

Where is Your BA Practice Going?

- You need an incremental approach to building practice
- Different levels – highlights still emerging, but recognition by most need change to improve consistency
- Everyone is struggling with this
- Getting the team involved is important
- Best practice is only something to aim for in the context of your business
- Provide tool box
- Maturity of practice
- Outsourcing BA code of practice
- Consistent methodology
- Place to get help

How to Deal With Difficult People

- Communication – discuss and understand their point of view
- Get them more involved and make them understand their role
- Be proactive and not reactive
- Use “screening committee” to pressure the “assassin” sponsor
- Keep using the triangle
- Hold workshops for open discussion
- Identify champions and use them to influence the difficult person
- Reassure those with insecurities
- Change yourself
- Change technique
- Use the IMPACT CHART
- Informal one-on-ones
- Understand personality style
- Change the “mood”
- Accept that some people won’t change
- Escalate to management if need be
- Worship the “sacred cow” instead of going against in personally
- Accept political environment
- Understand what the other person is having difficulties with
- Commitment
- Dealing with people in power – accept and adapt
- Separating the problem from the people
- Do not become emotionally involved

Outsourcing the BA Role – Can We Do it?

- Clearly define the role of the BA who will be outsourced
- Put in place tools and skill sets, including change management
- BA soft skills essential
- Be aware of all the techniques
- BA skills are transferable through different industries
- BA's are here to make businesses better
- Organizations need to better understand their need for a BA
- BA has to be versatile and able to fill gaps
- Stakeholder engagement
- Different style and type of BA
- Knowing your stakeholders
- Provide engagement advice immediately
- Need for support for contract BA's

Evaluating Your Certification

- Good for a basis/common understanding
- Shows commitment to career
- Provides a definition of your capabilities
- Question really is "how do we make it worthwhile?"
- Helpful for recruitment purposes but not sole criteria
- Delivers a common language
- "Jenga" is a good way to assess a BA as an alternative
- Base when hiring
- Soft skills still most important
- Advancing profession
- BA's with business expertise seem more valuable than a certification
- Experience outweighs certification
- Certified BA's more likely to be relevant in 3-5 years
- Still need technical or business focus
- Use of common methodologies
- Align the certification to career goals and path

Career Paths for the BA

- Remove the term Junior BA
- Employers need to be made aware of what a BA can bring to make the most of skills
- No clear career path
- Certification optional but don't define career path
- Titles don't define career path
- A centralized BA team is awful

- Manager for BA's could be a step up
- Industry crossover is very difficult in Australia
- Depends on the organization and the scale of the team
- Opportunities to move between industries you are not experienced in can be limited
- Taking a PM role is not necessarily the next role up
- Employers need to really understand the role of the BA

Adapting Agile – Best Practices?

- Used shared space to keep the rest of the team informed of the latest decision
- Using notes from meetings as “documentation”
- Prince2 PM method can be applied on top of Agile tool
- BA's role is still the same, just slightly changed – faster delivery
- Agile can be configured based on project
- Regular communication
- Needs support from management
- Multi-disciplinary teams with the right people are key to success
- Agile is a philosophy that can be applied to projects of different types
- Set the project up for success with a good Agile coach
- Hybrid Agile
- Should be carefully planned
- Hard to change people's behaviour
- Able to make a number of Agile oriented practices into any methodology
- Should be able to improve productivity through improved engagement
- Best practices are only best for a short period

Tools for the BA

- BIZAGI – free process modelling tool
- Awesome list of tools for all phases of SDLC
- Balsamiq – prototyping
- Tools to make traceability, testability and ambiguity possible
- Most BPM too high end and expensive
- Almost impossible to find the one right tool
- There needs to be an identification process
- Traceability of requirements
- Collaborative abilities amongst all software development teams
- Online web conferencing
- Accessible, up-to-date templates
- Software potentially exists to update whiteboard simultaneously

What are the Core Competencies for a BA?

- Communication

- Logical thinking
- User Experience workshops
- People need to be different but work as a team
- People skills – manage stakeholders, team, and other units
- Creative, abstract thinking
- Average IT awareness and appreciation
- Objective in system usability
- Customer experience workshops
- Listening skills
- Not to lose sight on usability by getting carried away with technology
- Importance of change management skills
- Always be considering implementation of system requirements
- The ability to “sell” a change
- Facilitation skills
- Technical skills are not required
- Negotiation skills
- Attention to detail
- Being able to think outside the square
- BA’s need to wear many hats and need to find the balance between blue sky and common sense
- Needs to be able to take a step back and look at the bigger picture