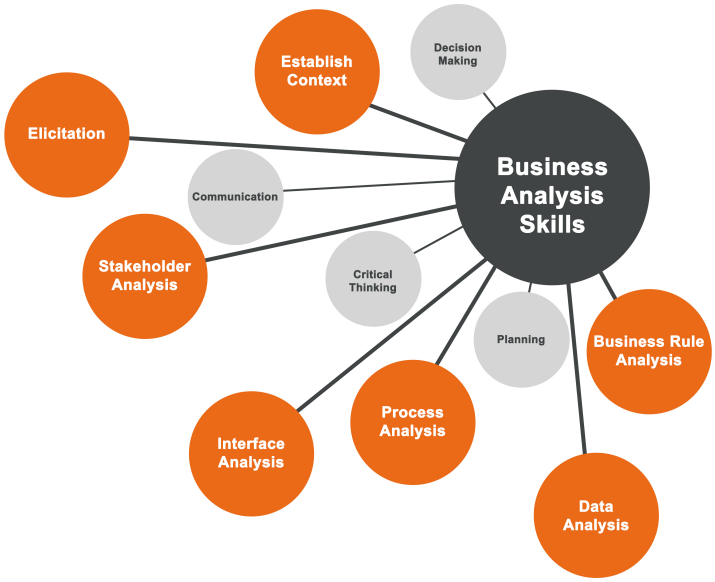
# Essential Skills for Business Analysis

4 Days | Virtual and Face-to-Face

To stay competitive in today's fast paced economy, companies need to deliver innovations that meet business or market needs without spending time on the wrong problem or doing rework for missed requirements. This foundational course provides students, regardless of their title, the essential business analyst skills necessary to identify the best solutions and realize significant value on their projects. It supports International Institute of Business Analysis™ (IIBA®) *BABOK® Guide* industry standards and PMI's *PBA* certification.

## Business Analysis Skills

This course explores the breadth of business analysis skills, tasks and interactions expected in a professional role. It provides a complete foundational set of practical tips and hands on exercises to build expertise and confidence using requirements delivery strategies, independent of methodology.




## Classroom Experience

Highly interactive exercises provide students opportunities to practice and reinforce techniques during class. Regardless of the participant's skill level, the workshop cases and discussions inspire learning insights for every level of experience. This is an excellent course to be held onsite at your organization to level set analysts across the organization. It provides consistent terminology, project participant roles, templates, and suggested standards for an organization to use as a starting point to add their unique customizations.

Students are encouraged to bring projects into class for exercises and to develop a more personalized post-class action plan to take their project to the next step.

## Learning Objectives

- Define business analysis and requirements
- Elicit requirements from stakeholders using a variety of effective techniques
- Practice creative thinking skills to engage stakeholders, uncover needs, and identify new approaches and ideas
- Compare and contrast analysis techniques in order to select the technique(s) that will most appropriately:
  - support your understanding, critical thinking and problem-solving
  - communicate information to stakeholders to enable review and their understanding of requirements
- Reduce confusion and development errors by creating excellent requirements that can be easily understood by outsourced or distributed teams
- Get the most out of your models and diagrams by asking the right questions during analysis
- Identify why the project is being done (business drivers) in order to ensure the right analysis effort is being performed and so that requirements efforts can be appropriately prioritized
- Create a context data flow diagram to identify interfaces, data flows, and high-level processes associated with the project, that is valuable both for planning and communications purposes
- Discuss strategies for content organization and collaboration, and describe why being more organized increases team agility
- Practice creating an analysis approach to make the most efficient use of elicitation and analysis techniques
- Learn to address common barriers that face project teams

## Intended Audience

This course is designed for individuals from any discipline who are performing elicitation activities; business analysts, project managers, business systems analysts, product managers, product owners, system architect, process engineers, requirements engineers, or any other project team member.

## Prerequisites

None

## Learning Topics

| Topic |
|---|
| **Introduction** |
| • Define business analysis<br>• Discuss what requirements are and how they are utilized in analysis |
| **Putting Requirements Elicitation into Practice** |
| • Describe requirements elicitation and techniques available<br>• Learn how to use 13 different elicitation techniques to understand stakeholder requirements:<br>○ Interviews<br>○ Brainstorming<br>○ Requirements Workshops<br>○ Collaborative Games<br>○ Focus Groups<br>○ Prototypes<br>○ Document Analysis<br>○ Benchmarking<br>○ Market Analysis<br>○ Data Mining<br>○ Surveys<br>○ Observation<br>○ Visualization Techniques<br>• Improve your elicitation skills by:<br>○ Practicing several elicitation techniques<br>○ Utilizing active listening techniques<br>○ Enhancing critical thinking skills<br>○ Using various techniques for increased brainstorming results |
| **Making Elicitation Work** |
| • Describe the considerations for planning elicitation<br>• Choose the most appropriate elicitation technique(s) for your project<br>• Match elicitation techniques to your stakeholder's learning style<br>• Ensure the right people are involved in elicitation activities<br>• Validate your elicitation results |
| **Introduction to Scoping** |
| • Define solution or project scope and explain its applicability and purpose<br>• Identify the components of scope in both traditional and agile approaches<br>• Describe the value of scoping your area of analysis<br>• Evaluate the context of your project<br>• Assess a project within the larger context of the enterprise<br>• Identify the resources valuable to establishing project context |

## Define Project Purpose

- Document Project Purpose
  - Document the current state
  - Study problems and opportunities in the organization
  - Differentiate business drivers from problem solutions
  - Clearly state business objectives
  - Perform stakeholder analysis
    - Develop personas to better understand stakeholder communities
  - Construct a project glossary and illustrate its value
- Distinguish and express key scope parameters and explain their importance:
  - Risks, assumptions, constraints, and dependencies

## Establish Boundaries

- Express scope with a graphical representation (Context Data Flow Diagram)
  - Identify external agents
  - Analyze and identify data flows
  - Distinguish the project boundary
- Complete scope with supporting documentation
  - Identify in-scope capabilities or processes
  - Analyze scope parameters for impacts on analysis planning
  - Document out-of-scope items

## Finalizing Scope

- Compose a well-defined problem or opportunity statement
- Validate scope with stakeholders
  - Explain process of validating your area of analysis
  - Describe considerations when planning communications about scope
  - Explain the importance and describe an approach to gaining stakeholder agreement on scope
- Explain how scope is used throughout the project
- Understand the process for identifying and managing scope change

## Introduction to Requirements Analysis Techniques

- Describe requirements and the importance of requirements analysis
- Understand how requirements analysis techniques apply within any methodology
- Compare and contrast the requirements analysis perspectives:  What vs. How
- Understand common categories of requirements
- Distinguish different levels of requirements categories and explain their purpose

## Breaking Down Requirements into Core Components

- Define the four core components that make up all requirements
  - Data
  - Process
  - People & Systems
  - Business Rules
- Describe what the core components represent
- Identify the importance of core components to your audience
- Understand the characteristics of excellent requirements

## Using Analysis Techniques to Your Advantage

- Describe how particular analysis techniques:
  - Drive quality analysis
  - Communicate requirements perspectives effectively
- Go beyond documenting requirements solely with text – describe how diagrams and models can also be used for analysis
- Compare and contrast the different requirements analysis techniques when preparing to communicate with your audience:
  - User stories
  - Context diagram
  - Decomposition diagram
  - User story map
  - Business process template
  - Process One-Pager
  - Flowchart
  - Entity Relationship Diagram (ERD)
  - Entity & attribute metadata
  - Prototype
  - Use case diagram
  - Use case description
  - Gherkin
  - System interface specification
  - Business rule techniques: structured text, decision trees, decision tables, and decision models
- Confirm the analyzed requirements with stakeholders

## Requirements Management

- Understand the iterative and incremental nature of requirements development
- Practice approaches to prioritizing requirements
- Define methods for performing traceability and impact analysis
- Describe the different kinds of requirements information that needs to be included in your requirements repository
- Describe why being more organized increases team agility
- Compare and contrast approaches for effectively organizing, filtering and reporting your requirements-related content
- Practice identifying appropriate requirements analysis techniques for various types of projects

| Developing an Analysis Approach |
|---|
| • Review elicitation and analysis techniques<br>• Workshop Options – What is your Analysis Approach?<br>  ○ Use a case study or your own project to discuss and determine the best approach to requirements for the situation<br>  ○ Discuss why you chose each particular elicitation and analysis technique in your approach<br>  ○ **OR**<br>  ○ Use a case study to plan for project inception on an agile project<br>• Discuss success criteria for getting started and moving your requirements work forward |
| **Swimming with the Sharks** |
| • Review key skills needed when working in teams<br>  ○ Managing conflict<br>  ○ Navigating organizational politics and culture<br>  ○ Supporting decision-making<br>  ○ Understanding and working with team dynamics and dysfunctions<br>• Work in groups to create an approach for overcoming real world obstacles that affect projects:<br>  ○ Developing solutions too early in the project<br>  ○ Poor stakeholder engagement<br>  ○ Conflicting needs between stakeholder groups, including prioritization strategies<br>  ○ Political projects<br>  ○ Inadequate time for proper analysis |
| **Course Summary** |
| • Course retrospective<br>• Develop a Post Class "Go Do It!" Plan with next steps for the student's current project |

BA Certified

This class is a part of the **B2T Training Business Analyst Certification Program**. For more information on the program, please see our Certification page.