



**Learning to be a Business Analyst**  
**(SFIA 1 & 2)**

“Is expected to seek guidance in unexpected situations” or “uses minor discretion in resolving problems or enquiries”

This is a key stage to get right in your career as it sets the baseline for the rest of your career. It’s important at this stage to utilise your inexperience to your advantage.

People have little expectation of your abilities and the majority of people would welcome giving up time to support you.

Remember it’s not always about skills but attitude. Most people would rather work with someone who is passionate and humble than someone who is experienced and acts as a know it all.

<p align="center"><b><u>Tools</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ If you get the chance to use a tool, take it, but don’t be concerned if you don’t</li> <li>✓ It’s important to remember tools are there to support communication. Don’t let tools drive your analysis</li> <li>✓ Don’t be afraid of using a tool that you understand before modelling in the one chosen for your organisation</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b><u>Techniques</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ You will find courses next to useless at this stage, you will not have enough knowledge or experience to be able to see synergies in your work place or apply learning practically</li> <li>✓ Use real life / conferences like this where people talk about a certain techniques</li> <li>✓ Make connections so you can draw on practical experience when you need to</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b><u>Business Knowledge</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Focused on having experiences, following / watching, asking about everything, spotting things that work well and not so well</li> <li>✓ Don’t be afraid of moving organisations regularly, taking on different roles</li> <li>✓ Use fellow established BAs and ask them how they see their organisation and how it fits together</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b><u>Soft Skills</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Focus on this skill the most as it is the hardest to master and will get you further than any other</li> <li>✓ Some people are naturally better at this than others but don’t assume natural ability is enough</li> <li>✓ Try saying yes to anything or saying the first thing that comes into your head in a meeting</li> <li>✓ Continually ask for feedback, but do not get defensive</li> </ul>



**Being a Competent Business Analyst**  
**(SFIA 3 & 4)**

“Uses discretion in identifying and resolving complex problems and assignments” and “can exercise substantial personal responsibility and autonomy”

Its at this stage I would recommend some formal learning so you can take real life past experiences into the classroom and ask the questions of how it relates to your world in context.

Begin to re-use techniques

<p align="center"><b><u>Tools</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Try exploring the depths of what a tools can support you in, speak to sales teams at events – even if your not the buyer you can get ideas of what’s possible (just remember they are sales people and things can look very different on the surface!</li> <li>✓ Begin to research and experiment with different tools</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b><u>Techniques</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ You may be very effective in your organisation but think about how efficient you are</li> <li>✓ The use of techniques allow a structured and disciplined in approach to solving problems which will eventually become second nature</li> <li>✓ Always write up your approach in a work package to clarify expectations and formalise your analysis</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b><u>Business Knowledge</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Stay longer in roles to experience some depth in business models</li> <li>✓ Stay current with external factors, reading news tracking company performance</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b><u>Soft Skills</u></b></p> <p><b>Some key tips:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Still be a sponge, never assume you know it all</li> <li>✓ Fake it until you make it</li> <li>✓ Get a BA mentor, someone you admire at work or have met at an event who is experienced in Business Analysis</li> </ul>



**Being an Experienced Business Analyst**  
**(SFIA 5 & 6)**

“Fully accountable for own work and have supervisory responsibilities”; “may establish organisational objectives and delegate responsibility”

This is the point in your career where I believe it’s appropriate to become a specialist. Think about what’s important to you is it the role or industry. Do you prefer change management/process or architecture / IT systems. Do you stay hands on or move into management?

Because you are doing this at this stage, you have the backing of the competent BA skill set. If you go in a direction you later feel was not right for you, it is easy to change. If you do this too early you will find it harder to be creditable as anything else.

<b><u>Tools</u></b>	<b><u>Techniques</u></b>
<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Look beyond just Business Modelling tools and at a wider industry level tools that can support your company not just your role</li><li>✓ When using a new tool work closely with an expert consultant while setting it up so that implementation is smooth and tool is adopted</li></ul>	<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Don’t ease up on preparation even if it becomes natural</li><li>✓ Draw together analysis into a big picture or the team to work within</li></ul>
<b><u>Business Knowledge</u></b>	<b><u>Soft Skills</u></b>
<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Attend industry specific events to broaden network and gain connections with other roles within the same industry</li></ul>	<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Write articles, blogs, join in discussions</li><li>✓ Ensure you are part of the social scene as well as just attending events</li><li>✓ Get an executive mentor</li></ul>



**Being a Professional Business Analyst**  
**(SFIA 7)**

“Has authority and responsibility for setting policy information and its application” and “influences developments within the industry”

Very few people will get to the level of responsibility in their career and its at this stage people generally turn to help others or use their experience to give back knowledge via books/ mentoring or championing new techniques.

<b><u>Tools</u></b>	<b><u>Techniques</u></b>
<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Offer to do beta testing on new products</li></ul>	<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Adapt techniques already in use and share them across the community</li><li>✓ Manage upwards</li></ul>
<b><u>Business Knowledge</u></b>	<b><u>Soft Skills</u></b>
<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Speak at industry events, not just ones focused on Business Analysis</li></ul>	<b>Some key tips:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Become a mentor</li><li>✓ Volunteer to be on the IIBA UK Chapter Board</li></ul>