The Business Analyst Friend or Foe?

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Business Analysis

“Business analysis is the set of tasks and techniques used to work as a liaison among stakeholders in order to understand the structure, policies and operations of an organization, and to recommend solutions that enable the organization to achieve its goals.”

A guide to the Business Analysis Book of Knowledge
Business Analysis (continued)

• 2003
• ‘Problem’ being made to fit the ‘solution’
• Shift in focus
• International Institute for Business Analysis (IIBA)
  – *The Business Analysis Book of Knowledge (BABOK)*, 2nd edition
Business Analyst

• Any person performing business analysis activities
  – Business process analyst
  – Business requirements engineer
  – Enterprise analyst
  – Business architect

@ Unisa: Business consultants
Business Consultants within ICT

• Directorate: ICT Innovation and Business Support
  – Relationship & Business Analysis
  – ICT Research & Innovation
  – User Education & Training

• Directorate Academic Systems
The role of the Business Analyst

- Facilitates communication
- Conducts enterprise analysis
  - Identifying business needs
  - Conducting analysis
  - Solutions in line with organizational goals
Tasks performed by the business analyst

1. Business analysis planning
2. Elicit requirements
3. Requirements management and communication
4. Identify a solution
5. Verify solution meets the requirements

Customer relationship management
1. Business analysis planning

- Business case
- Define the business problem
- Identify stakeholders, organizational units
- Exclusions
- Elicitation and analysis techniques
- Time
- Measure progress
2. Elicit requirements

“Requirements are the necessary and sufficient properties of a product that will satisfy the [client’s] need.” (Getting it right...)

- Obtain complete, detailed requirements through facilitation/interviews
  - Business needs
  - Business processes: AS IS and TO BE
  - Business rules
- Prioritize requirements

“The business analyst is responsible for eliciting the actual needs of stakeholders, not simply their expressed desires.” (BABOK)
I'LL NEED TO KNOW YOUR REQUIREMENTS BEFORE I START TO DESIGN THE SOFTWARE.

FIRST OF ALL, WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

I'M TRYING TO MAKE YOU DESIGN MY SOFTWARE.

I MEAN WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THE SOFTWARE?

I WON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN ACCOMPLISH UNTIL YOU TELL ME WHAT THE SOFTWARE CAN DO.

TRY TO GET THIS CONCEPT THROUGH YOUR THICK SKULL: THE SOFTWARE CAN DO WHATEVER I DESIGN IT TO DO!

CAN YOU DESIGN IT TO TELL YOU MY REQUIREMENTS?
3. Requirements management and communication

Different approaches

• Appropriate level of detail
• Document – models, diagrams and/or text – format determined by client
• Analyze and follow up
• Project scope
• Communicate
• Approval and sign off
Why requirements analysis is important...

DILBERT by Scott Adams

YOUR USER REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE FOUR HUNDRED FEATURES.

DO YOU REALIZE THAT NO HUMAN WOULD BE ABLE TO USE A PRODUCT WITH THAT LEVEL OF COMPLEXITY?

GOOD POINT. I'D BETTER ADD "EASY TO USE" TO THE LIST.
Template: High-level business requirements document

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND
2. OBJECTIVE
3. SCOPE
4. EXCLUSIONS
5. GLOSSARY
6. CONSTRAINTS
7. ASSUMPTIONS
8. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS
9. RISKS
10. INTERDEPENDENCY
11. APPLICATIONS (SYSTEMS)
12. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS
4. Identify a solution

• Assess potential solutions
• Assist with evaluation
• Recommendation
  – Procedural
  – Workflow
  – Automated solution
  – Commercial/off-the-shelf
5. Verify the solution meets the requirements

- Monitor implementation/development
- Test plans
Customer relationship management

- Your main point of contact in ICT
- “Link” between business and ICT
- Problem management
- Project meetings
Skills for dealing with clients

• Investigative, analytical
• Attention to detail
• Problem solving
• Administrative
• Understanding of the business
• Interpersonal skills
• Communication & listening skills

“You have two ears and one mouth. I suggest you use them in that proportion.” (G.K. Chesterton)
Skills for dealing with developers and solution providers

• Communication skills
• Specification skills
• Data and process modelling skills
Receive service request: Network/Outlook/Internet connectivity problem

Check details of requestor

Evaluate connectivity problem

Fix connectivity problem?

YES

Resolve Maximo service request

END

NO

Escalate SR to ICT Maximo

ICT resolves connectivity problem
The bottom line

... per Forrester Research is that the best BAs like and are good at IT, but like and are even better at people, and the latter is what makes the difference.

Value add:

• take advantage of business opportunities,
• to meet operational/legislative requirements
• to help them solve problems
Remember...

If you want a product, service or project to be:

- Cheap and fast, it won’t be good
- Good and fast, it won’t be cheap
- Good and cheap, it won’t be fast.

Courtesy: Cooney training services
Thank you