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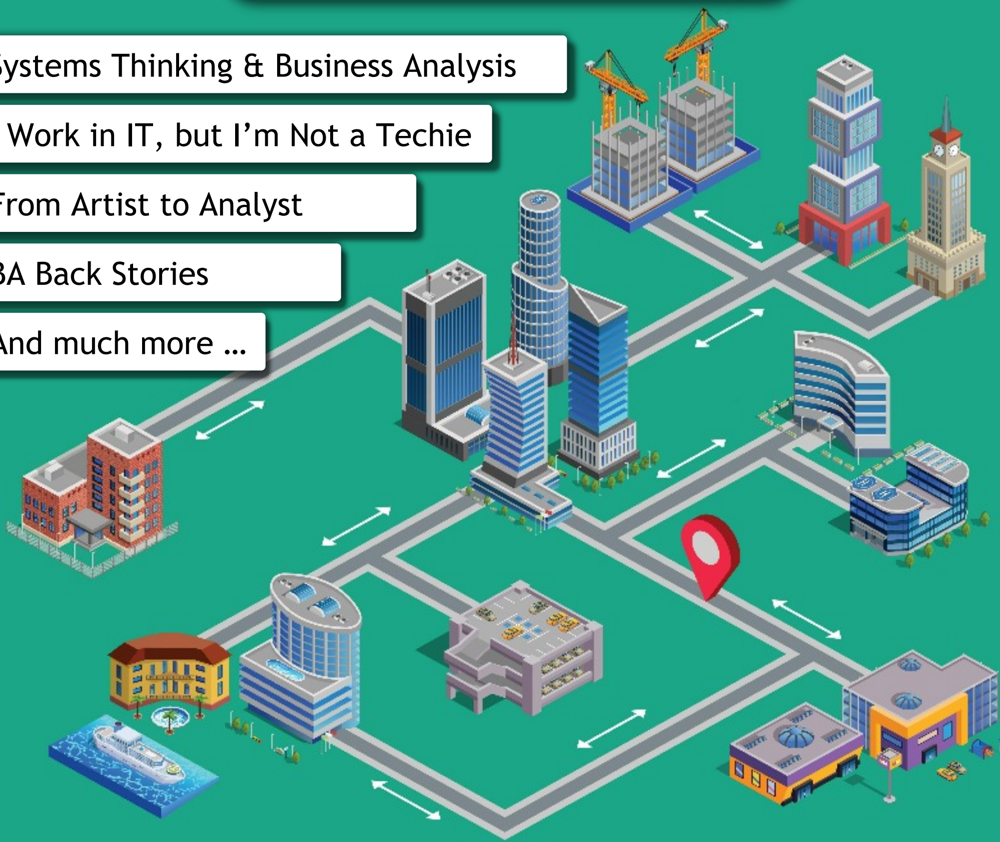
Q1 2023

BA DIGEST

- Systems Thinking & Business Analysis
- I Work in IT, but I'm Not a Techie
- From Artist to Analyst
- BA Back Stories
- And much more …



Your regular round-up of useful BA content

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Welcome

Happy New Year! I hope that you were able to have some 'downtime' over the end-of-year holiday season. As a new year begins, many of us will be thinking about how we want to develop in our careers and personal lives. Alongside this, it's important for us to collectively think about where we want our profession to go.

One of the great things about the BA profession is that it isn't really 'owned' or 'controlled' by any single individual or authority. As a community of enthusiastic and empowered practitioners we can decide where we want to take this profession. The discipline is, at its heart, the sum of what we all collectively do. Yes, there are standard definitions. Yes, there are role profiles. And you know what, all of them were created by people… and all of them are open to discussion, challenge and the occasional 'nudge'.

Part of BA Digest's vision is to be part of that ongoing discussion. For that reason, you'll find articles in this (and every!) edition of Digest that some might think go beyond the traditional view of business analysis. Whether it's systems thinking, business architecture, group construct analysis… we like to give 'air time' to adjacent and complementary disciplines. There is so much we can learn from the 'edges', and it's important to remember that those boundaries are only there because "we" created them!

I hope that you enjoy this edition. As usual, I'd like to extend a massive thank you to all of the authors who have contributed. BA Digest couldn't exist without their generous contribution to the community. Be sure to connect with them, and if an article particularly resonates with you, get in touch with the author and tell them. Trust me, they will appreciate it!

Also, a massive thank you to our advertisers. Check out their offerings, and remember, the brands that you see here in BA Digest are those that are actively supporting the BA Community. Be sure to support them if you can too!

Happy reading!

Adrian

Adrian Reed

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

ISSN 2753-7900

Contents

The Camera Conundrum: Coming Soon … Straight to Your Monitors!

Anna Balogh

We're all familiar with the world of hybrid and virtual meetings now. While some of us may have had experience with this way of working in the past, it has become all the more common since the pandemic. A key question is: to put cameras on or not to?

At the beginning I was 100% pro-cameras on. I find it more personable when you can see those you're talking to. Not seeing them might make you feel like you're talking *at* your audience, rather than *with* them. Seeing attendees is also useful for spotting non-verbal clues about engagement. Does someone look confused? Do people have quizzical looks, and would it be beneficial to repeat a key point?

However, one day a colleague told me that he finds it distracting when people put on their cameras, especially when all you see in the background is their dog chasing their cat and their laundry is piled up high ready to go in the washing machine. This made me think: he had a good point, it's not always helpful for people to put on their cameras. I started thinking of other scenarios when it is better not to have the camera on. Here are some of the situations I came up with:

Not Feeling 100%

We have all heard about how the average number of sick days has gone down since working from home is more common. It makes sense, some days we might feel under the weather and wouldn't want to commute to work. Back pre-March 2020 this could have resulted in a sick day. However, if someone is feeling up to working from home, why not. It could be the perfect time to work on a document that you need a quiet environment for. We all know people who have no problem with working through a cold but would avoid putting their sore red noses on display at all costs. Besides physical illness, it can be mental health related too. Sometimes not having to "show our faces" can be the deciding factor between a day of sick leave and peacefully working in the comfort of our homes.

Those That Choose Not To

We know already after nearly 3 years of Covid that not everyone will have their cameras on in online meetings. There are the rebels—those who just won't put their camera on, and then there are those who choose not to for genuine reasons. I work with a colleague who is extremely shy. He's hard-working, but I have learned not to expect any eye contact. Working from home is paradise for him: he's left in peace and can get on with his work in an environment that is comfortable for him. Also, he chooses not to put his camera on in meetings, and I can completely understand why.

Then there's the broadband aspect. Some of my colleagues work offshore and depending on where they are geographically, they can often have bandwidth issues which makes it almost impossible for them to put their cameras on.

I Do, But I Shouldn't

There's those of us in the pro-camera block, wanting to have it on all the time. It might not always be the best choice though. Imagine the distraction of your pets fighting behind you when you're running a virtual workshop and want it to be engaging.

Think about if there is anything you can do to make the background less distracting. If you work from somewhere where you can't avoid life going on in the background, then it's probably better to blur it out or use a virtual background. However, if you have an office space with, for example, a plain wall or a bookshelf as background, it is perhaps a good idea to use your real background—this also helps with demonstrating authenticity.

Having spent a few months pondering the pros and cons of it, I have come up with a handy checklist which helps to consider some relevant aspects of whether or not to put on a camera in meetings.

For:

- It feels more like a regular face to face meeting where you can see everyone
- Attendees with their cameras on are perceived as being engaged
- …and less likely to multi-task
- Gives a chance for participants to see and read nonverbal clues
- It demonstrates authenticity

Against:

- Weak or unreliable broadband can make it impossible to reliably use a camera
- Distractions in the background (e.g. when working from a busy home, or if someone is on a train but made special effort to join a meeting)
- Someone with a shy/introverted personality might benefit from not putting their camera on
- If there is a challenging conversation (e.g. there is a language barrier) it might help people not being in the "limelight"
- People might have a desk setup where they can't change their camera angle to show them properly
- Someone having an "off" day might prefer not to put it on – the scenario when one is feeling fine to work but don't feel up to having their camera on (e.g. hiding a red nose when having a cold)

Virtual and hybrid meetings are still relatively new, and we're still finding our way around them. There's a lot more to be mindful of than it used to be with in-person meetings: technology, time zones, making sure there are breaks when people get away from their screens etc. When it comes to cameras and seeing each other on screen, consider this list and set expectations accordingly. Perhaps the idea of everyone being visible isn't that ideal and it's important that all meeting participants agree on the approach to camera usage.

Anna Balogh is a Business Analyst with specific interest in digital solutions, teamwork, and equality. You can contact her on LinkedIn at: www.linkedin.com/in/anna-balogh-43855449/

Systems Thinking & Business Analysis

Matt Lloyd

Systems Thinking. It's a term that as business analysts you may have come across, either whilst browsing social media or as part of a bigger initiative, such as the recently launched 'Systems Thinking for Civil Servants' initiative from the UK government. But what, actually, is systems thinking?

If you asked seven different people you would get ten different answers, all of them probably right and all of them possibly wrong. Rather than trying to provide you with a "correct" answer, it is probably more useful to offer an elevator pitch, to try and give an understanding without misleading.

Systems thinking is a way of communicating a situation, so it is possible to see the influences, outcomes and relationships that affect the situation as well as the individuals and organisations that are active within that situation.

There are numerous methodologies associated with systems thinking such as Systems Dynamics (SD), the Viable Systems Model (VSM), and Soft Systems Methodology (SSM), all of which have their own tools such as rich pictures and causal loop diagrams. However, at the heart of it all are the fundamentals. Whilst different methodologies may use different names for these different fundamentals, essentially there are a number of ideas which, if embraced, can be of significant value whilst exploring any situation, whether it initially appears to be a computer based scenario or one of a human nature.

The first fundamental is **holism**, that is the idea that you look at a situation as a whole, rather than trying to reduce it to a component level. There is a well-known parable of the elephant and the blind men, which perfectly encapsulates holism.(It's also a great song by Natalie Merchant). Essentially if multiple blind men all touch a different part of an elephant, they will all get a different idea of what it is. One might interpret a leg as a tree trunk, another the elephant's trunk as a snake, etc. However no one man can fully comprehend what an elephant is. So, holism is valuable in enabling an analyst to see the whole situation.

Next up are **interconnections**. Essentially this is looking at how different components in a system are connected to each other; for instance, how a set of components combined makes up a car. But it is also worth considering that simply connecting a set of components is not enough. For example stringing together components from different car manufacturers is unlikely to result in a car that actually works! . How things connect can be as important as the role the components each play within the system.

Emergence is another fundamental of systems thinking, looking at how the parts of the system interact to produce something larger. Think of emergence in terms of bands; some bands, such as The Beatles combine their individual parts to produce something considered special whilst four friends simply playing two guitars, a bass and a set of drums may produce something that can best be described as “noise”. The by-product of the elements interacting is what emerges, and it can be either positive, in the case of The Beatles, or negative.

A further key fundamental of systems thinking to consider is **perspective**. If we again consider The Beatles some people may perceive them as the greatest band of all time, whereas others might consider that the main role of The Beatles was to influence Britpop bands such as Oasis, whereas someone else might just consider them noise. In order to utilise systems thinking it is important to consider all of the multiple perspectives that apply to a system. After all, to some people a word processor may just be a way of writing a document but to the programmer of the word processor it is something altogether different.

The last significant fundamental relates to **boundary setting**. This can be crucial as it enables boundaries to be identified as part of the process of defining a situation. Boundaries separate what is of interest and what isn’t, but it’s also important to acknowledge that boundaries can shift depending on perspectives or purpose. It isn’t always easy to identify the appropriate boundaries when considering a system; for instance, if you are considering “a system of education” do you need to consider transport as part of the system (as the students need to get to their place of education) or do you simply view the system’s boundary starting when students are in the building?

So why, you might ask, should you consider exploring systems thinking further? Systems thinking enables different people to express their understanding of a system and to ask questions. Consider the difference between what “is” happening in the situation and what “should” be happening, as sometimes (often) they can be two different things. You might think a university is a place to educate young people, but from the perspective of a local landlord it's a source of customers. And as business analysts this can be very important, because what a BA often needs to do is meet the needs of multiple stakeholders, whilst communicating the current situation and also identifying potential changes within a framework that is robust and transparent.

At this stage you are hopefully now tempted to explore systems thinking in more depth. The Open University provides some excellent free resources. In addition there are many great books (and, unfortunately, a lot of really poor books) available to buy. In terms of research, you could do far worse than check out Thinking in Systems: A Primer by Donella Meadows, which has a Systems Dynamics flavour, The Grammar of Systems by Patrick Hoverstadt (Viable Systems Model centric) with Michael C Jacksons, Critical Systems and the Management of Complexity, probably being the most in-depth and cross methodology book available.

Matt Lloyd has had a varied career. After leaving university with a degree in Business Information Systems, Matt went on to work as a music journalist before moving into local government and then business consultancy. Currently Matt is undertaking a PhD at the Centre for Systems Studies. www.linkedin.com/in/matt-lloyd-ply-b307062

Identifying the Humans Relevant to Our Business Analysis Work

Oge Nwachukwu

According to the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA®)'s Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOK®) Guide:

"The business analyst is responsible for eliciting the actual needs of stakeholders—which frequently involves investigating and clarifying their expressed desires—in order to determine underlying issues and causes. Business analysts play a role in aligning the designed and delivered solutions with the needs of stakeholders."

This quote highlights how identifying and effectively managing all the humans (stakeholders) relevant to a change is a critical success factor for every change initiative.

Stakeholder identification involves determining the individuals, groups or entities who can be impacted by or impact an initiative's activities or outcomes.

High-level stakeholder Identification may start to happen during project initiation; with the initial stakeholder list generated at this phase. It can then be progressively elaborated on as the work scope becomes clearer and the change effort advances.

Some stakeholders are obvious and easily identifiable, examples are customers, suppliers, regulators, and people from related business areas. However, additional analysis may be required to identify the not-so-obvious stakeholders.

As analysis practitioners, the benefits of setting time aside to define a logical process that ensures task goals are met before commencing task execution cannot be overemphasised. This exact best practice applies to the stakeholder identification, analysis and engagement process.

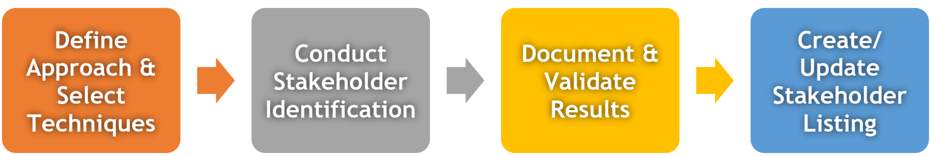
Adopting a structured approach to identifying all key stakeholders as early as possible is also a tactic to mitigate the risk of missed, incomplete and/or misunderstood requirements, which may adversely impact the goals and success of the initiative.

It is important to note that stakeholder identification is an iterative and ongoing endeavour, not a done once and for all process. Changes in stakeholders or context can occur at any time during the initiative; hence it is important to schedule regular stakeholder identification exercises when developing the work plan. Agile projects may experience a higher degree of change than waterfall projects and may require more regular and active stakeholder identification cycles. Irrespective of the delivery approach, it's essential to revisit the stakeholder landscape regularly.

Asides from periodic review of the stakeholder list, there might be specific events that could trigger a reassessment of the stakeholder list. Examples include:

- Completing a project phase and starting a new phase
- Current stakeholders no longer involved in the project work and new members becoming part of the initiative
- Changes in management team and the wider organisation
- Changes in the political or regulatory environment, and any other significant changes in the wider stakeholder community or business environment

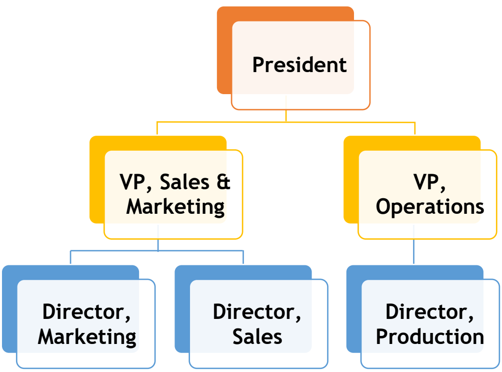
Stakeholder identification is the first step in the stakeholder management and engagement process. It sets the tone for a successful stakeholder management as you can only effectively manage an identified stakeholder. The diagram below depicts a structured approach to stakeholder identification.



Having defined an approach, let's consider some useful techniques that aid effective stakeholder identification.

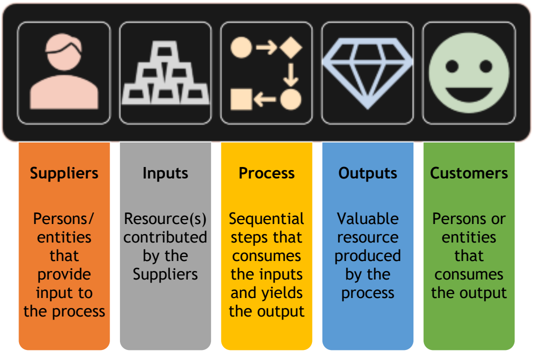
Organisational modelling: the organisational model is a visual representation of the organisational unit. It shows the boundaries, formal relationships, functional roles, interfaces, and dependencies between individual units and stakeholders. It's useful for identifying internal stakeholders and their relationships within the organisation.

Beyond identifying internal stakeholders and their relationships, the model can also be used as a baseline for identifying external stakeholders. This is achieved by performing an interface analysis on each organisational unit to identify external entities they interact with. An example of an organisational (hierarchical) model is shown below:



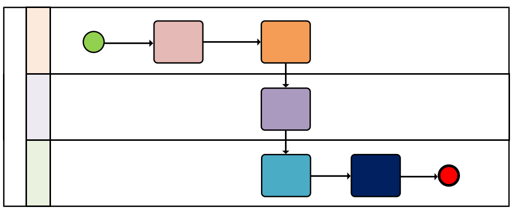
Process modelling and analysis: This is one of my favourite techniques for performing high level stakeholder identification. This exercise would involve collaborating with subject matter experts to describe the processes in scope. You can apply the SIPOC ("Supplier, Input, Process, Output, Customer) technique here. Alternatively using a swimlane diagram can be useful. Each of these approaches is outlined below:

- **SIPOC model** enables a quick visualisation of the process highlighting the primary stakeholders (process owners, suppliers, and customers)



- **Swimlane diagrams** highlight all the actors involved in a process, clearly depicting who is responsible for each task/activity in a process.

Like the organisation model, interface analysis can be performed on each role to identify more internal and external stakeholders relevant to the initiative.



Here is a list of some other techniques that can be used to identify stakeholders:

- Brainstorming
- Mind mapping
- Interviews
- Document analysis
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Focus group
- Workshops

I have also compiled some sample questions that can be used as conversation starters during an elicitation session. These are particularly aimed at validating knowledge of the stakeholder landscape, while identifying anyone that has been missed.

- Who are the individuals directly involved with the processes under review?
- Who are the subject matter experts within the team?
- Who are their supervisors and managers?
- What internal stakeholders supply input to their work process?
- What external stakeholders supply input to their work process?
- What internal stakeholders receive the output of their work process?
- What external stakeholders receive the output of their work process?
- Who can be happy or unhappy with changes around the work scope?
- Who has the power to make or break the project?
- Who are the eventual users of the process or technology?
- What person or group has overall decision-making authority?
- How are the industry regulators impacted by the change?

As change enablers, we can set up the initiative for success early on by adopting a structured and systematic process for stakeholder identification, rather than following the path of least resistance, relying on our intuition to identify stakeholders randomly.

Remember, this is not a once and for all event, It's an iterative process. The key is to perform it early at the start of the initiative and progressively elaborate throughout the lifecycle of the initiative.

Oge is a business transformation enthusiast. She has played various critical roles on diverse transformation projects across multiple industry domains for over 14 years.

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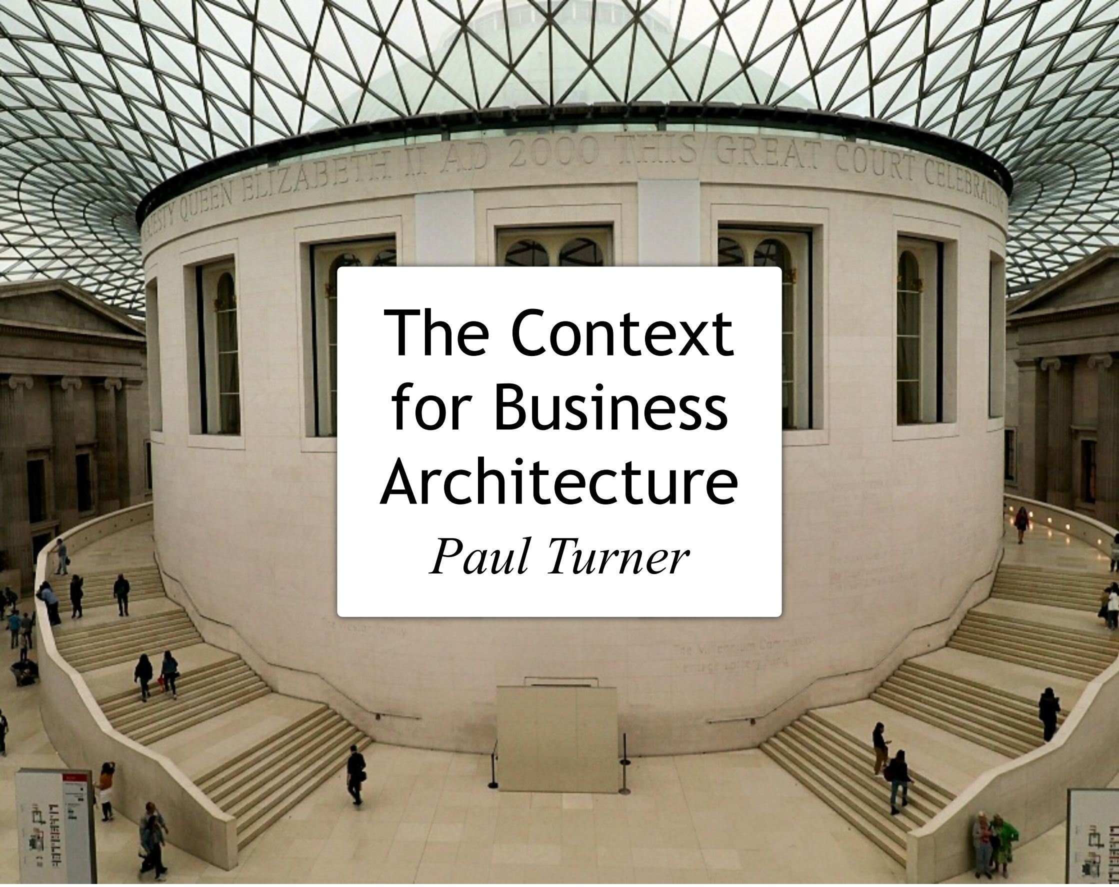


The Context for Business Architecture

Paul Turner

Background and Rationale

Much has been said about architecture in all its numerous flavours, and not surprisingly much of this is quite technical in nature. For instance, the most mature and well defined examples of architecture are those of application, data and infrastructure. However, while these are of obvious importance they are only of real value when used to enable business advantage or service delivery. In each case these architectures are needed to ensure that technical change and development can be rapidly evaluated in terms of impact and effectively deployed.

In the modern world of business (the term business is used here to also include public sector and not for profit organisations), value to end customers can only be delivered by various organisations working together in collaboration. It is this collaborative approach to servicing customer needs that led to standards which allowed various technical platforms to interface with one another. The same needs to be done to enable discrete businesses and the departments within them to work together in a rapidly changing business landscape.

It is important to note that there will be many who will perceive business architecture as an obstacle to be avoided, rather than the value add it is in truth. In some cases, this will mean that the business architecture may need to be introduced into an organisation by stealth in order to demonstrate its value iteratively. This should result in the go ahead to introduce it fully and ultimately implement it as the essence of governance and the underpinning authority for design and new initiative assessment.

This is where business architecture comes in, providing a standard definition of business capabilities, value streams, organisational business units and information concepts which can focus on WHAT a business needs to do to add value to its customers independently of HOW this value is actually delivered at a specific point in time. In addition, this implementation independent definition of the business can act as a necessary bridge between the strategic direction of the business, set by the management/leadership team and the day-to-day execution of this vision, delivered by operational teams of the various organisations involved. By using business architecture to focus on what is the same across organisations rather than getting diverted by concentrating on what is different, business can benefit from reuse at a variety of levels in terms of business capabilities and their implantation. It is worth always remembering the mantra:

> *All organisations are the same, - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - except where they are different.*

So what exactly is business architecture and why is it so important to organisations going forward? Here we will consider these questions and explore some of the key business architecture techniques that help it provide real business benefit in practice.

The term "business architecture" has been used in many contexts and there have been many definitions within a range of frameworks. In some cases, the term is used in ways that imply it is quite a technical concept and in others that it is simply another name for business analysis undertaken at a higher level. While business architecture is vital to successful business analysis, it is clearly a different discipline with a different set of objectives, rationale and techniques. Its relationship with business analysis is best described by stating that:

> *A business architecture provides 'air cover' for business analysts enabling them to get on with their jobs at a programme and project delivery level.*

For example, while process improvement undertaken by business analysts will make an organisation more efficient, it is only when this is done in conjunction with a robust, stable and well defined business architecture that the organisation will become more effective and be able to implement innovation in a timely and flexible way. Business architecture provides a more strategic high level view of the key elements which make up a business and enable the delivery of real and substantial value.

The Truths Behind Business Architecture

So, let us have a look at some of the truths that underpin the concept of business architecture as we see it:

- It is perhaps best to start by appreciating that the business architecture is a model of the business that will support and facilitate various levels of business change. It represents the underlying wiring of the business and it provides a business-wide blueprint which helps in the identification and evaluation of new ideas, initiatives and potential projects.

- It is also important to understand that the business architecture does not incorporate technical architectures, but does need to be mapped to them to provide consistency. The best way to do this is to map the various business architecture artefacts, such as value stream stages and high level information concepts, to processes, applications and data classes. These can then be subsequently mapped to the technical infrastructure architecture itself. It is important however to maintain a clear separation between business architecture and the other more technically focussed architectures.

- People often ask "what is the scope of a business architecture?" Well, the scope of business architecture is in fact the scope of the business itself. However, this does not mean you need to wait for the production of the full 'big picture' before you can populate some individual elements of the business architecture. For example, starting with business capabilities and key value streams and moving on to elements later on or producing high level models of the various business architecture models and drilling down into these to provide more detail at a later stage. As we will see later it is not necessary to drill down to the same level of detail for each of the components of a given business architecture model.

To provide a clear understanding of the discipline of business architecture, it is worth looking at some definitions of the value proposition of business architecture itself:

- To increase organisational effectiveness and ability to deliver the organisation's vision and strategic goals

- To map and model various important aspects of the business

- To align business capabilities with business outcomes in order to deliver value

Beneficiaries of Business Architecture

If a robust Business Architecture is in place there four main groups of beneficiaries:

Executives:	**Projects:**
• Impact assessment • Strategy and execution alignment • Enterprise wide view • Appropriate focussed sponsorship • Support for long term planning	• What is needed to discover projects • Project governance • Identification and reuse of design artefacts • Problem and solution alignment
IT: • Target business models • Enterprise level requirements • Support for target technical models • IT governance	**3rd party organisations:** • Consistency of outsourcing • Design governance • Shared models • Ease of regulation and audit

Senior Executives: Having a business architecture will assist in the evaluation of new initiatives, and enable effective execution of the strategy. The development of a business architecture can be fundamental to the long term success of a business and allow executives to make more informed decisions. In fact, it has been suggested that large organisations which do not have some form of business architecture in place may find it difficult to survive in the rapidly changing world in which we live.

Projects: At the project level, not only can business architecture help by identifying potential projects for improvement, but also can facilitate consistent and co-ordinated delivery across all projects.

IT: The IT department will be able to implement suggested changes that are consistent across the organisation identifying high level business requirements while promoting appropriate governance and best practice.

3rd Party organisations: It is important to also realise that business architecture covers the scope of the delivery of value across organisational boundaries. It therefore considers the relationship between partners, suppliers and customers, hence providing a shared model for collaboration. To facilitate this, it is very common for a standard business architecture reference model to be available for specific sectors. But remember this will need you to consider whether you want your organisation to be part of someone else's value stream or whether you want them to be part of yours.

Summary

So to summarise, the main purposes of a business architecture are:

- To enable the development of a perspective of an organisation's strategy and competitive differentiators and to make it easier for an organisation to fully understand what it is and what it is trying to achieve.

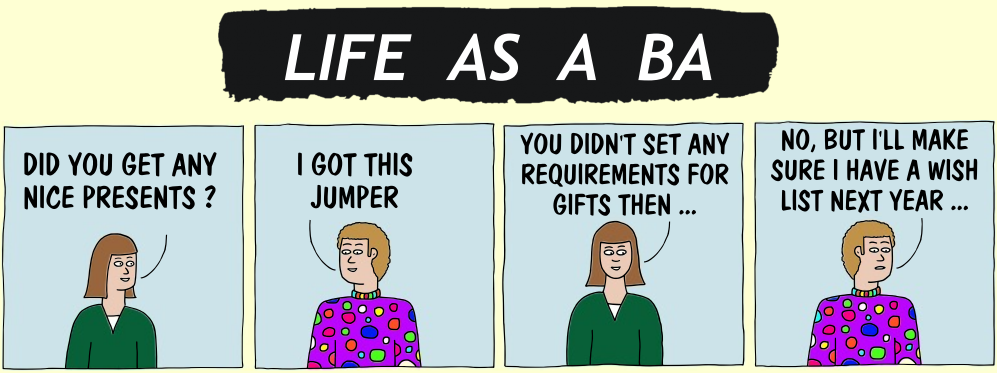
- To understand the key value streams (enabled by reusable business capabilities) which are used to deliver the organisation's value propositions and meet the customer's value expectations, while harmonising these with each other. Hence, providing appropriate value to recipients of an organisation's products and services.

- It allows senior management to be better informed and make more consistent decisions while helping solve more complex business wide problems. In addition, it allows the business to respond effectively and appropriately to the commonly heard phrase from senior stakeholders: "I've had an idea".

- As a link to the more structured, less abstract discipline of business analysis, business architecture will contribute towards the derivation of high level business needs which may be used as input to business and IT solution development subsequently.

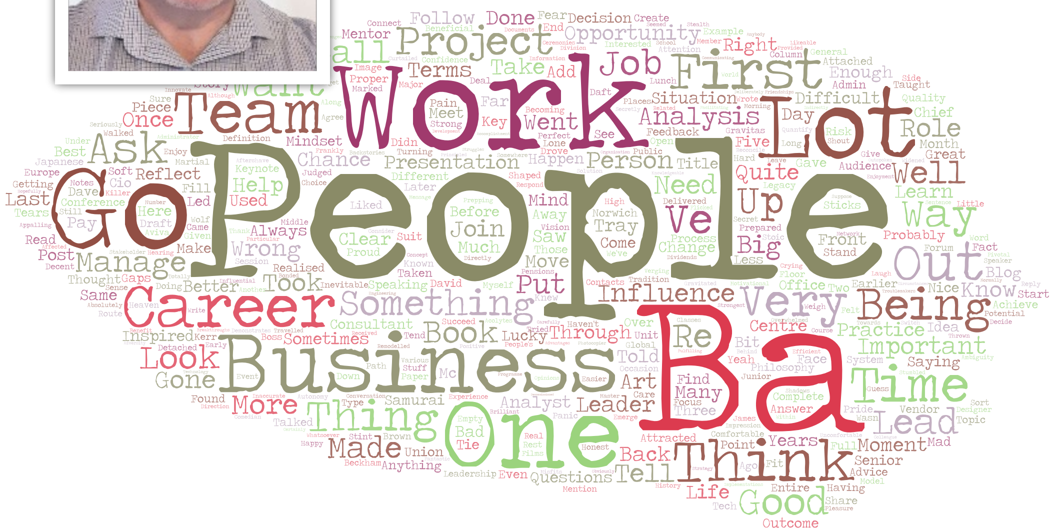
- It ensures the successful use of other architectures by serving as the driving force for the more technical supporting architectures rather than the other way around.

These, and the many other advantages, show the compelling reasons why organisations choose to focus on understanding their business architecture.



BA Back Stories

David Beckham



Interviewed by Christina Lovelock

Dave is a business analyst and motivational speaker, he took time away from prepping for a session at the BA Manager Forum to have this conversation. He reflected on the need to create a strong start for a presentation to connect with the audience, and we talked later about how public speaking has influenced his career. He's also been working on a potential book…

Can you share the topic of the book you are working on with us?

It's my philosophy of being a BA. I am very interested in Japanese martial arts and the samurai tradition and my blog title is samurai business analyst. It's my philosophy of business analysis and life in general… combined with a little bit of Japanese samurai! It's something I feel like I could do and people might be interested in. It’s just as far as the first draft at the moment.

What mindset do you think people need to succeed as BAs?

It’s important that a BA has a clear definition of what they do, in their own mind, because it's a role that is many things to many people. It's important that BAs have a clear focus in terms of what they are delivering. I also feel that you've got to be attached yet detached at the same time. You’ve got to be attached to getting the work done and getting the right outcome, but you haven't got to take it personally. A lot of BAs I’ve mentored are used to having their work marked, so their work has to be 100% perfect before they put it in front of people. You've got to just take a chance and put things out there sometimes, be prepared to be wrong.

Being clear as to what your role is, being comfortable with ambiguity and being prepared to be wrong are the three mindset qualities I think a good BA demonstrates.

How do you think we can get better at being comfortable with being wrong?

Be wrong more often! You have to have pride in your work, that’s important, but having less fear of being judged is also important. It’s a difficult mindset to achieve, because we all want to be right, and all want to do well. I've been in situations where I've deliberately put something in front of a stakeholder which I knew to be inaccurate because I wanted them to fill in the gaps. That is difficult because it can put you at risk of people's impression that you are not knowledgeable enough. It’s a difficult one to quantify how we get better at it, but it is an important quality for BA to have: not taking it personally.

This column is called “BA backstories”, so can you tell me about your first proper job?

My first proper job was in 1986 when I joined what was then Norwich Union as a junior pensions administrator. I walked into the office in an absolutely appalling suit and tie. I didn't even know what a photocopier was… and I was completely overwhelmed. In fact, it was only when I’d gone out for lunch, I realised I didn't know what floor they had taken me to in the morning! I did about five years in an admin role which was when your in-tray was full and then it was empty and there was no autonomy whatsoever. And it drove me mad, quite frankly, because I wasn't right for the job.

I then joined the Vision Unit. We were working with a vendor on things like image documents and high-tech stuff like call centre technology. That was when I found my first enjoyment in work, as a project consultant as we were known then. And the rest, as they say, is history.

What attracted you to business analysis?

I don't know if I was attracted to business analysis or I attracted it to me, because I was always quite outspoken and I'd always be the one in the team meetings asking questions and saying “Why are we doing it this way?” I gravitated into project work from being a pain in the **** in the admin teams. I was lucky enough to be put on one of the first business process re-engineering teams that they had at Norwich Union, in the days of post-its and brown paper. We remodelled the entire call centre system and processes. It was brilliant because I went from in-tray/out-tray, to "find out how the call centre works and come back to us in three months, and we don't care how you do it." It was heaven!

It was a chance to ask questions and to be taken seriously when you're asking questions, because it was almost in the job title! We didn't have BAs when I joined the division, we had project consultants. We worked with the vendor and took on board their practice model and the business analysis practice was one of those. I was a business analyst through and through from then on.

Could you tell us who or what have been the strongest influences on your career?

I've been lucky enough to have a lot of decent managers, who've given me opportunities. One of the most influential leaders I was under was an IT Chief Information Officer (CIO). He was a very principled, honest and open leader. He once told me that the way to be a leader was to have followers, not to have acolytes, or people who just agree with us, and he led by example. I had a particular manager who was very good, because she would ask all the difficult questions that you didn't want to answer! She was a great influence on me, in terms of becoming a mentor, because she taught me that sometimes you have to go places with people where they're uncomfortable, but it leads to great dividends.

There's been a lot of people who have influenced my career, directly or indirectly, more than I could mention here!

Is there a piece of feedback or advice that you have received that sticks with you?

My manager once told me that I needed to get some gravitas. As I've said before in various presentations, I thought "Gravitas" was an aftershave when he first mentioned it. Once I looked the word up, I realised he was right because I liked to have a laugh and I like to be liked. It's an important quality as a BA that you are likeable. For me, people work with you and respond if they enjoy working with you. But I was verging on becoming a stand-up comedian rather than a business analyst. So that was an important piece of advice.

My first stint as BA practice lead was curtailed because I was asked back to lead a BA team on a major project. I wasn't very happy about it at the time. Another colleague who was a senior programme manager, told me that sometimes you have to take the good times and the bad times. That if I went away and reflected on it, I would see that it was a beneficial move. And it was a beneficial move, I learned a lot from it.

As long as you have moments to reflect on what you're hearing from people, you can get feedback from anything and any situation. I think it's important that we do take time to reflect on our experiences.

And how do you reconcile the roles of business analyst and leader?

I think we're secret leaders, we lead from the shadows.

There are people who manage and there are people who lead and I don't think the two are the same thing. BAs lead through facilitating, that soft leadership, stealth leadership, asking the questions. We're not out front going "follow me, follow me!" we're somewhere in the middle going "what if we do it this way?" and "have we done this before" and "how would this work?". We lead through influence rather than through being in your face. Although there are some occasions when BAs have to be "follow me" type leaders.

For example, situations sometimes emerge on projects where implementations have gone wrong and people panic and there's lots of opinions being thrown about as to who's wrong, who's right. The BA can lead by saying "look, we've got to get to the outcome we need, how are we going to do it?". I may not have all the answers, but I can ask questions that will get us there.

Is there anything you would do differently if you had the chance?

I would learn to be a team member earlier. I was quite a lone wolf as a BA for quite some time. Learning to deal with people took me quite a while. I think one of the big breakthroughs in my career was when I realised that by asking people what more I could do to make their job easier, like solution designers, was a much more positive outcome, than saying "well, this is what I'm going to do, you're going to have to get used to it". And also, communicating my strategy earlier because I'm always a great one for ideas, and sometimes I forget that I've had an idea and I need to tell people why it's a good one!

Can you tell me about a path not travelled? When you faced a choice and could have gone in a different direction.

If I was going for life change, I would probably have gone down the art route. I always secretly wanted to be a concept designer for films. I would have to pay more attention in classes at school. But in terms of my BA career? No, I don't think I'd change much at all, it's been very fulfilling.

How have you made some of the big decisions along the way?

Well, I'm quite stoic in my philosophy. If something is going to happen, it's going to happen. And if something happens, it's happened. I guess I tend to weigh up the options and the inevitability of things. And then, once I decide that is inevitable, I look for the advantages and the opportunities in it, because there are opportunities in most situations you come across in life. Not all of them, some of them are not good situations, but look for the opportunity in things and move towards that. If you look hard enough and you think carefully enough, you can normally find some benefit in a decision.

What are the decisions or opportunities that you feel have made you a better business analyst?

One of the opportunities I had was to join a team that was called the business consultancy team, early in my career. They were a sort of A-Team of misfits and troublemakers who went into projects and tried to help innovate and make them more efficient. That gave me a lot of experience of working with senior people. That was a big opportunity that came my way. Then the opportunity to go into the BA practice rather than sticking to the consultancy practice, I took the decision to go into the BA practice because I thought it was a better fit for me.

One of the best opportunities I had was not BA related. They were looking for a 'master of ceremonies' (MC) for a conference. I took a chance because I wasn't sure I'd be able to do it, but I did it and it went very well and I made a lot of contacts in senior management. I widened my network through that. So that was something that wasn't obviously business analysis, but it certainly made a lot of difference to my career, as did speaking at the BA Conference Europe. That was a turning point I think in my career, it gave me the confidence that I wasn't as daft as I thought I was, I got to meet a lot of like-minded people and they seemed to pay attention to what I was saying, which was nice. It did my confidence no-end of good, so that was definitely a turning point in my career as well.

Is there anything that stands out as an accomplishment that you're most proud of?

Yeah, it has to be my keynote speaking about change and managing change in my own personal circumstances. The first time I did that presentation was to the entire leadership team of IT within the Aviva global organisation. I looked up after I delivered that last killer sentence and looked over at my boss who was in tears and the Chief IT office was in tears as well. So, I thought, I've either done something very bad or very good here. That was a big thing for me to do: to tell my own story, and hopefully influence people. I know it has influenced people, because I've had feedback from people, who have said that it helped them with their personal struggles and challenges.

From a business analysis side, it's probably the first project I did, the global call centre project I was talking about earlier. I learned so much, not just post-it notes, but about working on projects and I made a lot of friendships that have lasted to this day. I still go out with the people from the team I worked with on that project every month or so because we bonded through adversity. It taught me a lot about myself and what business analysis is, and the system was only decommissioned five years ago, so it lasted at least 15 years.

I know that your keynote has affected a lot of people. I've been one of those

people crying in the audience on at least one occasion.

This is your chance to give a shout out to a person, a book or an event, something that has inspired you that you think might be helpful to other people.

There's been so many people that have inspired me. One of the key moments in my career was at the BA Conference Europe, where I saw a presentation by James Kerr who wrote a book called Legacy and it just totally inspired me. That was one of the first things that inspired me to do my keynote, because I felt like I'd got something I could add. It made me think about the legacy I want to leave behind, and it's also shaped my mentoring because I just want to do good things for people, if I can. So that was probably a pivotal moment. I saw the presentation and I read the book and it was just like a switch had been flicked that made complete sense to me in a number of ways. That book has shaped the way my career has gone since I read it and since I saw the presentation. That would probably be a real moment for me in terms of my personal development and I did thank him, I contacted him saying how inspirational I found his book and he did reply, which was nice.

Is there anything that you want to add?

Yeah, I suppose the key message for me is business analysis is a fantastic role, it's the best job in the world. I consider myself lucky that I completely stumbled into something that has provided me with a lot of pleasure over the course of my career so, If I can help anybody in any way by what I say, or what I write or what I blog, then that is an achievement I am proud of as well.

Connect with Dave:
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About the interviewer:

Christina Lovelock is a BA leader, author and coach. She is active in the Business Analysis professional community and champions entry level roles. She is co-author of the BCS book Delivering Business Analysis: The BA Service Handbook. She would be delighted if you would like to connect!
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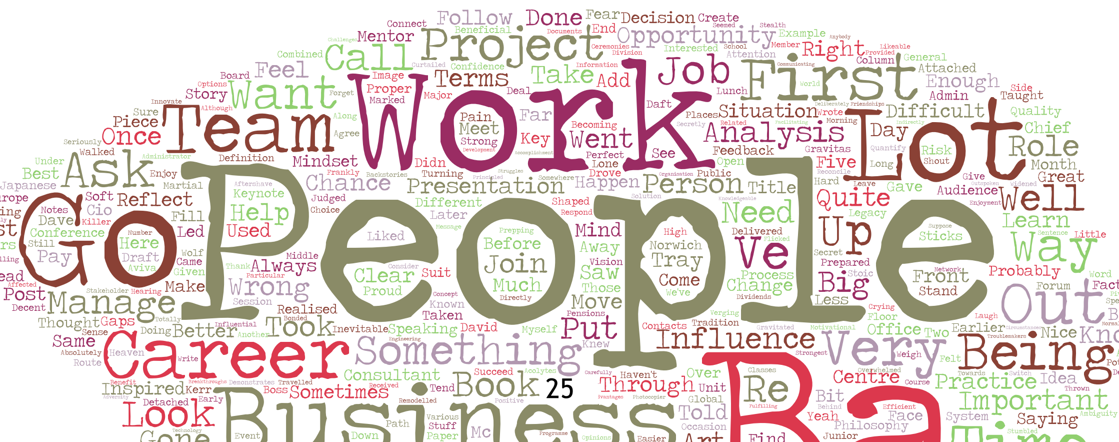


Neurodivergence in Business Analysis: Can You Train Your Traits?

Josh Hyland

I am a business analyst who also has Dyspraxia. I have no idea how many people in the business analysis community are self or medically diagnosed with neurodivergent conditions, or how an individual's condition may manifest in their life and work. However, I do consider business analysis to be the first role in which the traits conventionally associated with my disability have become useful and advantageous. I wanted to share how being a neurodivergent business analyst feels, in the hope that I can correspond with others who experience profound joy and derive salaried self-worth from our fascinating and varied profession. We might even be able to support each other.

To fairly represent my experiences, I have partitioned the role into convenient segments.

Anxiety in advance

When first I am invited into a project, I am overcome with anxiety. Dozens of unformed questions arise. My brain suggests that I am unprepared, I know nothing, and I am destined to fail. The initial deadline gives me some focus, and the fluctuating adrenaline is rationalised into words. “Where do I find information?”; “What do I need to know?”; “To whom should I speak?”; “Which systems are used?”; and the ever-naïve “is this process already documented?”.

After some time with the relevant subject matter experts, I am reassured – we have some great, knowledgeable people who care about things improving. That, or I might discover, the person that left in the summer knew *everything*. I use my anxiety to propel the replacement of uncertainty with credible facts. A hidden dimmer switch turns down, and I can begin to work coherently.

Operational oblivion

Capturing processes can feel disingenuous – the diagrammatic representation of what people do is often a huge simplification of a complex reality riddled with ifs, maybes, and Excel workarounds. Yet when you transcribe a colleague’s daily task via Visio you learn that it has been made simple by their professionalism, or convoluted by yesteryear’s managerial logic, or borderline torturous thanks to a half-finished desktop application. You can shine light on lumpen frustrations and elegant opportunities within a matter of hours, offering an ear.

I love presenting a simplistic, basic flow riddled with incorrect assumptions. I have clear memories of colleagues pointing out what I have missed, identifying exceptions, and sighing, before making a quip about how they would *love* the process to be that simple.

In the conversations about processes, you begin to learn about the more obscure stakeholder relationships, the frictions between people, software, hardware, and data. You get insight into how people feel about their roles, and how they feel about the rules and tools that are supplied to them. Sometimes, you are engaging with someone who has never received such detailed interest in their job, and how they do it. Sometimes, they reflect anew and realise how much they contribute to an organisation. Sometimes, they realise how much effort they have been making to carry a broken or under-developed operational process, then inevitably make a joke about updating their CV. Some of our most valuable people have been quietly fixing the pipework of the business for years. They are conscientious and understand the consequences of failure. They make great allies for us BAs.

The policy pickpocket

Sometimes, a process and a policy document, or procedure document, relate beautifully. Sometimes, the policy was an idealised snapshot written when a core application was implemented a decade ago. We never know until our innate curiosity begins to sweep for perspectives and tacit rules from our formal and informal sources, nimbly taking what we can.

I like to peek at official documents so I can understand the maturity of a set of rules, as well as the house template and writing style. I like to get a feeling for how context is explained, and if the document is for everyone, or an exclusive group of procedural approvers. A well-executed policy or procedure empowers people with clear guidance for what they should do. If this is in place, and your stakeholders are fluent and confident in operating in accordance with fair and realistic instructions, is your work as a BA needed? Yes, it is, and it's nice to feel wanted.

The data diver and report devourer

I love SQL. I can get lost when I explore tables in parallel to people and process, each row the fruit of a human and machine activity, an aggregation substantiating estimations or disproving myths. A grid of query results offering the evidence of the mundane that human memory discards. Understanding the entity relationships that underpin the everyday, finding the gaps that reveal a lack of front-end definition, or consistent system logic.

Reports can be magical sets of text that some just trust, produced via unseen parameters, accepted without wariness of reliability. They can also be agonisingly iterated works that exist as a result of diligent process ownership and sympathetic technicians. Text files can be silently generated overnight, ensuring a third-party has what they need. An expected subscription failing can ruin an entire Monday, and introduce disarray after a nice weekend.

Outputs are an essential element of any process, and taking a bit of time to adjust to some Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or weekly digests will help us to empathise with those who rely on data represented in a useful way. The link from SQL to applications such as Microsoft Power BI means that a data appreciator like me can idle for a few minutes on a common dataset, then show someone who has run a service for many years a few things that they may not already know. Alas, one may then assume responsibility for resolving the unearthed issue.

The assured adviser

Once I am confident with my sources, and documentation has been validated, I feel ready to offer some considered perspectives to my new friends. If budgetary constraints inhibit creativity, we must make the best of what is most efficient. If the project is a profound rebuilding of something outmoded, temper the available business and technical expertise to define something more ambitious. Find the people with the ideas, energy, experience, and the motivation to evoke change, and ensure that they are heard and credited, regardless of their place in a workplace hierarchy, stopping occasionally to wonder if they despise your endless questions.

The reaper of risks

Anxious sensitivity can feel like bumping around a dark, electrified maze. Even the most distant and least-likely eventuality can feel like a catastrophe, poised above the heads of the oblivious. As a paranoid thinker, I need to know what we are going to do about this fringe case, since the regulatory consequences would jeopardise the livelihoods of hundreds of people, and who knows what else.

With some peer grounding and warm humour, the fear of the world ending is neatly added to a text table, and we move on to talking about how many inconvenient system updates have been released this month. The depressive elements of my condition are great for offering dystopian outcomes, if mildly debilitating every few months.

There are many other areas too that I could mention, but then I'd exceed my word count! I hope that you have found this article interesting, and please do get in touch with your thoughts and experiences.

Josh has been a BA in the housing sector since 2018 when he was offered a choice between BA and SQL roles. His continued friendship with SQL is no secret, and finds writing in the third person hilariously uncomfortable. He'd love to hear from other BAs, ND or otherwise: www.linkedin.com/in/hylandjoshua.

I Work in IT, but I'm Not a Techie

Louise Powell

I'm a business analyst working in a business technology IT department, that works on a host of partner /business changes across a lot of different technical platforms.

If you asked my mum, she'd say I was a 'techie'. I have frequent calls from her when her phone or tablet goes wrong, most of the time I just advise to turn it off, wait a few seconds then turn it back on ☺. Only the other day she was perplexed at why her car lights were now dipped after she cleaned her dashboard—Lou to the rescue, I just moved the dial back-up and she thinks I'm a technical genius.

I don't write code, I'm not a gamer in my spare time—but I work as part of a successful development team, delivering technical solutions for our partners.

I originally started work in a call centre. BGL Insurance (BGLi) has been very supportive throughout my career, funding my qualifications and allowing me time off to continue my development. I'm currently working towards the BCS Advanced International Diploma in Business Analysis. I've worked as a BA for about 10 years now, and really enjoy my job—because of the project work, no day ever really feels the same.

A business analyst works with companies to improve their systems and processes. This typically includes eliciting, analysing and documenting requirements, then working with the development team to put a solution in place. Projects can last from a couple of weeks to a couple of years.

Normally when a change comes in, I get a high-level understanding of what the change is – changes can range massively, from a new question being added to one of our online journeys, to a new regulatory requirement, impacting all our brands and all our products.

Then as a team, we have one or many sessions (depending on the size of change) to discuss with the change owner and main stakeholders what the underlying need is and what change will be required. During these meetings, the software developers talk about any technical restrictions and ways the change would work best. Part of my role is to facilitate the workshop; we need to get the best from the wealth of expertise in the room (or online) at that time.

In general, we all know it's very easy for things to be done as they always have been, that's what we do, we're comfortable with that – and we don't want to change—this can be true in software development too.

Part of my job is to ask 'those' questions:

(I should add at this point that it's the whole teams' responsibility to ask questions, and to understand the change but I'm normally the one who starts the conversation)

- What's the quickest way of doing this?
- What's the best way, in terms of quality, to do this – even though it may take longer?
- Is this a short-term fix?
- What systems does this need to integrate with?
- What else or who else will this change affect?
- How does it affect our customers? What would our customers want from this?
- What are our options?

One of my favourite questions, that I cringe a little inside as I ask (imagine the eye rolls of my supportive team, who by this time are maybe a little tired of the questions) is:

Why are we doing it that way? I know we've done it that way in the past but why? Would this approach work instead?

A lot of the time, this is met by reassurance that this is the best way. We then go through the pros and cons of the solutions available, but even then this question does allow thinking time. In some circumstances, this question might uncover a better way, a simpler approach, or a way that leads to less technical debt, a better customer outcome or enables a more robust test approach. I feel triumphant and reminded of the value the whole team adds to the delivery of the business solution. It's very easy for routine to dictate how things progress, rather than to stop and investigate – is this still the best way? 'Since we last did this, X&Y changed, so could we do this in a better way?' In software delivery, things never stay static.

We need to make sure we are delivering the outcome that has been asked, and that we have thought about all the possibilities—sometimes we are able to enhance the outcome, deliver more than what was expected. There is never a perfect solution, so we work out which is the best customer outcome, the best solution for the business and deliver what has been asked of us.

It can take someone that's not in the technical detail, or an expert in that area, to see a different way that could be a better way – not to be stuck in a process.

Questions can drive innovation, they elicit information, they help the whole team understand the issue—it's dangerous to not understand the issue properly, at the very least, you may get quality issues, the worst, you deliver the wrong solution—both of these cost money and time.

Remember, no question is a bad question. If you are thinking it, then other people may be too.

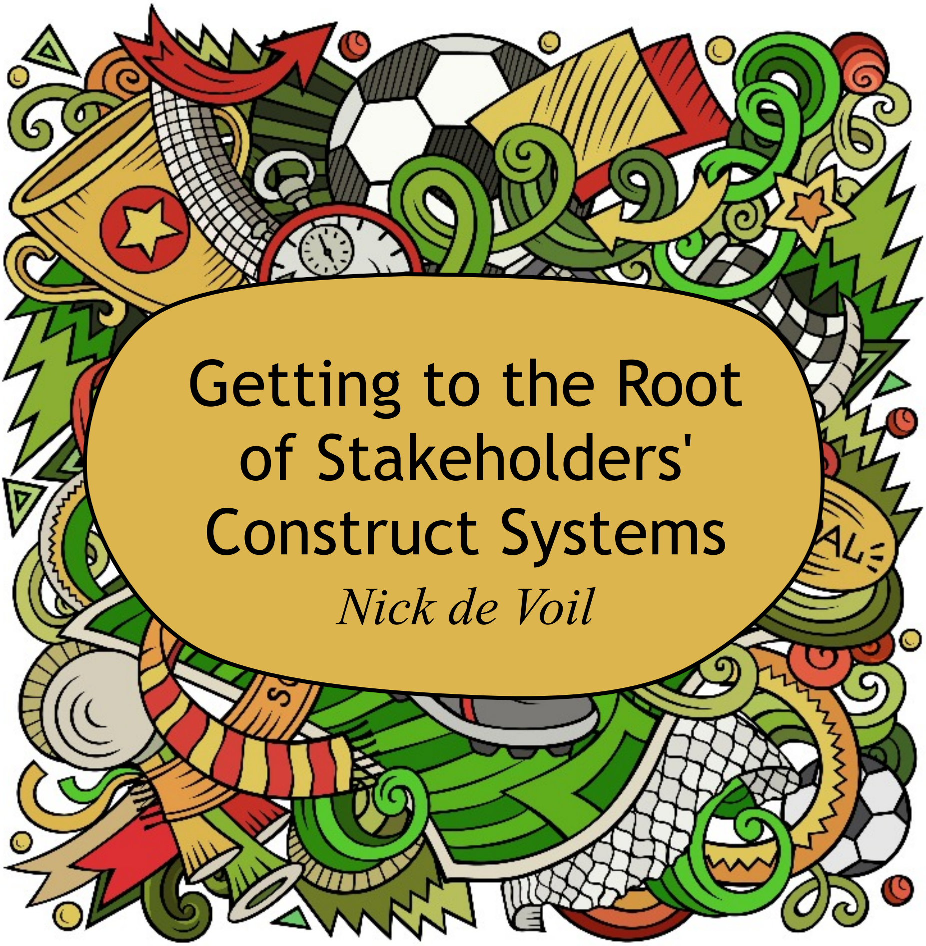
Be confident, ask your question, and listen

All the above can only work if your team works well together, you need collaboration. No one team member could deliver a project on their own.

Louise is an experienced senior business analyst at BGL Insurance, part of the Markerstudy Group. Louise is active in the BA professional community, attending and organising BA events.

Louise is a co-founder of the successful BA Crowd. You can contact her on linkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/louise-powell-b2772439

Using Group Construct Analysis to Understand Stakeholder Worldviews in Ambiguous Situations, Part 7



Getting to the Root of Stakeholders' Construct Systems

Nick de Voil

Recently I was taking questions after a presentation. Looking for examples to illustrate a particular idea, I discussed the Sydney Opera House and the O2 Arena, then moved on to the London Stadium. At this point I couldn't resist making a deprecating remark about West Ham United Football Club. Immediately an audience member right in front of me growled, "Careful… West Ham fan here!" Have you ever unwittingly said something to a stakeholder which you later realised was tactless or inappropriate? Have you ever wondered why a stakeholder was unreceptive to your ideas, only to find out much later that they'd taken a dislike to you for some unforeseeable reason?

Branching systems

Botanists tell us that a plant, such as a tree, consists of two **systems**: the root system, which is usually under the ground, and the shoot system, usually above the ground. If you've ever dug up a plant, you may have been struck by the similar structure of these two systems. Their most characteristic feature is that they exhibit **branching**. There's generally a central stem, which divides into progressively smaller outer stems or roots. The same is true of systems in the human body, such as the nervous system or circulatory system. We can see this branching principle in human-made systems, as well. Think of the road transport system, with its hierarchy of motorways, 'A' roads, 'B' roads and unclassified roads. And business analysts are familiar with a range of diagramming techniques which use the visual metaphor of branching to convey structure of various kinds.

In a branching system, the outer extremities may be the weakest parts, but they play a vital role. They transport information, energy etc. inwards and outwards between the system and the external environment. They are responsible for much of the system's variety and its visible behaviour. The central parts are even more important. Whereas the system might be able to survive damage to the outermost parts, injury to the core elements is difficult or impossible to recover from. They are the first parts to take shape, and the others are dependent on them.

Core and peripheral elements

In this series, we've been discussing how the inner life of an individual can be described in terms of a construct system (see article 1) - a network of categories and concepts that are meaningful to that person. Just like the systems mentioned above, a construct system contains both **core** and **peripheral** elements. Core elements are the hardest to change. When we do or say something which makes an individual feel that their core constructs are under attack, they can react badly, because they feel we are threatening their **identity**. In fact, it turns out that identity is a very helpful concept when thinking about stakeholders. But what does it mean, exactly?

Identity and social groups

One way of looking at identity is in terms of **social groups**. Most individuals belong to many groups. Someone might belong to a (semi-)formally constituted structure such as a religious denomination, a political party or a sports club; or they might see themselves as part of a community made up of individuals with particular characteristics, such as gay men or software developers. These can all be considered groups. For a given individual, one or more group identities will typically be core constructs, whereas others will be peripheral. We'll look at social groups again in a future article.

Identity and narrative

Another illuminating perspective on identity is provided by the social theorist Anthony Giddens (a Tottenham Hotspur Football Club supporter, incidentally). Giddens shows us that a person's identity is a **story** which they tell, and which they maintain by constantly updating it with new information. Although a core part of their construct system, it is dynamic, not static. It tells a story, and that story develops over time. We tell this story to other people, and we tell it to ourselves. Like everything else in our construct system, we are continually testing and revising it without necessarily realising. And this illustrates a crucial way in which human beings' construct systems are unique. Perhaps as a result of *neuroplasticity* – the ability of the connections in our brains to reconfigure themselves – the core parts of these systems are subject to change.

How constructs are strengthened

There are at least six ways in which a construct can become particularly important to a person, and qualify for inclusion among their core constructs.

Repetition: In a way, we are simple creatures. The more we repeat an idea, or an idea is repeated to us, the stronger it becomes in our construct system. Again, this a result of neuroplasticity.

Origin: A crucial part of our identity is the *origin story* we tell about ourselves. Our background – geographical and cultural origin, our family and so on – is important to us.

Ordeal: If we have gone through difficult or even traumatic experiences, the learning that we've taken from this is deeply significant.

Conflict: Similarly, if we've had to fight (literally or figuratively) for something, we won't let go of it lightly.

Commitment: A person might make a public commitment to a particular construct. The simple act of doing this makes it important to them. Having to defend values against challenge from others strengthens this tendency.

Special knowledge: Each of us tends to believe that there are certain ideas which we are privileged to understand, unlike most people. This may be because of our own thought processes, or because we were led to this belief by an individual or group who is important to us.

I invite you to consider what you know about yourself and your stakeholders, and review it in the light of these principles. Are there any other forces that you see at work? Let me know!

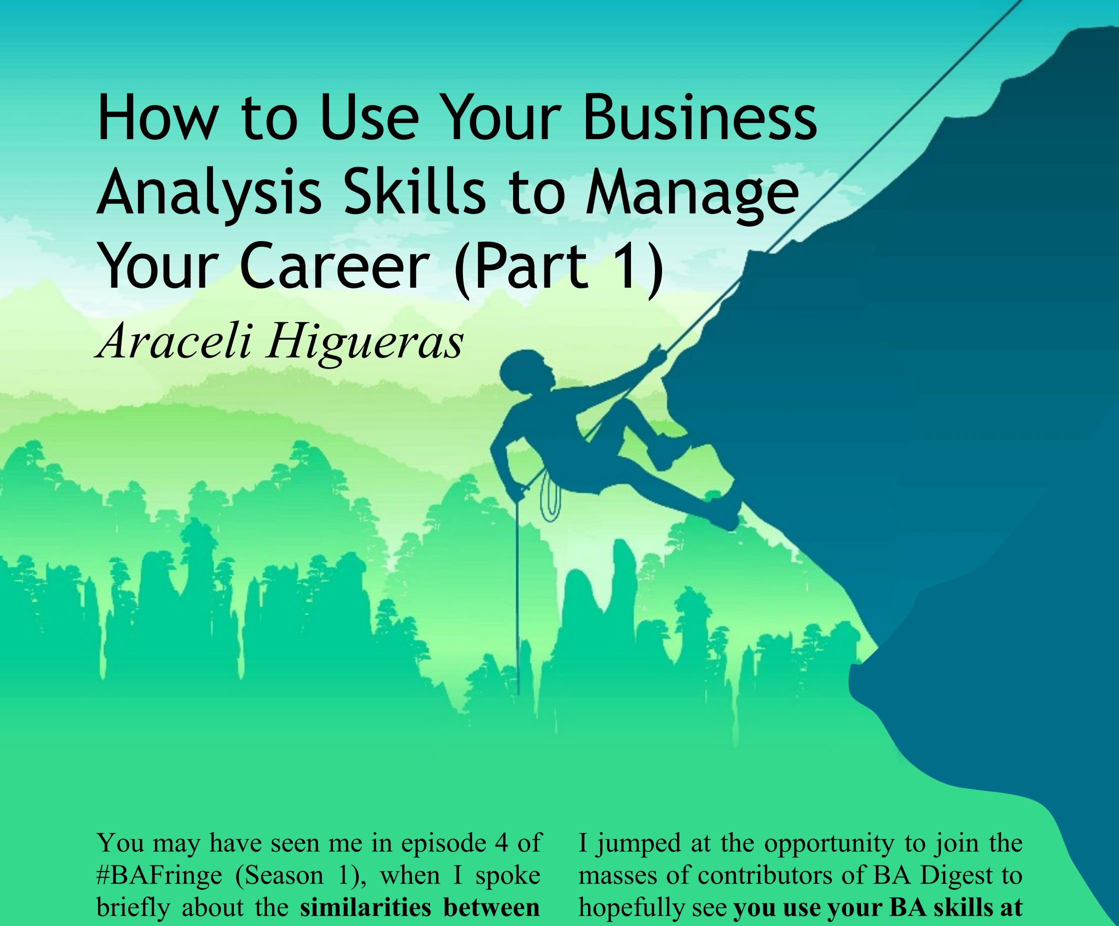
P.S. Why do I keep mentioning Tottenham Hotspur?

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

You can read the previous articles in this series by accessing the BA Digest archive.

How to Use Your Business Analysis Skills to Manage Your Career (Part 1)

Araceli Higueras



You may have seen me in episode 4 of #BAFringe (Season 1), when I spoke briefly about the **similarities between coaching and business analysis**. Feel free to look again at the recording or read the accompanying article.

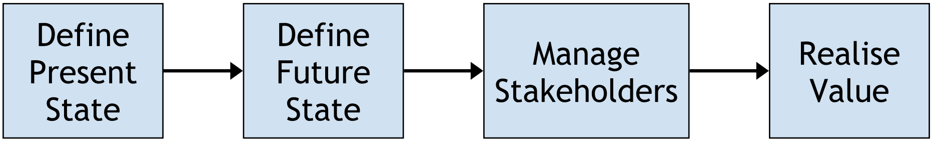
I am writing this article as an executive coach with experience since the beginning of 2009, albeit part-time, because I am also a business analyst in my 'day job'.

In this article, I would like to discuss some of the similarities between coaching and business analysis, but not necessarily to encourage you to **become a coach** (*although I recommend that you learn the skills!*) or that you **hire somebody with coaching skills** (*even if I find people with coaching skills great*!).

I jumped at the opportunity to join the masses of contributors of BA Digest to hopefully see **you use your BA skills at the service of your career**. With that in mind, I think it's best if I split this topic up into 3 articles, for the "journey" to be more meaningful and concise:

1. We'll start with the analysis of the present state and the articulation of the desired future state
2. We'll continue with stakeholder analysis and
3. We will finish with managing the business value realisation.

This journey is summarised in the following diagram.



Begin at the beginning

To begin with, let's look at the "**problem situation**", that is to say: you in your current state.

Where are you now? Consider your current role, the length of time you have been in your current project, team, department and organisation.

Take this exercise in a scientific way: we are **observing** only, without judgement at this stage. It's not "right" or "wrong" to be somewhere for 3, 2 or 10 years.

As you remind yourself of where you are, take the time to list the **responsibilities** that you assume in the role. Do you act like a buddy to support newcomers as they onboard? Are you an early adopter of systems and tools and support your team with transitions and adoption?

Take a notepad and start a list to collect answers. This is not a 2 minute exercise and the answers can come back to you at any time. Make a note and catch them!

Do you pick up certain types of projects?

The list of questions can go on. I am trying to help you distil as many **tasks** as possible that go beyond the "obvious" ones that you "officially" associate with your role. I am looking for "flavour" that will give you insight into **transferable skills** that are worth becoming aware of, what you do well, what you ***enjoy***.

Look inside

Now let's have a look at your **values**.

Our values define our essence. They are what we consider (though not always consciously) when we make decisions. When we "disobey" them, when we don't listen to them, when we are in situations that contradict them, they are the reason why we leave work, or a person.

When you are aware of your values, you have a compass at your disposal that helps you align your decisions and the situations you get into, with your priorities. Let's have a good think about what **represents you**.

How do you "find" them?

Look at the core value list in this article and **choose the 10 values you identify yourself with**. Then make the effort (yes, it's an effort!) To shorten the small list so there are only 5 left.

This is not an exercise in philosophy or language—explain your values, your own way: define them as you wish, give them the "label" you like best. The most important thing is that **they have a name** and that **you know what they mean**.

Look forward

We have now arrived at the time to start **thinking about the future**.

What does the future mean to you? It can mean an **ideal role**, it can mean a certain **income**, it can mean being part of a sector or reaching a seniority level.

Thinking about your future can also be done by thinking about the **impact** that we want to have in society or a community.

There's nothing wrong with answering in a "fuzzy" way. Just make sure you break it down into practical elements so that you can identify what success means. The key elements in coaching are, at least in the methodology that I follow: goals, feedback and flexibility.

If your future looks fuzzy, how will you know that you have reached it? One way would be to think about the criteria that satisfies it.

For example, if you want to be the Chief Marketing Officer of an organisation, that's one answer. If you want to earn enough to support your family, be within a specific distance of your parents, work during specific hours, serve the Filipino community or reduce homelessness. Those are fine as other types of answers.

We can work with everything, as long as it is ***meaningful*** to you.

Meaningful future visualisation gives us motivation, identity, courage and ultimately helps us succeed.

Coming next

In the second article we'll look at who you need to connect with to make your future happen (who is part of your journey) and in the final article we will think about the very important part of demonstrating value.

Araceli is a BA, coach and copywriter. She loves crafts, is a keen sportswoman and a languages enthusiast.

She works as a product owner at Global Relay, serves as trustee at ICYE-UK and is on the leadership team of London's chapter of International Association of Women.

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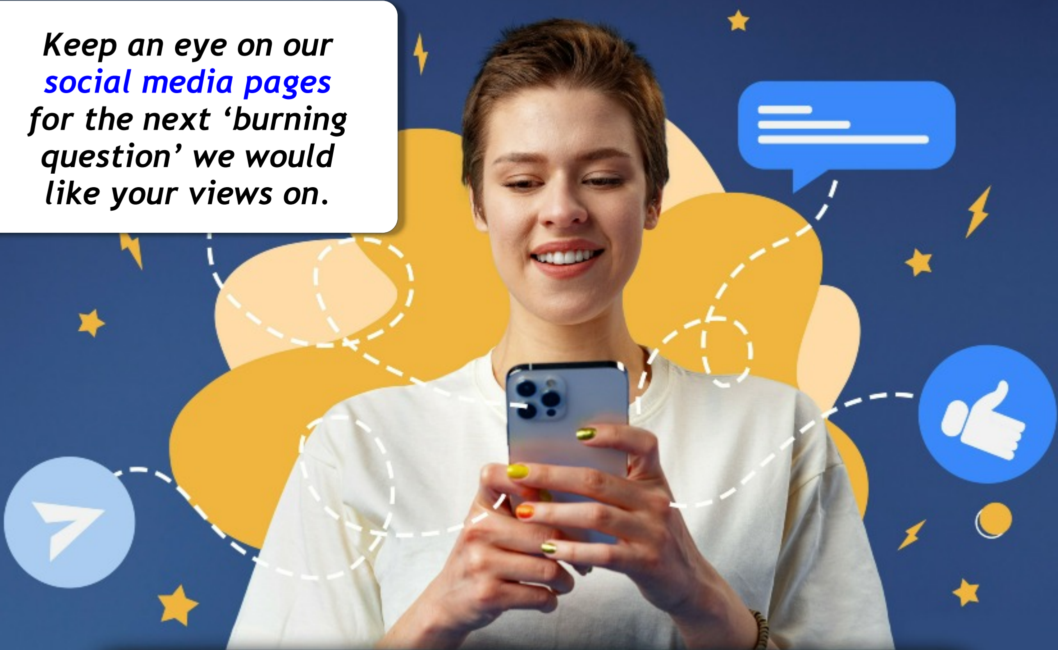
Keep an eye on our [social media pages](#) for the next 'burning question' we would like your views on.



VIEWPOINTS

On social media, we posed the question ***"How have you used your business analysis skills in unexpected ways?"***

Tabletop roleplaying games (RPGs) is a big passion of mine and I use my BA skills in that space quite a bit. The 500lb Gorilla that is Dungeons & Dragons is what most people think of when someone talks about RPGs but there are 1000s of different games across 100s of different genres. As the person who hosts such games (referred to as the Gamemaster or Referee), it puts me in the unique position of having to understand the needs of my players, the things they enjoy, tailoring the game to those needs, and then part-collaborating/part-managing them within the boundaries of the game to collectively produce an emergent story. There are lots of soft management and analytical skills including things like structuring and communicating ideas and people management, as well as developing a good self-awareness of timing and pacing - all useful BA skills!

Rich Harrison

Managing a teenage heavy metal band back in 2004 - 2005. Using my stakeholder management skills to manage not just the band members - but also other stakeholders including promoters, venue managers, local media, sound & lighting techies, other bands, studio producers and fans. Using my fact finding and analysis skills to work out exactly how a demo CD should be formatted and distributed, to get the attention of promoters and broadcasters. Successes included playing larger theatre venues (600+ capacity), selling out the first CD and getting some airplay. Also funding the operation entirely ourselves - from CD sales and gigs revenues. If you have ever seen the movie Spinal Tap, yes it is a spoof documentary - but I can promise you that some of it is all too true!

Steve McIntosh

It was for my housing estate's end-of-year party; the planning committee could not seem to agree on the best way to mark the yearly celebration. After much deliberation, I suggested we provided post-it notes for people to put on the bulletin board to pick their preferred mode of celebration. We ended up having fun in a "colourful" way and we were able to come up with a suggestion that most of the occupants of the estate were happy with. I named it my modified Kanban board of celebration.

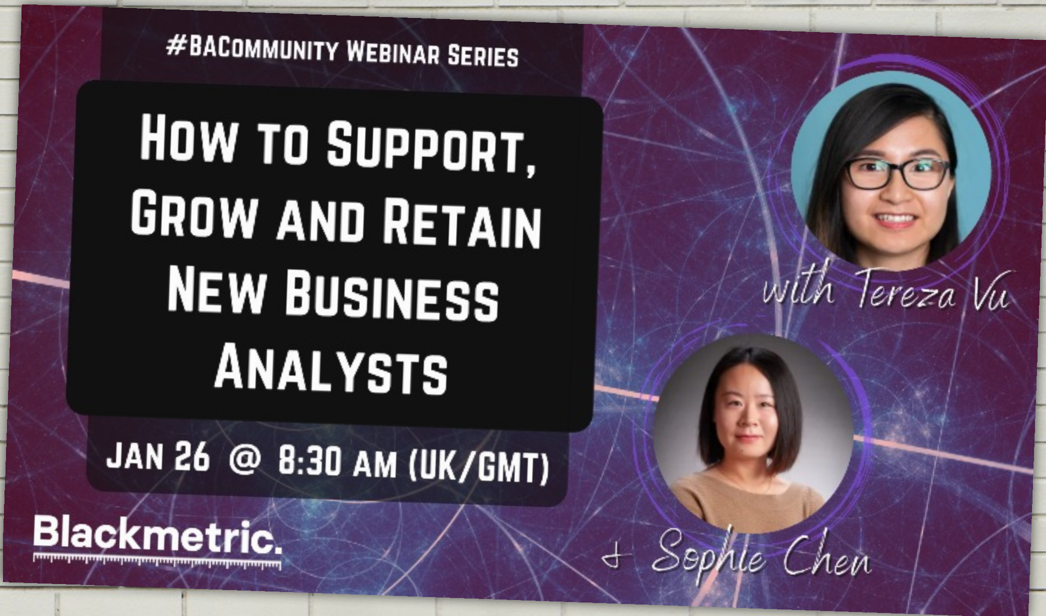
Kafilat Oluwasola

There are a few ways in which I've used business analysis skills in my personal life. It was great to determine the best process of dealing with bath time for my youngest (6 months old) and how to improve it. It's been an agile approach with a few iterations, but testing in production has made for increased risks.

Other areas include requirements elicitation, by determining what exactly my 4 year old is crying about and how we can ensure we cry less. Drawing rough process diagrams that explain why it's important we do certain things like share or brush our teeth daily and strategy sessions on how we can all get along and lastly why ice-cream is out of scope on weekdays.

Keanon Donnelly

UPCOMING WEBINARS



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A Common Structure to Learn Multiple Industry Domains

Manoj Kumar Lal

Business analysis techniques and knowing related industry knowledge are two crucial skills of a business analyst. Requirement management, cost benefit analysis and process modelling are examples of techniques, and insurance, banking and retail are examples of related industries.. Whereas techniques are industry agnostic, each industry has its own learning path. In this article, a common structure that is domain agnostic is discussed that brings in science to the art of learning industry domains providing an alternative and hopefully better way of learning industry domains.

Traditional ways of gaining industry knowledge and their challenges

Let's first understand the traditional ways of gaining industry knowledge and the associated challenges. We gain industry knowledge in the following ways:

1. On the job by self-discovery and asking senior colleagues.
2. Reading domain related books supplemented by audio / visual aids.
3. Undergoing training in related domains.
4. Pursuing certification courses in the related industry domains.
5. Proactively learning domains under the guidance of willing subject matter experts.

The main challenge in these traditional ways of gaining industry knowledge is that the knowledge is available in unstructured formats, i.e., knowledge is in documents and similar artefacts consisting of topics, paragraphs, and sentences. Industry knowledge is also vast adding to the challenge. For these reasons it typically takes years to become an industry expert. For example, even a person who has worked their entire career in the banking industry, would hesitate to claim exhaustive knowledge of the banking industry. Also, there is no sense of quantification in the traditional way, a book on insurance does not claim that the reader will gain a certain percentage of insurance industry knowledge by reading the book.

Structuring industry knowledge can assist learning it significantly. There are multiple techniques to represent structured knowledge including entity relationship diagramming, creation of a domain ontology, knowledge graphing and business process modelling. Business process modelling facilitates the widest coverage of industry knowledge. Business processes can be modelled at multiple hierarchical levels, showing interconnected processes that can be linked to business rules and business data. However, it is primarily meant to aid with understanding the process flow for the operations and software being built / maintained. It may vary significantly based on variations in channel (the medium via which process is executed such as online, post, phone), geography (primarily due to variations in different countries' regulations) and industry product (i.e., savings accounts in case of banking industry).

Business process modelling can sometimes arguably over-complicate industry knowledge, particularly when processes are modelled at a detailed level. Often the real knowledge is duplicated in the variations due to channels, geography, and domain product. This makes a business process model less intuitive when it comes to using it to learn industry knowledge, at least as a starting point. An alternate structure is proposed in this article that may simplify the way we learn industry knowledge.

DKF (Domain Knowledge Framework) – A common structure to learn multiple domains

Every industry will have offerings named as products (or services) and every product (or service) will have its lifecycle, from launch to decommissioning, which could arguably be represented by processes. Products and processes form a two-dimensional matrix structure used to scope the industry domain. This matrix structure is hierarchical, the same structure regenerates from the intersection point of the parent structure. The real knowledge of the industry domain comes from Statements of Relevance (SoR) that are atomic knowledge for each of the intersection points of the structure. Atomicity is contextual. For example, 'Date should be captured in DDMMYY format' is atomic knowledge at the detailed level whereas 'KYC (Know Your Customer) compliance is mandatory before opening of a savings account' is at the initial level.

Statements of Relevance at the intersection points of the product-process mesh structure where the mesh is hierarchical provides an alternate mechanism of learning industry domains. This structure is domain agnostic and called the Domain Knowledge Framework (DKF). Figure 1 assists in visualising DKF while structuring Property and Casualty (P&C) insurance domain. Insurance domain at level 1 consists of P&C and L&P (Life and Pensions) as two products and Launch, Product administration, Policy management and Decommission as four processes. From one of the intersection points at level 1 which is Policy management of P&C insurance, the same structure regenerates to the next level (level 2) where P&C product is split into three products and policy management process is split into four processes. The regeneration goes down to level 4 where products start resembling products offered in the marketplace by P&C insurance companies and insurance experts agree that processes are detailed enough and may not be easily split from operations and IT point of views. Sample Statement of Relevance at level 2 and level 4 add clarity to the DKF structure.

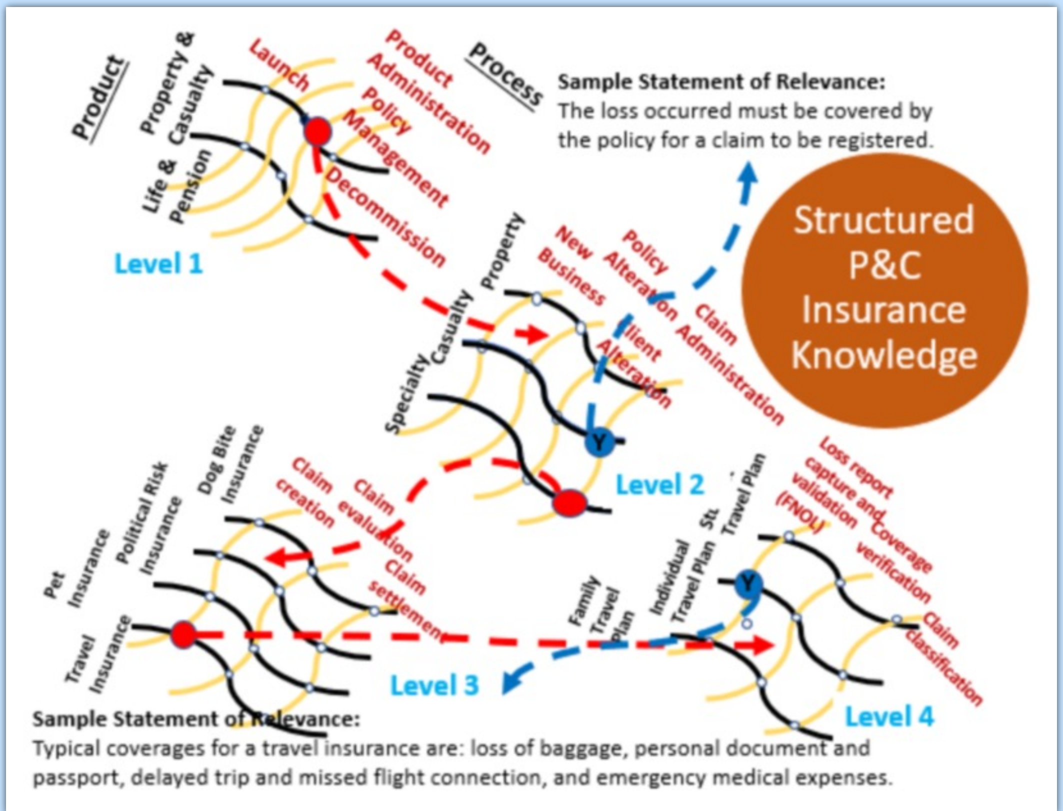

Figure 1: Structured Property and Casualty (P&C) insurance knowledge

Benefits of DKF and further literature

The DKF structure being domain agnostic, can be used to learn multiple industry domains both at general knowledge (at initial levels) and at a level where the knowledge can be reused in the day job of the IT and Operations team. It brings in science to the art of learning domains where domain learning can be quantified with ease. For example, Figure 1 at level 4 states that the claim creation process of travel insurance can be understood by 9 data points (consisting of 3 products and 3 processes at level 4) and 180 SoR's (assuming each data point will have 20 Statements of Relevance).

This notion of quantification in learning industry domains is introduced by DKF and that is a differentiator. Business analysts stand to gain the most from DKF as it enables a structured way of learning domains. And when they move to another industry, DKF will assist them in gaining the new industry knowledge better than the traditional options they have. Not only business analysts but the entire project team and even people working in operations may find DKF a better alternative to learn industry domains. Being domain agnostic, it has also allowed seeding industry knowledge formally in academia that is currently an open gap. Being a new idea it is generating interest both in academia and in industry forums.

For more information about DKF check out this short video on YouTube.

Manoj Kumar Lal has been a BA for over 25 years and has written two books 'Introduction to business domains for software engineers' and 'Knowledge Driven Development – Bridging Waterfall and Agile Methodologies'.

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3 Symptoms of Business Analyst Disorder (BAD)

Sumi Prasad

The Business Analyst Disorder (BAD) is a work style disorder that can affect a business analyst's performance and their team's empowerment. According to my observations, BAD symptoms can appear soon after the "discovery phase" and may gradually worsen as the "development phase" advances. When left untreated, it appears to be prone to causing complications within the product delivery team.

Despite the fact that BAD is not terminal, it can negatively affect all team events such as refinements, retrospectives, and reviews, not to mention the overall productivity of the team. Self-assessment and self-awareness are the best defences against this disorder which can be prevented or treated through realistic work styles and principles.

Signs and symptoms can include:

1 - Feels like you have the superpower to solve all the problems.

You will feel as though you are endowed with supernatural powers to fix and solve everything around you. It is not uncommon for BAs to wear multiple hats and go above and beyond to support their teams. However, that doesn't mean you can solve all the problems without working as a team.

The product development / delivery tasks shouldn't be considered to be completed / facilitated solely by the business analyst but should be done with the proper involvement of concerned team members so that the deliverables can be validated against different perspectives (commercial, strategical or technical).

BAs are responsible for eliciting requirements from the business and communicating them to the development team in a manner that clarifies what is needed and what needs to be checked.

This can be prevented if you:

- Keep the right balance and know when enough is enough.
- Facilitate the discussions with the team to understand the root cause of the problem and refrain from jumping to conclusions on your own.
- Refrain from going into more detail than is necessary.
- Provide developers with the opportunity to come up with "how" by communicating "what" and "why".
- Make the team feel empowered by clearly stating the problems/ requirements and motivate/ challenge them to come up with possible solutions.
- Don't hesitate to seek help wherever needed.

2 - Over addiction to process

It will be a breeze for you to implement process improvements and practice frameworks/delivery models on the assumption that they will deliver better value to customers or enhance team performance. Does that always hold true? As every team is unique, so are their processes, so being more process-oriented than people-oriented is a red flag. Using frameworks, tools, and techniques is beneficial for improving the efficiency of product development and delivery. Innovation, however, will be hampered by over-reliance on processes.

This can be prevented if you:

- Openly communicate with team members and lead context-driven discussions.
- Encourage ideas and feedback from the team, rather than developing just the solution someone requested. Use this mindset when facilitating refinement, story mapping, and planning sessions.

- Establish trust and rapport with team members.

- Adapt to changing situations with an agile mindset and work with the team to implement the improvements that work for them.

3 - Lack of clarity and alignment in thoughts and actions.

In requirement elicitation, assumptions may look like it will help to limit and clarify the scope of the work, but can also backfire by making the requirements unclear and deviating from the goal. By asking the right questions at the right time, ambiguity can be avoided to some extent. However, ensuring shared understanding among team members is the key to co-creating value and meeting delivery deadlines. Unwanted rework, as well as unnecessary delay, can result from missing out on relevant information.

This can be prevented if you:

- Take the time to listen to your team, stakeholders, and customers.

- Make sure you ask questions with the purpose of learning and understanding. This will help to minimise the risk of frequent scope changes.

- Embrace mistakes as opportunities for learning.

- Focus on discussing, collaborating, and brainstorming to implement a viable solution that can delight your clients, rather than preparing too many documents. It is important to document what is sufficient for future reference and knowledge sharing, but it should not be the primary goal.

It is easier to treat BAD if it is detected early. You can do a self-assessment to determine if you have any of the above symptoms and plan on how you will overcome it/them through workstyle practices that are realistic for you and your team. You can also benefit from talking to experts and reading widely on related topics.

Once you develop immunity against this disorder, you'll find yourself as a "limited edition" healthy business analyst who is not just successful in enabling changes but also in influencing decisions and people in a much more effective way.

This article was originally published on LinkedIn at: www.linkedin.com/pulse/3-symptoms-business-analyst-disorderbad-sumi-prasad/ and has been republished with kind permission of the author:

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Effective Leadership: A Business Analyst's Perspective

Paul Whiteley

This article has been written to aid Business Analysts (BAs) in identifying and honing five of the key leadership skills required to maximise the business value they provide to an organisation.

What is leadership?

A universal definition of leadership has yet to be established but it is arguably neither a job title nor a position within the organisational hierarchy.

At a social level, a leader can only exist if they have attained several followers who are in turn influenced to behave in a certain manner or seek the pursuit of a particular goal. A celebrity endorsing a product, a popular athlete, a teacher, a parent could therefore all be viewed as leaders in a particular domain.

Within an organisational environment however, the leader is often viewed as the individual who establishes *shared goals* and facilitates the collective efforts of employees (followers) in their pursuit of those *goals*.

The word 'goal' is central to the definition above, and 'goals' are premised on an understanding of what stakeholders perceive to be valuable. This leads us to the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA®)'s definition of business analysis as: "...the practice of enabling change in an enterprise by defining needs and recommending solutions that deliver value to stakeholders". (See IIBA®'s BABOK® Guide v3).

With this context and overlap in mind the article will now examine the essential leadership traits the BA must demonstrate to assist the organisation in attaining its goals.

Goal and Value Orientated

The BA should make the ambiguous clear by establishing and articulating objectives for the group that are both explicit and measurable. It is not enough for the BA to simply communicate the need for a new system. The BA must go beyond and state for example the goal of creating a solution that will reduce processing times by ten percent or increase customer satisfaction. With the constraints of a predefined solution removed, creative innovation is more likely to occur, and this leads us to the trait of empowerment.

Empowerment

If one assumes the objective has been both clearly articulated and understood, the leader must then turn their attention to fostering an environment where the talents of the group can be fully utilised. To do so the BA should fully empower the team to determine how best the objectives can be achieved. By way of example, visualisation experts have the expertise to design interfaces and reports with technology leads best positioned to recommend the most appropriate platform or coding language.

Through empowerment creative thinking will materialise and the morale of the team will naturally increase. This is not to suggest that the BA neglect oversight but in overseeing should ask rather than direct. When unsure as to the validity of an approach the BA is advised to ask the team how the proposed approach will achieve the goal rather than simply stating that the approach differs from what was expected.

Focus

It is through asking questions such as the above that the leader can best ensure the team remains focused on the task of delivering value. In today's business environment with resources scarce, it is imperative the team does not utilise resources on activities that will not move the organisation towards its goals. The BA should therefore reject solution proposals that will fail to move the organisation forward and be firm in insisting the team no longer revisit and rework models and designs when an acceptable solution has already been established.

Foresight

Despite our best-efforts, tasks may not always proceed as planned, and it is here that the BA can excel. Through the skill of foresight, the BA can predict potential roadblocks and generate ideas to address them before they even occur. Solution proposals will fall short if they only address the present needs of our existing clients and user base. The BA is advised therefore to incorporate growth projections, emerging technologies and if applicable the evolving products of our competitors prior to making their recommendations.

This is no easy task and while a business analyst may blame oneself for an important omission the BA with a leadership tendency will take the omission as a lesson and look for opportunities to improve future elicitation and analysis activities to prevent its recurrence in the future.

Adaptability

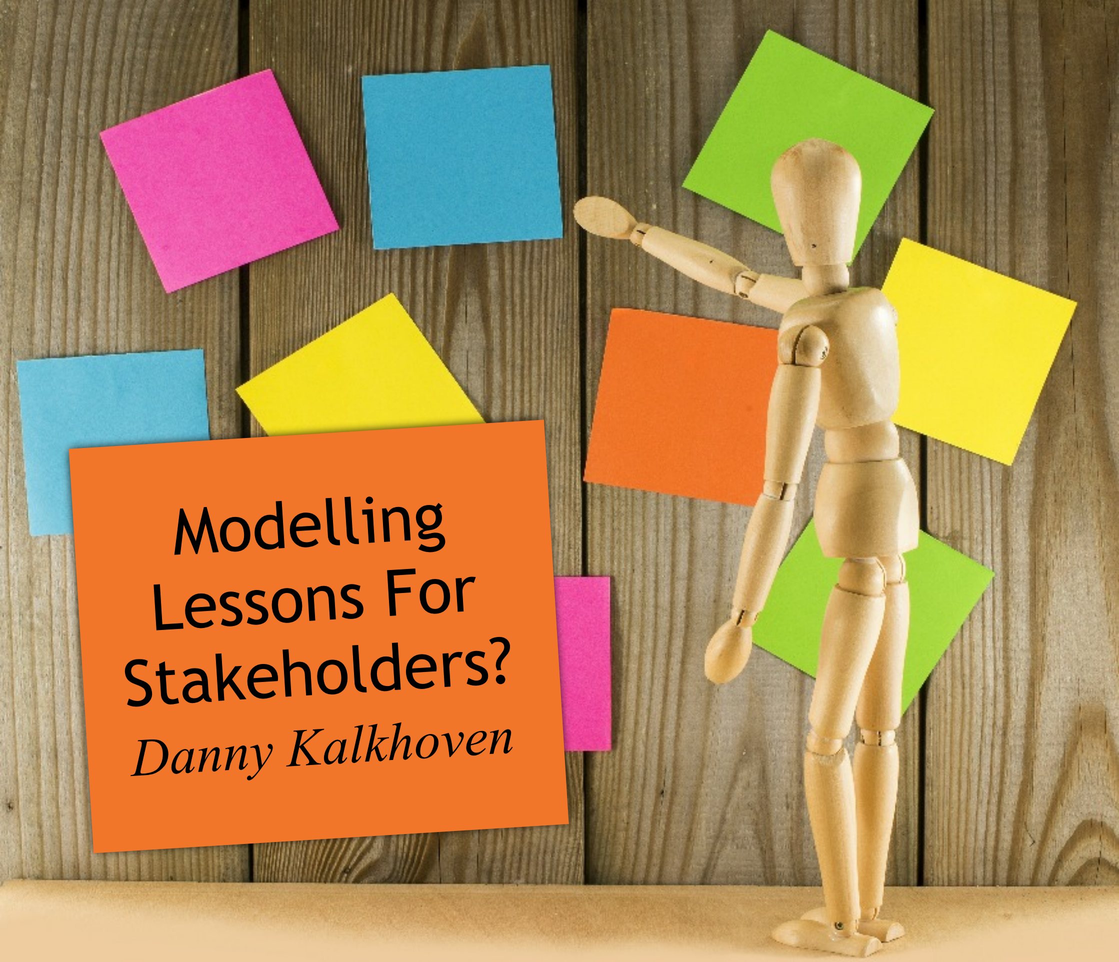
The business environment of today differs significantly from the environment of three years, one year and even one month previous. Supply chain disruptions, tightening monetary policy and employee unrest have resulted in business leaders revisiting objectives, creating new plans and potentially postponing or cancelling initiatives. The BA must be equally adaptive and possess the skills to effortlessly transition from working with one stakeholder group to another. Through demonstrating an open-mindedness to change and the ability to build relationships with stakeholders of differing levels of authority, knowledge, and beliefs the BA can be an invaluable organisational asset that is both ready and willing to be successfully deployed to the initiatives of greatest organisational need.

Conclusion

Very few leaders will possess all the traits described in this article and it follows that not all are required to become a successful leader. The traits described are neither a definitive nor exhaustive list and should therefore be viewed as an opportunity for self-reflection of our own strengths and weaknesses with a view to identifying areas for improvement and growth.

While numerous leadership texts and formal learning opportunities exist, the only way to truly become a confident and effective leader is through experience. As BAs numerous opportunities to improve our leadership skills exist in our day-to-day activities, be it actively making decisions, establishing goals, resolving conflicts or the sharing of knowledge with others. I therefore encourage you to actively experiment and develop your own unique leadership style.

Paul Whiteley (M.B.A Leadership, CBAP, PMP) is a proven Business Analyst/Project Manager possessing over 20 years' experience in the financial, healthcare, regulation, and manufacturing industries. He can be contacted on LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/paul-whiteley-mba-cbap-pmp-ssbbp-cms-9b93061



Modelling Lessons For Stakeholders?

Danny Kalkhoven

We all know the effect: try to explore some process or find our business rules and decisions, and you use some sketch of a model to illustrate it with the stakeholders. However, the stakeholders might not be familiar with the technique or the notation, so you end up explaining it. You hear yourself saying things like: “this diamond shape means that a decision is made that affects the flow of information”, and so on.

It keeps happening to me because it’s the way my BA mind works. In order to get a grip on an issue, to understand the situation, I tend to use some form of modelling to select the relevant information from the endlessly complicated real world. A model simplifies matters, and that helps you to focus on the elements that are most crucial. Each model has its vocabulary, has symbols and lines and other ‘stuff’ that give information about the real world that is modelled. It’s like a road map: we all know that in reality there are no red and yellow roads, there is no line of crosses painted on the ground to show the border* Yet it is easy to forget that while, as BAs, we know the meaning of these abstract symbols and lines, our stakeholders might not.

Put simply: not everyone is experienced in interpreting models.

This can lead to a dangerous pattern where the bulk of the conversation ends up focussing on the nuances of the modelling notation instead of whatever it is you wanted to investigate.

What is the solution? There are several options:

- First give appropriate modelling training to the stakeholders (However, this will use up a lot of energy and time, and they might not be willing)
- Use a technique that everybody understands without explanation, perhaps a rich picture (Although in reality creating something universally understandable is impossible, a rich picture has symbols and notation that is meaningful to those that created it, that might not be immediately understandable to others)
- Don't use a model, use only words (However language is also a model, with words triggering all sorts of representations)

So, should we use models at all? Of course, but not in the way we use them for ourselves. When I use a model to clarify matters, I check if the audience is familiar with the symbols,. keeping in mind that a little bit of understanding is enough. I never check if they really know all the details and notation rules, because that is not important! If we end up with an informal model that is full of notation errors, that is OK, because it helped us explore and understand. **So that is my tip no. 1: if an incorrect model does the job so be it.** You can always change it to a formally correct model later on.

If you sense that a model could be helpful, but the people in the room are completely unfamiliar with it, you have to guide them. Don't show them an overwhelming lexicon of symbols. Instead, explain the main things that the model shows, and explain the key notation.

What could help is to look for the connection between the real world and the model. And use that connection to take your audience along into the world of modelling.

> *Example 1: when you order something online to be delivered to your home, there will ultimately be a package underway. That package has some barcode identification. It also has a delivery address.*
> *→ There's your connection: Identification, address data…*
>
> *Example 2: when your boss holds the annual evaluation session, the results will have to be entered in the HR system and (hopefully) trigger some bonus or salary increase.*
> *→ There's your connection: data entry, triggering event, process steps…*

When you have arrived at that point, people can understand that the model helps in understanding the real world, and that it guides us to the important elements that play a part.

So that is my tip number 2: always keep an eye on the connection between the real world and that model. It should be there!

Another way around this issue may be considered a bit "outside the box": let them draw!

If you are discussing matters with a group of people, and you get to the point where you think "hmm some small model would help", ask them if they could draw up something to explain. Most people have some natural ability of creating "models", it's a human trait. With a bit of encouragement, they can come up with some lines and circles and other stuff.

You then have a model that you can build upon, and it will help to get into the abstract world of models in a natural way. And again, later on you can take this and convert it into a complete and correct model for proper documentation.

So my conclusion of this article is: should we teach our stakeholders modelling? Not necessarily, but that doesn't mean we can't use models!

*actually sometimes there is:

Danny Kalkhoven is a business analyst and trainer with Le Blanc advies in the Netherlands.

He has worked in banking, insurance and health care environments as a business analyst for over 20 years, and is a trainer for a series of BCS Business Analysis courses in NL.

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From Artist to Analyst



Keanon Donnelly

There is something truly fascinating about design, I've been utterly enamoured with it for the better part of my 32 years of life. Every facet of it, from doodles, sketches, layouts and composition to a final piece, I breathed visual design and it felt tantamount to living in perpetual colour, until it didn't.

For 10 years my identity was as a multimedia designer, along the way I became jaded, I had met my own goals and felt stagnated, I needed more, I needed my next challenge. I signed up for a local programme with Umuzi which offers graduates a way into a tech career, and I thought my entry point would be as a front end web developer. It turns out I didn't fully have the aptitude for it and was placed in the UX Strategy stream, which is when I began understanding the value that good design, that is considerate and backed by research, analysis and empathy, can bring.

Until I started the programme, I had no idea as to what a business analyst was. I believed I'd be involved or assigned to a user experience (UX) team but things didn't go as planned (as so often happens for BAs). I was informed that I'd be working as a business analyst and would be upskilled as part of my development.

The initial shock led me into a frenzy, how was I, a graphic designer, going to be a business analyst? I quickly went into survival mode and researched everything I could about it and found a reassuring common trait: many BAs don't start off with the intention of becoming business analysts. I was assigned a mentor by my line manager and provided with a slew of information, documentation and a copy of the BABOK®. If I'm honest, I'm still working my way through it, but the more I learn, the more I value the methodologies and knowledge areas in it.

I tackled being a BA eagerly, I joined a great reddit, spent hours on YouTube learning new concepts and consumed so much material from various resources like BA Cube, Bridging the Gap, BA Digest, BA courses on LinkedIn Learning and more. I felt wholly ready until my mentor asked me to work on a user specification, I remember him calmly saying,: "listen to what they say, take notes, ask them what you think they aren't telling you, and the rest is just English, you'll be fine", I responded nonchalantly that I'd be okay - I wasn't.

The full weight of imposter syndrome came down on me. It was one thing interviewing stakeholders, but putting together a document that succinctly details what is needed, that was for the knowledgeable, the tech guys, not me. I felt ashamed and quickly realised posturing was not going to help, once again I stuck myself into research, if you're wondering if it helped, unfortunately it didn't! What it did, however, was hone my ability to find and analyse documentation.

With each passing initiative or task I wondered if the people in the room would realise that I was a fraud and that they didn't need me. I doubted my abilities and often still do. The Dunning-Kruger effect explains it aptly. This is a cognitive bias where those with lack of knowledge or expertise overestimate their competence and conversely, those with a high level of knowledge and ability presume that others can easily do it as well and then underestimate their relative ability. I don't know where I am on the graph but experience thus far has taught me that as a BA, I won't know everything, nor do I need to, I just need to know the people who do know. Of late, I've embraced asking the supposedly "daft" questions proudly.

I still battle with imposter syndrome daily and question if I add value. After all, the core function of a good BA is to be an agent of change and provide value to an organisation. There is solace however, in unearthing that even Senior BAs with over 10 years experience also feel this way. There's a high chance any one of them you meet would not have done a computer science degree, or know how to write a line of code. Typical business analysts come from rich and diverse careers which is a reminder to me that I too belong. I also have a daily affirmation set to remind me that I'm a great business analyst, which has made a great difference to my personal perspective. I work alongside amazing BAs and have a manager who isn't afraid to throw me in at the deep end, and I'm all the more better for it as my skills continue to slowly grow and expand. I have also identified transitional abilities that have helped me on my journey and help me become a better BA.

As a designer, a design brief was a luxury. Discovering what the client wants was often a challenge involving phone calls, texts and emails, sending inspiration, optional colours, fonts, iconography, mockups and alternatives whilst trying to get a straightforward answer as to what exactly they meant. If I transpose all of these things, they are actually what would be defined as functional and nonfunctional requirements and in some cases user stories. These abilities have really aided me in my elicitation, and being able to wireframe and create mockups is yet another way to ensure I capture requirements as stakeholders intended. My foray into ecommerce gave me an insight into customer journeys and are an anchor when mapping. I often think how vector illustration has been the foundation for creating process diagrams. All of my past experiences have expanded my toolkit and aid me on my path to becoming a better business analyst.

Being a BA isn't a title, it's a mindset and a way of working to provide value to an end user, artists provide value to users by creating beauty, BAs do it by creating beauty out of chaos. There is something I stand by and I hope it helps you if you decide to make the switch. If you ever doubt your ability, remember, you may not have the skill to do it, but you do have the skill to learn to do it.

Keanon Donnelly is an Intern Business Analyst, UX Strategist and Designer, actively pursuing growth to spark the change that makes a difference for people. You can find him on LinkedIn at
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