we must stay open-minded.

We must see that the tools we use do not come without risk (i.e. from a human or security perspective), and our model of work needs to put a clear line between work from home and private life.

Katarzyna is a Head of Business Analysis at Objectivity with around 55 Business Analysts on board. Co-founder and co-organiser of Business Analysts Meetups (BAM) in Poland, Conference speaker (i.e. IIBA London). She specialises in Solution Design, Product Development and Business Analysis. Contact via LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/katarzyna-nowak-rybka/

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The Customer Is Not Always Right



Maxime Lacasse

As business analysts, we are advisors, right-hand consultants and coordinators of projects that are driving change and innovation. I like to think of the assistance that we provide as a customer service profession: We assist customers with the requirement elicitation and with the ideation of their business needs. These steps often lead to processes and IT solutions to be implemented in organisations. Sometimes they are so delighted and amazed by our work, and they only wish they had dealt with a BA on previous projects too. Other times, well… there are other times too.

The customer who already knows the solution. They can be both a favourite and a difficult customer to deal with.

The difficulty with these customers is rarely the relevance of the suggested solution. Usually, they are experts in their field - They *know* what they are talking about. Still, we notice that the solutions they often suggest are frequently limited and biassed by their experience. These customers limit themselves to what they know and to what works now. Innovation is not necessarily the objective of their solution. However, they will reach **value** only when they think beyond their existing constraints.

"My bike isn't going fast enough, I arrived late at work this morning… add more gears to my bike!"

> Business analysts will instead determine that the customer's real problem is lack of time. Get up earlier!

"I want to increase my productivity by 10%. Please modify the XYZ application and precisely improve such and such features."



> If we had not limited our scope to the *XYZ* application, perhaps we would have programmed or acquired an independent application that would have provided a higher operational gain at smaller cost.

"I need to know the number of X transactions on a given date, take the info from the ABC database/application I know well."

> During development, it is realised that the ABC database/application only has a fragment of the data at its disposal and thus, provides incomplete information to the business intelligence team.

The academic example of this customer is the one who wants a **big red button to send weekly payroll cheques to their employees.** It was a red button before, it should be a red button now, again. The red button is probably effective and easy to notice. The manager is thanked for the proposed solution. That said, it is one solution among many. The business analyst, in collaboration with the solution architect, might suggest making payroll processing automated weekly (without any button ☺ or cheques), or at least configuring the application to avoid idle time waiting for someone to press a red, blue, or *multi-coloured* button. Hey, they could suggest a crypto-NFT payroll? Why not?!

It is always important to assess several solutions before choosing one. Sometimes the customer or stakeholder is spot on, and gets the best solution, sometimes they are off track. And they can be *wayyy* off track! But, that's just the way it is! It's our job to guide them better, to get them to look outside the box and suggest alternatives. As BAs, we work on the *What* and the *Why*. Customers with these types of issues cannot define their *Why* properly, and they need help finding the root cause of their problems for us to recommend the most appropriate solution.

"For this solution, I'll write an email to my team and mention it at the daily stand-up on Monday morning. So a few days before the launch."

> Any change, from current-state to a target-state, requires extensive change management, legitimised by the organisation's power structure, to get the best solution adoption possible. Or you will find shortcuts and workarounds being applied to your solution in a few months.

Stakeholders might also underestimate the impact of change management, as they consider their idea as an "obvious" one and as an "easy" change. They are

so hands-on with the solution conception, that they do not realise how a procedure or a process change can have huge implications for the staff on-site. Whether it is a new tool to learn, a new legislation to comply to, or a process reengineering, the people affected by this change need to be accompanied and assisted in their integration of a change nevertheless. Here again, **value** is only obtained by doing our BA job *right*. As business analysts, we can *be the voice* of these stakeholders and make sure they are well considered in the Impact analysis. Also, we must state to the customer what are the *winning conditions* to make this project a success. And a little hint: 1 email sent on Monday morning is not sufficient!

Really, How to deal with this customer?

Since…

Expert power:
They usually have more experience in their field…
They can see the operations rolling, and they *know* where the problems are…

Titular power:
They hired your company…

Coercive power:
They can fire you, literally.

Annoying power:
They are known to be strong-minded and hard to convince…

*Hippopotamus power***:*
They are the highest paid guy/gal in the room, so they get to decide.

Be yourself. *I know I know.* Not this again! YES… Be yourself! That is : **Be the BA that you believe the profession should look up to.** Refuse to go through with a rushed project or imposed solution with little conformity or security. Refuse to be intimidated by a title, salary, car make/model, or by a possible retaliation. To be a yes-person was certainly not in your contract. Understand that you were hired to advise, to make recommendations, to identify the winning conditions for a solution to work. This is how you will be able to stand up to those, by showing confidence and by doing great business analysis no matter the conditions. They will see the courage you took and might even thank you for saying what others were thinking quietly. Telling someone an uncomfortable truth, especially to a decision-maker is always a challenge, but only those who take this challenge will obtain positive results and will serve the business analysis profession in the long run.

The customer is NOT always right, but they **want to hear it**!

***Yes, it's HiPPO, I know.

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Swimming Outside of Your Comfort Zone



Emma Ford

Imagine this… It's a lovely hot summer's day, and you're wanting to take a nice swim in the sea you have visited many times before…but wait, something is different….the tides are stronger, or the sea has more fish swimming closer to the shore, or the sea appears to have more seaweed floating in it, or the area is a lot more busier than you are used to with various swimmers also wanting to enjoy a swim on this lovely day….what do you do???

Swimming in the sea is one example where the experience can change with each encounter. This can make a person feel uneasy about executing a skill, swimming in this instance, that they have done many times before. The changing variables can make you turn away from doing an activity, especially when those variables are different from your 'norm'. I refer to this as being presented with a decision of whether to stay within your comfort zone or decide to take the chance and try something new.. This can be quite a daunting task for some people, but it can also be an exciting opportunity. I personally like to try to use these situations as an opportunity for personal growth, try something different and see what can be learnt for future situations. It is not always easy, and you may feel out of your depth at

times, but there are things that can help steady 'the oncoming waves'.

When confronted with something new, whether hosting a workshop, interacting with stakeholders you have not interacted with before, or even working on a project that is different to your experience or knowledge, I would always recommend taking a step back first to prepare. How you prepare is an individual choice, but asking yourself a series of questions can be helpful and can ease the sense of unfamiliarity. Your questions might include

- **Do you have the right equipment?** (E.g. a swimsuit that fits and not likely to fall off when you dive into the sea)
- **Do you require any support?** (E.g. life vest or buoyancy aid, or even someone to help you get into the sea if it is accessed via a jetty)
- **Can you see any obstacles within the path?** (E.g. debris floating in the sea that you need to avoid, or boats moored up that require you to take diversions)
- **Are there any crossovers with other people or objectives?** (E.g. instead of duplicating effort to remove an obstacle or try to find an alternative route you may want to reuse a previous swimmer's route)
- **At what points in the journey can you "check in" to ensure the path being taken is still correct or needs to deviate based on any new 'surprises' arising?**

The above is only a small set of questions that could be asked to help you prepare to do something outside of your comfort zone. Regardless of what questions you ask yourself, prompting yourself to think ahead will help you prepare for potential unknowns.

Let's say you've now asked yourself a set of questions and have planned your swimming route. You take the plunge and are now in the sea. Your initial feelings and thoughts could be a mix of excitement, apprehension, constantly checking where you are against your route…. but you are doing it… you are in the process of doing something outside your comfort zone!! With each stroke you gain more confidence and try to remain calm and sustain a suitable pace.. Some swimmers may be faster and zip past you, others may be slower than you. Nothing is wrong with either as people will find a pace that suits them, especially when the activity they are doing is outside their 'norm'.

There may be moments where you feel overwhelmed by the situation and a little lost. In my view there is nothing wrong with this feeling as you are doing something new. Little adjustments in this situation to overcome any waves that are hitting you from different directions can make all the difference—I immediately recall the Aesop's story about the 'Hare and Tortoise' with the moral message that the race is not always swift, you may be more successful doing things steadily instead of acting quickly and carelessly.

Another recommendation, from my experience, is to not be afraid to ask for help or support, which can sometimes be the action that puts you outside your comfort zone. Support can come in a variety of forms; bumping ideas off someone, or maybe asking your lead for direction, or even regrouping with other stakeholders on your project. If you don't get the support you need, this can be a very unsettling situation but that's a topic for a different article. However, if you have experienced this, I would recommend sharing your views with peers so any learnings can be addressed, and correct support/steer provided in future.

Let's say that you have now completed your swim and are stepping out of the sea, realising you have now completed your task. Multiple feelings and thoughts could be going through you right now; Are you feeling positivity and motivated with 'I did it!!', 'that was difficult at times but I made it through', 'I learnt something new and feel great!', or was the experience not so positive with negativity 'I'm never doing that again, it was too much', 'I am exhausted, and my swimsuit is torn!', 'I never want to swim again in this sea'.

It is at this point where you should evaluate what happened and identify any learnings of things you would like to do again and things that you either need to work on or look to not repeat again. Each person's outcome for each time they move outside their comfort zone can be positive or negative or even a combination of both. Staying within your comfort zone and doing what you know can be beneficial to reduce stress and discomfort but maybe you are missing out by doing just that. When you achieve something from doing an activity or project you have not done before, there is a sense of pride and achievement. Plus you will develop your skill-set and widen future opportunities.

I hope that this article prompts some thoughts on doing something new and different to your 'norm', and hopefully it hasn't put anyone off swimming in the sea either!!

Emma Ford is a professional independent contract business analyst who has worked for multiple financial institutions.

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Going Back to the Essence: Look out for the "Hold Music" in Your Organisation

Adrian Reed



If you've ever been on hold when trying to contact a company by phone, you've probably experienced the irritation of hold music. Typically, this is an irritating experience for two reasons:

1. The sound quality is awful. This is particularly true if you're calling via a mobile/cell phone. I gather that phone calls via the GSM network are optimised for *voice*; they literally cut out non-voice frequencies to save bandwidth, meaning music sounds compressed and garbled.

2. The music is interrupted every 30 seconds with a recorded voice explaining how important your call is and how 'we're experiencing unexpectedly high call volumes right now…'.

I can't imagine *anyone* particularly liking hold music, which begs the question why does it exist in the first

place, particularly when the phone system compresses and garbles it? Surely it just irritates customers which is bad for everyone?

My best guess is that companies use hold music because it's the 'done thing'. It's a well-established convention and telephony systems provide the functionality out of the box. To use a tried and tested cliché "it's the way we've always done things around here". Crucially, when implementing or changing a telephony system this leads to questions like "what hold music shall we use…?" rather than "should we use hold music at all…?" or "should we create a service where people don't have to hold at all?".

Question Everything: Don't Use It Just Because It's There

This trap of using functionality just because it exists is dangerous. Hold music is just one example, but this kind of pattern can be seen throughout organisations. Sometimes particular metrics are measured and reported upon simply because they are the default metrics that the software/hardware spits out. Measuring 'average call handling time' and 'average speed of answer' might be valuable… but doing it just because they are two of the default metrics that a particular telephony system produces is a pretty poor reason. In fact, measure those two metrics alone without considering customer satisfaction and you'll likely get a dashboard that is reassuringly (but deceptively) green even when your customers are frustrated.

A useful concept here is one that Suzanne and James Robertson describe in their book *Mastering the Requirements Process 3rd Edition* as 'essence'. The idea here is to take a situation (e.g. use of hold music) and 'scrape away' the existing technology to understand its underlying intent. Once we understand that intent, that essence, we might change the implementation and find other ways of delivering it.

The intent of hold music, presumably, is "to provide customers with a pleasant experience while they wait". If it's agreed that is *what* an organisation is trying to achieve, the discussion can then centre on *how* to achieve it. Hold music, as it is commonly implemented, probably doesn't actually meet the planned intent. Some other form of queuing system, which lets the customer know their place in the queue and how long they need to wait, might be more appropriate.

Use Essence / Intent as an Innovation Trigger

Yet even more powerful is to re-examine this intent (see also the Brown Cow model in the book mentioned above). Here we might ask 'do we really want customers to wait at all?'. If the answer is no, this might lead us to understand peaks and troughs in demand, to try to predict and level out demand, or even to provide alternative (asynchronous) ways of the customer contacting us. Or, it might lead to some kind of callback system where the telephone system calls the customer when they are first in the queue so they don't have to wait at all.

It might even involve predicting the customers' needs and pre-empting them so no contact is needed at all!

This is relevant to any BA or service designer who is working on existing systems and processes. There will be established norms, within the organisation and within industries generally. Challenging them may lead to resistance, but doing so can lead to innovation. Sometimes there will be very good reasons that things are done in a particular way… other times there might be *no* good reason. These are the times when it may be possible to identify a cheaper and more effective alternative that also increases customer satisfaction. And who wouldn't want to do that?!

Adrian Reed is Principal Consultant at Blackmetric. He speaks internationally on topics relating to business analysis and business change. Adrian wrote the 2016 book 'Be a Great Problem Solver… Now' and the 2018 book 'Business Analyst'. Connect with Adrian on LinkedIn. Check out Adrian's blog.

References:

Robertson & Robertson (2013), *'Mastering the Requirements Process'* 3rd Ed, Addison Wesley/Pearson, Ohio USA

Systems Thinking for Business Analysts:

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Many initiatives focus on solving 'messy' organisational problems, involving many stakeholders, departments and processes.

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September 6 2022

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Company:
Oxford University, IT Services

Role & Salary:
Senior Business Analyst
Grade 8: £42,149 - £50,296 pro rata

Location:
Central Oxford, regular remote working pattern can be agreed. Full-time or part-time applications considered.

Benefits:
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hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/staff-benefits

Job Description:
We have a dynamic and varied role in a thriving BA practice at a top UK university. Come and work with us!

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Email ana.mataksiviour@it.ox.ac.uk for more information



Company:
allpay Limited

Role & Salary:
Business Analyst (£35k-£45k)

Location:
Hybrid, Herefordshire UK

Benefits:
2 on-site restaurants and free gym
Financial and well-being benefits

Job Description:
We are seeking an experienced BA to work in a mutually-supportive team. The analysis work is broad and will involve collaborating on the development of organisation-wide analysis standards.

This exciting role provides the opportunity to pursue internal training as well as certification so that the successful candidate can develop personally and professionally.

Interviews will be held over 2 stages (phone interview, on-site interview)

Business Analyst - allpay

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Company:
Capco

Role & Salary:
Business Analyst - Financial Services
Low £40's to high £60's

Location:
Edinburgh / Glasgow

Benefits:
- *Eligible to join the Capco Pension Scheme*
- *Income Protection*
- *Life Assurance*
- *Private Medical Insurance*
- *Discretionary Bonus*

Job Description:
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Business Analyst - Capco

Company:
Close Brothers

Role & Salary:
Business Analyst
(£50,000 - £55,000)

Location:
Wimbledon & Doncaster

Benefits:
Employee Benefits Close Brothers Group

- *Pension contributions of up to 10%.*
- *A range of health, wellbeing and cost savings benefits.*

Job Description:
Our BAs work across the project lifecycle, acting as an intermediary between our business and technical communities. Using appropriate tools and models, you'll work with a range of stakeholders to capture, clarify, and design business requirements.

You'll be part of our thriving Business Analysis Community of Practice, working with colleagues across the Bank.

We have a two stage interview process, including a presentation.

Search Jobs (current-vacancies.com)

Company:
PanCompany

Role & Salary:
Mid-Level & Senior Business Analyst
(Multiple roles)
€ 75.000 to € 100.000

Location:
Hybrid, western / central Netherlands

Benefits:
Check out werkenbijpancompany.com for our additional benefits

Job Description:
We're a medium sized consultancy firm, specialising in public and private sector IT. We're often engaged when projects get stuck, so we're looking for highly adaptable practitioners.

We are looking for Mid-level and Senior BAs that can work in different project methodologies.

Interviews held over 2 stages.

Competency based interview – 60 mins with the Business Manager.

Technical interview with Competence Developer – 60 mins.

werkenbijpancompany.com/business-information-analyst



Company:
Marie Curie

Role & Salary:
Business Analyst x 2
(£30k - £40k per annum dependent on experience, 35hrs per week, Mon-Fri)

Location:
Office/Home-based/Hybrid - based on candidate's preference (various locations across the UK available)

Benefits:
- *Group Personal Pension Scheme*
- *Season ticket loan*
- *Continuous development*
- *Employee Assistance Programme*
- *Flexible Working*

Job Description:
We are looking to recruit 2x additional Business Analysts to sit within our Central Change function's Business Analysis Team to support us on our extensive transformation programmes planned. You will work with colleagues to understand current processes and where and how we can improve these to increase our reach and the outcomes for the people we support across the UK.

Please contact
Hayley.lord@mariecurie.org.uk for more information



Company:
Newcastle Building Society

Role & Salary:
Lead Business Analyst
£40,567 - £51,631

Location:
Cobalt Business Park, working Hybrid

Benefits:
- *30 days holiday plus bank holidays*
- *Pension*
- *Volunteering days*
- *Private medical insurance*
- *Corporate bonus scheme*

Job Description:
Reporting to the Business Analysis Manager in our Group Change function, you will shape, lead and complete the business analysis activity required to evolve and support strategic portfolio delivery. Working alongside key business, portfolio and project stakeholders, you will coordinate and complete business analysis activity to understand change objectives and deliver effective business outcomes.

Selection process involves an initial discussion followed by two interviews.

Newcastle Building Society
Lead Business Analyst



Company:
Newcastle Building Society

Role & Salary:
Business Analyst
£34,000 - £46,000

Location:
Cobalt Business Park, working Hybrid

Benefits:

- *30 days holiday plus bank holidays*
- *Pension*
- *Volunteering days*
- *Private medical insurance*
- *Corporate bonus scheme*

Job Description:

Working in our Group Change function, reporting to the Lead BA, you'll complete business analysis activity required to deliver effective business outcomes.

Working alongside key business, portfolio and project stakeholders, you'll complete investigative work to determine business requirements and specify effective business process solutions through improvements in systems, information, working practices, procedures and organisational change.

Selection process involves an initial discussion followed by two interviews.

Newcastle Building Society - Business Analyst

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