The Past, Present, and Future of Business Analysis

BBC Sydney 2013
Once upon a time...

How I Became A BA
Nobody Understood What We Did

PM? Rules? Testing?
UX? Coding?
Process? Requirements?
Coffee? Training?

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Projects Paid A High Price
Flawed business analysis work became a key point of failure for projects and drove much higher delivery costs.

“Analysts report that as many as 71% of software projects that fail do so because of poor requirements management, making it the single biggest reason for project failure—bigger than bad technology, missed deadlines or change management fiascoes.”

Source: CIO Magazine, 11/15/2005
Are we:

ORDER-TAKERS?

GOFERS?

ASSISTANT PROJECT MANAGERS?

DOCUMENTERS?

Or would we rise to the challenge?
Business Analysis Had to Change

New tools and techniques, methodologies, and organizations began to define and improve how business analysts worked.

- Methodologies began to address requirements development in earnest
- Specialized techniques emerged taking us past “the system shall”
- IIBA formed in 2003 to help move profession forward
Business Analysis Became A Profession

We developed a shared understanding of the role so that we could define how to deliver better project outcomes.
Bridging the gap between...

Business and IT
But that didn’t fix the problem
According to PMI, less than \( \frac{2}{3} \) of projects meet their business goals and that number has been **falling** since 2008.

**Standish Group CHAOS Report**

**Source:** The Standish Group Project Resolution History, PMI *Pulse of the Profession*
Business Value Isn’t Inside Projects

We can only do so much to improve business value by focusing on managing requirements within a project.

Traditional BA Space

Pre-Project → Project → Post-Project

Rationale → Delivery → Benefits

Enterprise Analysis

Requirements Analysis

Solution Assessment & Validation

IIBA.org
Are we:

LIAISONS?
FACILITATORS?
TRANSLATORS?
REQUIREMENTS MANAGERS?

Or will we rise to the challenge?
Business Analysis Has to Change

Our focus has to shift again...from tactical support of project delivery to a strategic understanding of business value.

- Requirements management focuses us on predictable delivery of scope
- We have to focus on delivery of business value
- We consistently neglect understanding of the reasons for change and evaluating the benefits
Move From Software to Systems

Successful change requires that we look at things from a business perspective—software requirements are only a part.
Bridging the gap between... Projects and Operations
We still have the alignment problem...

We must strike a balance between analysis and intuition, and take a share of responsibility for business outcomes.

Analytical Thinking
Goal: To Produce Reliable, Predictable, Repeatable Outcomes
Reliability

Architecture and Design

Intuitive Thinking
Goal: To produce outcomes that meet the desired objectives
Validity

Source: Roger L. Martin, The Design of Business
Embrace Architecture and Design

Architecture and design ensure that we deliver value to our stakeholders by defining solutions that meet their needs.

- **Architecture**
  - Focused on Strategy, Structure and Purpose
  - Provides a vision for Design, keeps it flexible

- **Design**
  - Focused on Execution and Implementation
  - Keeps Architecture grounded and relevant
Can we become:

VISIONARIES?

INNOVATORS?

STRATEGISTS?

LEADERS?

Are we up to the challenge?
Business Analysis Can Change Again

We need to create a feedback loop in the business between its strategies and the results delivered by change.
Take Business Analysis to the Top

Strategist

Link needs to results, envision what could be, create new ideas and approaches.

Facilitator

Help project teams deliver better outcomes and results, control change, learn how to get requirements right, define needs correctly, create useful models.

Contributor

Learn the skills needed to contribute to a change team, the challenges of making changes, and the importance of requirements.
Bridging the gap between...

Strategy and Execution
Businesses Need Us To Take This Leap

The average lifespan of an S&P 500 company has dropped from 67 years in the 1920s to 15 today.

- Companies must focus on innovation and reinvention to survive
- Process and rules systems intensify competition
- Better execution of old models isn’t enough
The Path Forward Is Up To Us

“Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower.”

*Steve Jobs*

- Business Analysis is a self-improving profession
- This gives us exciting new challenges and opportunities
- This gives our employers a better future, greater odds of success

What do you want to be?
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