



## A Sneak Peek into the Role of a Business Analyst

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*According to Wikipedia, a business analyst (BA) "is responsible for analyzing the business needs of their clients and stakeholders to help identify business problems and propose solutions." The focus of this article is on business system analysts (BSAs) even though many of the issues are pertinent to other analyst types.*



It is more than likely today that most of the corporate organizations have a sound information system to regulate its business. Business analysts, who are also known as business system analysts or business systems planners, are the

people who are the typical fix-it guys of IT. If a company has an IT problem or seeks to upgrade its information technology capacity to remain competitive, the expert skills of a business analyst may be called upon. The business analyst examines the company's goals and the systems that it has in place to meet those goals. They then determine how to maximize efficiency, or improve a company's operations through the application of computer systems.

### Looking Beyond the "Business" in "Business Analyst"

Business analysts are not restricted to solving problems in the business sector. They may also be called in to companies in a range of industry sectors, including science or engineering companies that use computers extensively in their daily operations.

Experienced analysts may advance to the position of senior business systems analyst, where they will project manage teams of people undertaking business systems analysis.

### The Trials of Business Analysts in the Corporate World

Agile system developers are *generalizing specialists*, people with one or more specialties, a general understanding of the software process, and knowledge of the domain. One of their specialties might be in analysis, or then again it might not. It is reasonable to expect IT professionals to have some analytical skills and for some people to have strong skills in this activity. It is unreasonable to expect everyone to be an expert at every aspect of software development.

- The best analysts are very organized and are great communicators with the ability to distill the critical

information from your project stakeholders, often through a wide range of modeling techniques.

- For many organizations, the addition of BAs clearly improves the quality of the requirements elicitation and analysis modeling.
- But a BA is severely detrimental to the interests of the company if he tends to over-analyze, act as a communication barrier, or lack the required skills of an average BA. Also it is the management which has to decide whether there is the need of a business analyst in the company.
- The role of a BA makes sense when barriers to communication (such as time, distance, or lack of communication skills among developers) have been erected between stakeholders and developers. BAs compensate for these barriers.
- Generally the problem has been of technical folks thinking BA as a career progression with somewhere the feeling that as one progresses one does less of technology and more of business.
- Since BAs are the bridge between business and IT, their ownership becomes an issue in any project. If IT owns them, then business considers them technical resources that hardly add any extra value, and similarly, if business owns them, then IT shuns them as foreign.
- This situation can be handled by making a distinction in the market between the IT-oriented business analyst and the domain-oriented business analyst.

Finally, experts say that the need is to look within and to understand, as individuals, where we can provide the most value using our unique backgrounds. We need to approach each situation in a neutral fashion. Business analysts are themselves in one of the best positions to actively participate in the creation of new and exciting cutting edge solutions.



## Business Analyst Jobs Feature

The International Institute of Business Analysis has the following definition of the role: "A business analyst works as a liaison among stakeholders in order to elicit, analyze, communicate, and validate requirements for changes to

business processes, policies and information systems." Thus, it is the all-around attitude, agility, and expertise in communication skills which qualifies a skilled developer for the role of a business systems analyst.

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