

Outsourcing the BA role – Can we do it?

- As a consultant, you need to try to understand company culture but not over evaluate it
- As a company, it's important to make outsourced people feel part of the team
- Great BA skills should be transferable
- Engage with the business to ensure the BA fit
- There is a great need for outsourcing BAs based on skill and need
- Outsourced BA's need to ensure that they regularly get development
- Outsourcing works well with the right recruitment
- Make sure the skill set requested is what is delivered
- Don't get into the politics of the organization
- Outsourcing might be more successful in organizations that are more familiar with the BA profession
- Review of overall project scope – who are the people involved and what are their roles

How to Deal With Difficult People

- Get to know them on a personal level
- Ask for advice
- Try to understand what's behind the frustration
- Start with things you agree on
- Understand the background of the situation
- Build a relationship with them
- Escalate to management when it is out of your control
- Informal approach
- Wait for the person to calm down
- Direct approach
- Asking if they have problems with change
- Cater your style to the personality traits of others
- Gain agreement on roles and responsibilities and how you will work together
- Understand their motivations
- Communicate consistently

Certification – Is it Worth it?

- If you keep going it is worthwhile
- Provides a standard
- CBAP is gaining momentum
- Application process is viewed as very onerous
- Depends entirely on motivation
- More people will be certified in the future, so you need to get on board now
- Can provide company with a more legitimate, measurable view of a BA

- Personal satisfaction of being able to put the structure around what you already know
- Improving credibility and interest in the BA profession
- Improvement of BA practice

Demonstrating the Value of Analysis

- Peer review of documents
- Post completion review
- Gap analysis and user requirements
- Survey stakeholders after the project to determine their perception of analysis value
- Identify who needs to be convinced
- Evaluate requirements document
- Implement better process to utilize the BA
- Bringing understanding to what a stakeholder wants
- Educate users to distinguish between a problem and a solution
- Raise maturity of organization in software developments
- Emphasize value of analysis by giving examples

Tools for the BA

- Understanding the value that tools add to BA activities
- There are many different tools out there
- Understanding return on investing in a tool
- Basic tools – Word, Excel – provide a more humble work environment
- Tools should be easy to learn and use
- Traceability is very important between artifacts
- Tools need to support the way the BA works
- There are many tools available, but it is important to do requirements gathering
- The content is more important than the tool itself
- The BA should have enough knowledge on various tools for better job prospects
- There is no standard tool used by BA's
- Tools require visual design to help confirm requirements

Where is Your BA Practice Going?

- Fortnightly catch ups are widely used for knowledge sharing
- Peer review is widely used
- Be “agile” with developing your BA Practice
- Get executive buy-in
- A social gathering is cheap and easy
- Capability development and sharing of knowledge
- Needs great and consistent leadership

- Requires a passionate leader
- Career development is a major focus
- Attendance at regular meeting is a challenge for everyone
- Governance is useful
- BA framework
- Internal reviews – constructive feedback

Career Paths for BA's

- There is a need to look at where key competencies align to other career options
- BA's and PM's could/should be seen as equal roles as they fulfill different functions
- Career progression does not necessarily mean moving up
- BA's can be great team leads
- Other companies offer the ability to do certification even if you're not a senior BA
- \Strategic BA roles and more into management side
- Business Architecture
- Strategic Analysis
- Practice lead
- Use of BABOK

Adapting Agile

- Need to consider costing, vendors, expectation
- Changing mindsets and culture to support agile projects
- Getting right members of teams to work well together
- Concern around the fit into current (Waterfall?) environment
- Negotiating costs and risks with vendors
- Understanding the scope and the PM role
- Agile with part time resources is difficult and poses challenges
- Requires cultural change in mature organizations
- Appropriate development and testing infrastructure must be in place
- Use a small pilot project to ease into Agile
- Qualified coach to lead the first project
- It's an organizational change, not IT centric
- Not all projects suit agile – a hybrid is OK

What are the Core Competencies for a BA

- Common sense – lots of it
- Communication
- Take the client along on the journey
- Soft skills/people skills
- Stakeholder management

- Ability to deliver pragmatic and practical solutions
- Portable/transferable skills
- Pro-active - do more than required
- Conflict resolution
- Every organization has differing competencies for the role of the BA
- Interview processes differ
- BA's need to be objective