

# **Career Profile: Business/Systems Analyst**

A modern business needs to be able to adapt quickly to changes in the market place if it is to survive. What adaptation is needed? How will it affect the business? How will it be done? These are some of the questions that a business/systems analyst tries to answer. There are a number of factors that come into play including the nature and type of business and its size, how it is organised, the degree and sophistication of the computer systems in use. The variety of situations explains why different titles are used by various organisations. Some prefer business analyst, others systems analyst and a number of job advertisements refer to both business and systems analysis.

Whatever the title, a business analyst serves as a bridge between the project development staff and the end users of the project. Business analysts work with project stakeholders to identify, document and validate requirements. This may include determining the scope of a system to be used, identifying potential areas of automation and improving the underlying business process. For example, analysts might decide how sales information will get into a store's computers and how the computer will add up the information in a way that makes it useful for store managers.

The analyst has to be able to communicate effectively with the developers to translate stakeholder requirements into something they can understand, and then translate developers' subsequent questions for the stakeholders. The cycle continues throughout. The analyst plays an important role in ensuring that a project remains in scope.

It is obvious that business/systems analysts need a good understanding of the industry and the organization of the business on the one hand and of computer systems and software on the other.

Analysts usually work as part of a team. Some typical activities involved in this career include:

- identifying business improvement and innovation opportunities
- compiling business requirement specifications
- compiling functional requirement specifications
- being involved in the process of specifying interface requirements
- compiling report specifications
- compiling user requirement specifications
- managing feedback and requests for change on defined business requirements.

## Education Requirements

### National Senior Certificate (NSC)

For a career in business/systems analysis students are advised to select English and Mathematics, and to add to this a selection from the designated subjects. These are subjects that are particularly suitable for tertiary study.

### Bachelor Degree

#### **Bachelor of Commerce – (3 years)**

The most directly related degree to business/systems analysis, which combines both business and computer subjects is a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Informatics or Information Management.

#### **Offered at:**

- [North-West University](#)<sup>1</sup> ([Computer Science and Information Systems](#)<sup>2</sup> - Potchefstroom Campus)
- [University of Johannesburg](#)<sup>3</sup> (Management - BCom IT Management)
- [University of Pretoria](#)<sup>4</sup> (School of Information Technology – [BCom Informatics](#)<sup>5</sup>)
- [University of South Africa](#)<sup>6</sup> (BCom in Informatics)

### National Diploma / BTech

The [University of Johannesburg](#)<sup>7</sup> offers a National Diploma in Information Systems and Technology Management and a related BTech qualification in Information Technology.

## Possible Employers

- Commercial organisations
- Manufacturing companies
- Manufacturing industries
- Banks and financial services
- Transnet
- Sasol

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.puk.ac.za/opencms/export/PUK/html/fakulteite/natuur/comp/index\\_e.html](http://www.puk.ac.za/opencms/export/PUK/html/fakulteite/natuur/comp/index_e.html)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.puk.ac.za/opencms/export/PUK/html/fakulteite/natuur/comp/BSc\\_in\\_IT\\_e.pdf](http://www.puk.ac.za/opencms/export/PUK/html/fakulteite/natuur/comp/BSc_in_IT_e.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.uj.ac.za/study/AcademicCourses/Management/BComITManagement/tabid/8517/Default.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=1066&subid=1066&ipklookid=7&parentid=>

<sup>5</sup> <http://web.up.ac.za/default.asp?ipkCategoryID=2018>

<sup>6</sup> [http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showprev.aspx?d=\\_sr\\_c&f=p\\_02011IFM](http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/brochure/showprev.aspx?d=_sr_c&f=p_02011IFM)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.uj.ac.za/bit/FieldsofStudy/Undergraduate/NationalDiploma/tabid/463/Default.aspx>

- Iscor
- CSIR
- Mines, e.g. AngloGold Ashanti, Goldfields
- Consulting firms, e.g. Future Lead, Lima Bean, Visolution Management Consultants.

## **Find out more**

Find out more about a business analyst career.

- The [South African Chapter of the International Institute of Business Analysis](http://southafrica.theiiba.org/)<sup>8</sup> can be viewed at this site.
- The [Computer Society South Africa's](http://www.cssa.org.za/page.php?p_id=190)<sup>9</sup> website includes helpful comments on the role of a business analyst.
- You will find this website very useful for gaining an insight into the work of a [business analyst](http://business-analyst.net/guide/analyst.html)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://southafrica.theiiba.org/>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.cssa.org.za/page.php?p\\_id=190](http://www.cssa.org.za/page.php?p_id=190)

<sup>10</sup> <http://business-analyst.net/guide/analyst.html>

## Are you suited to this career?

This quick quiz can help you to identify whether you are suited for this career.

| Quiz   | YES | NO |
|--|-----|----|
| Do you enjoy analysing situations?   |     |    |
| Are you interested in finding out what makes businesses successful?                                  |     |    |
| Are you interested in the relationship between a broad overview of a subject and its detailed parts? |     |    |
| Are you a good listener?   |     |    |
| Do you communicate easily both in speech and in writing?   |     |    |
| Are detail and accuracy in your work important to you?   |     |    |
| Are you curious and flexible?  |     |    |
| Are you well organised and able to keep to deadlines?  |     |    |
| Are you able to handle conflict?   |     |    |
| Do you enjoy research?   |     |    |

If you have mainly yes answers it may be an indication that this is a career to consider.