

## Success is in the Details

In business analysis, performing a gap analysis on a process or system in order to identify potential areas of improvement can be extremely valuable. But maybe the one thing that's even more valuable is identifying potential areas of improvement among the individuals *who perform* the analysis. Just like any business process, conducting an analysis can only be as effective as the people behind it.

By using an exhaustive set of best practice competencies as a benchmark, organizations can determine how their business analysts measure up to those who have achieved the highest levels of business analysis maturity. Managers can then close the relevant performance gaps and help get analysts where they need to be. But it all calls for a very deliberate process and focused approach. That's where Systemation comes in.

That's why everything Systemation does is purposeful, intentional and precise and why our competency-based approach to business analysis improvement is one of the most comprehensive and effective in the industry.

While many of our competitors simply relate their training seminars to the six Knowledge Areas outlined by the International Institute of Business Analysis's (IIBA) *Body of Knowledge*, our workshops are tightly linked to a much more comprehensive set of 29 competencies derived from that standards guide. These competencies cover the full range of Business Analyst activities, and are cross-referenced with IIBA's six Knowledge Areas and Underlying Fundamentals.

Each competency can be carried out at a particular skill level, such as

those prescribed in Daniel Kim's<sup>1</sup> *Five Stages of Skill Development*. In this model, individuals move through five separate and distinct stages when acquiring a new skill: Novice, Advanced Beginner, Competent, Proficient, and Expert. The following is a breakdown of the five skill stages:

### Novice

- Is aware of abstract concepts and ideas.
- Has little or no ability to put ideas into practice in a reliable way.
- Requires context-free steps in order to move forward.

### Advanced Beginner

- Reliably follows the prescribed steps, provided the situation closely matches ones they have previously encountered.
- Has considerable experience scoping in real-life settings.
- Has a deeper appreciation for the subject area and acknowledges his/her own lack of knowledge about the discipline.

### Competent

- Is able to go beyond simply applying rule-bound procedures in highly structured settings.

<sup>1</sup> Daniel H. Kim, "Leveraging Competence to Build Organizational Capability," *The Systems Thinker*, Feb. 1998.

- Begins internalizing the new tools and concepts.
- Has received all the knowledge there is to know about the skill.

*Proficient*

- Reliably applies the tools and principles to any situation in a highly flexible and fluid manner.
- Has internalized all the tools and concepts.
- Continues to grow only from direct experience gained by continual practice in diverse settings.

*Expert*

- Enmeshes with their environment.
- Acts based on practiced understanding and intuition.
- Advances in the field through direct interaction with other experts.

While Systemation’s Business Analysis curriculum has many important components, it was developed with one main goal in mind: to ensure our students have matured to Kim’s “Competent” level in all 29 competencies by the completion of their curriculums.

Let’s take a closer look at the unique competency-based approach that has made Systemation one of the leading business analysis training and consulting companies in the world today.

THE COMPETENCY MATRIX

As described in the previous section, each of our Business Analysis workshops have been designed with specific competencies and various skill levels in mind. The matrix in this section helps illustrate the relationship between our workshops and those competencies.

The left column of the matrix lists the business analysis competencies, which are subdivided into the six Knowledge Areas, plus Underlying Fundamentals. The top row of the matrix lists Systemation’s workshops organized into our two Certificate Programs – Practitioner and Advanced.

The matrix utilizes the following workshop abbreviations:

*Practitioner Certificate*

**FSIBA:** Fast® Start in Business Analysis

**SSA:** Survival Skills for Analyst

**MRP:** Mastering the Requirements Process

*Advanced Certificate*

**ADBA:** Advanced Business Analysis

**BBSL:** Bringing Business Solutions to Life

**BASIM:** Business Analysis Simulation

The main body of the matrix indicates to what skill level each workshop develops a particular competency.

## Practitioner Certificate Program

COMPETENCY AREA	FSIBA	SSA	MRP
<b>Enterprise Analysis</b>			
Business Opportunity Identification	Novice		
Business Case Development	Novice		
<b>Requirements Planning &amp; Management</b>			
Stakeholder Identification	Competent		
Planning Considerations	Novice		Competent
Activities Selection and Estimation	Novice		Competent
Scope Management	Novice		Competent
<b>Requirements Gathering</b>			
Requirements Gathering	Novice	Advanced Beginner	Competent
<b>Requirements Analysis and Documentation</b>			
Solution Model Definition	Novice		Advanced Beginner
Functional Requirements Analysis	Novice		Advanced Beginner
Data models Development			Novice
Behavioral Models Development			Novice
Process Flow Models Development			Novice
Supplementary Requirements Definition	Novice		Advanced Beginner
Assumptions and Constraints Identification	Competent		
Requirements Attributes Determination			Novice
Requirements Traceability			Novice
Requirements Specification Creation	Novice		Advanced Beginner
Requirements Validation			Novice
<b>Requirements Communication</b>			
Requirements Communication	Novice	Advanced Beginner	Competent
<b>Requirements Implementation</b>			
Alternate Solutions Development			
Technology Options Evaluation			
Solution Selection			
Solution Usability			
Solution Implementation	Novice		
Solution Impact Communication	Novice		
<b>Underlying Fundamentals</b>			
Communication		Competent	
Leadership		Competent	
Problem Solving		Competent	
Information Technology Knowledge			

## Advanced Certificate Program

COMPETENCY AREA	ADBA	BBSL	BASIM
<b>Enterprise Analysis</b>			
Business Opportunity Identification		Competent	
Business Case Development		Competent	
<b>Requirements Planning &amp; Management</b>			
Stakeholder Identification			
Planning Considerations	Competent		
Activities Selection and Estimation			
Scope Management			
<b>Requirements Gathering</b>			
Requirements Gathering			
<b>Requirements Analysis and Documentation</b>			
Solution Model Definition	Competent		
Functional Requirements Analysis	Advanced Beginner	Competent	
Data models Development	Competent		
Behavioral Models Development	Competent		
Process Flow Models Development	Competent		
Supplementary Requirements Definition	Advanced Beginner	Competent	
Assumptions and Constraints Identification			
Requirements Attributes Determination	Advanced Beginner	Competent	
Requirements Traceability	Competent		
Requirements Specification Creation		Competent	
Requirements Validation		Competent	
<b>Requirements Communication</b>			
Requirements Communication			
<b>Requirements Implementation</b>			
Alternate Solutions Development		Competent	
Technology Options Evaluation		Competent	
Solution Selection		Competent	
Solution Usability		Competent	
Solution Implementation		Competent	
Solution Impact Communication		Competent	
<b>Underlying Fundamentals</b>			
Communication			
Leadership			
Problem Solving			
Information Technology Knowledge		Competent	