Business analysis and the Product Owner roles – a retrospective on the essential differences and career opportunity

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Previously…

- Nov 2017 session lead by David Beckham, Karen Lees and Debbie Paul looking at "Should the role of Product Owner be part of the role of the Business Analyst?"

- Conclusion was that BA's could execute the PO role, it was unclear if they should and the organisational context was an important factor in weather this was advised.

The groups identified the following skills within these three categories:

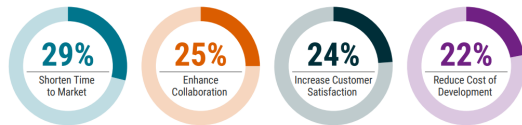| Personal	Analytical	Business
• Team working • Influencing & negotiation • Adaptability • Stakeholder management • Innovation • Organisational diplomacy • Decision making • Risk awareness • Confidence • Collaboration • Written & verbal communication • Relationship building	• Problem solving • Prioritisation • Customer experience/design • Data interpretation • Research • Option appraisal • Informed decision making • Strategy alignment • Outcome definition	• Market research/ awareness • Competitor analysis • Trend analysis • Business knowledge • High level Application knowledge • Regulatory awareness • Commercial awareness (cost/drivers) • Customer perspective • Agile methodology

In the last 5 years...

- 26% increase in agile practices internationally and 92% of UK respondents are involved in Agile Practices.

76% OF BUSINESS ANALYSIS PROFESSIONALS PRACTICE AGILE APPROACHES

50% 2017
69% 2018
71% 2019
72% 2020
76% 2021

26% INCREASE IN AGILE PRACTICES FROM 2017 TO 2021

Reasons Why Organizations Adopt Agile Approaches

29% Shorten Time to Market
25% Enhance Collaboration
24% Increase Customer Satisfaction
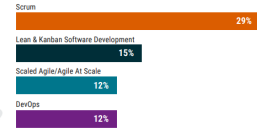22% Reduce Cost of Development

Regional Results: United Kingdom (continued)

Agile Analysis

92% of respondents are **involved in Agile**

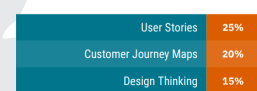**18%** of respondents **are in a Product Owner Analysis role**

Top 3 Agile Approaches
- Scrum — 29%
- Lean & Kanban Software Development — 15%
- Scaled Agile/Agile At Scale — 12%
- DevOps — 12%

Digital Initatives

67% of Respondents are Involved on Digital Initiatives

Top 3 Digital Techniques
- User Stories — 25%
- Customer Journey Maps — 20%
- Design Thinking — 15%

PO Role...

- 41% are involved in Product Ownership Analysis
- 61% are working in or wanting to work in a POA role
- 40% in a PO or Proxy PO role
- 6% of Core Responsibilities are PO related

Product Ownership

Respondents ranked the agile business analysis approaches, techniques, and skills required as a Product Owner. The results aligned with the Agile Business Analysis principles of "Analyze to determine what is valuable".

Organizations Involved in Product Ownership Analysis (POA)

41% | 23% | 36%

Yes | I Don't Know | No

Do You Work in a Product Ownership Role?

31% | 30% | 39%

Yes | Not Yet | No

BUSINESS ANALYSIS PROFESSIONALS WORKING IN A POA ROLE (31%) OR TRANSITIONING TO ONE (30%)

How Business Analysis Professionals Are Involved in Product Ownership

46% | 24% | 16% | 14%

My Work Supports a Product Owner | I am a Proxy Product Owner | I am a Product Owner | N/A

WORKING AS A PROXY PRODUCT OWNER (24%) OR DIRECTLY SUPPORT PRODUCT OWNER (46%)

Core Responsibilities

- Business Analysis — 21%
- Process Development
- Project Management
- Testing/Quality Assurance
- Data Analysis
- Product Ownership
- Organizational Development/Training
- Scrum Master/Agile Coach
- Business Architecture

- Solutions Architecture
- Development
- Technical Design
- Proxy Product Ownership
- Financial Analysis
- Enterprise Architecture
- Cybersecurity Analysis
- Other

2% 1% 2% 3% 4% 4% 4% 4% 5% 5% 6% 8% 9% 9% 10% 21%

Top areas and percentage of time where business analysis professionals report they spend time performing this work.

Senior Business Analyst Salaries in England, UK

Very High Confidence

£55,145 /yr
Average Base Pay

1,744 salaries

£40K Low £55K Average

No additional cash compensation has been reported for this role

£50,809 / year
Avg. Base Salary (GBP)

10%	MEDIAN	90%
£38k	£51k	£72k

The average salary for a Senior Business Analyst is £50,809
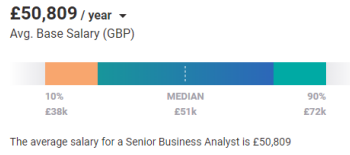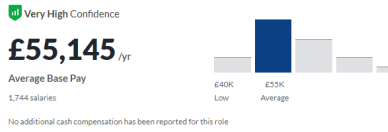
Product Manager Salaries in England, UK

Very High Confidence

£49,000 /yr
Average Base Pay

28,831 salaries

£30K Low £49K Average

No additional cash compensation has been reported for this role

Base Salary	£38k - £72k	
Bonus	£1k - £11k	
Profit Sharing	£498 - £12k	
Total Pay	£39k - £80k	

Based on 729 salary profiles (last updated Mar 16 2022)
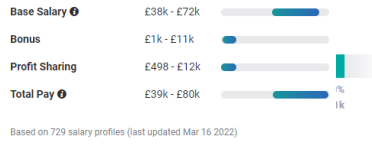
Product Owner Salaries in England, UK

Very High Confidence

£50,263 /yr
Average Base Pay

1,942 salaries

£36K Low £50K Average

No additional cash compensation has been reported for this role

£43,220 / year
Avg. Base Salary (GBP)

10%	MEDIAN	90%
£29k	£43k	£66k

The average salary for a Product Owner is £43,220
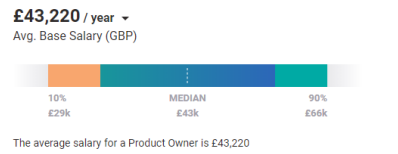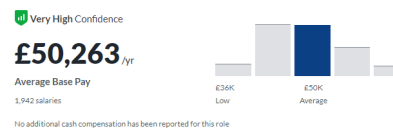
Money…

Question:

What do you see in your organisations?

VB NOTES FROM FLIPCHART:

BA -> PO role	Where does the BA Practice sit vs ownership
SME-> product domain	Product Managers Product Owners
From the core business	Relegated authority
Context of what is being delivered	Temporary role for build
BA at a higher level (4) -> PO sitting at team level (16)	Crossover Duplication
PO sets priority -> Team schedule	Direction SME -> BA day-to-day
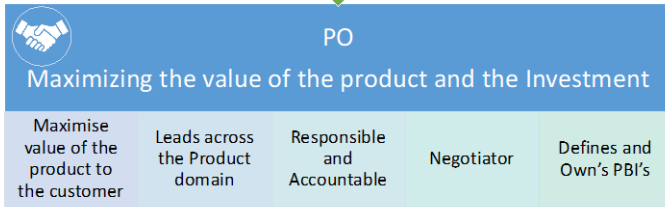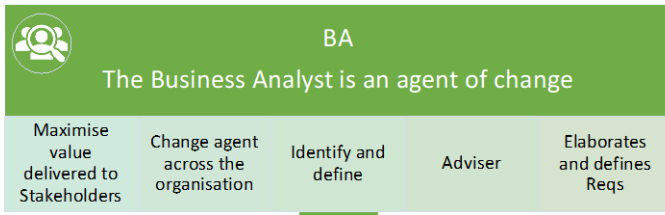
Parallels in role descriptions

BA
The Business Analyst is an agent of change

Maximise value delivered to Stakeholders	Change agent across the organisation	Identify and define	Adviser	Elaborates and defines Reqs

PO
Maximizing the value of the product and the Investment

Maximise value of the product to the customer	Leads across the Product domain	Responsible and Accountable	Negotiator	Defines and Own's PBI's

Typical scope of the roles

Increasing level of detail

- Business Vision
- Business Mission
- Business Strategy
- KPI's/CSF's/Benefits/Business case
- Product Strategy – Customer & Market Research
- Product Roadmap – Release planning
- Product Backlog – Prioritisations & Stakeholder Alignment
- Sprint Backlog – Increment planning
- Detailed Analysis – Backlog refinement
- Development
- Testing – Business/Customer & Technical
- Product Release Planning/process change

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Product Owner

Shared

Business Analyst

Skills assessment activity

Flip charts

Dot Voting
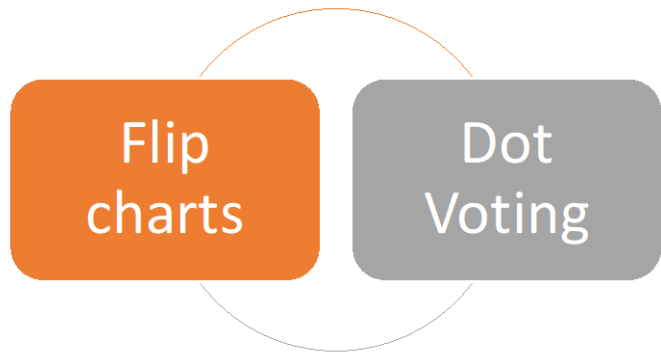
NOTES FROM FLIPCHARTS:

BA/PO competencies by category

🟢 BA

🔵 PO

🔴 Shared

Personal Qualities / Soft Skills

Influencing 🔴🔴

Relationship building 🟢🟢

Problem solving 🟢🟢

Saying NO! 🔵🔴

Decision making 🔵🔵🔵

Visionary 🔵🔵🔵

Negotiation 🔵🔴

Analytical skills & critical thinking 🟢🟢🟢

Stakeholder management 🔴🔴🔴

Political awareness 🔵

Curiosity 🟢

Listening skills 🔴

Written and verbal communication 🔴

Attention to detail 🟢

Business / Soft Skills

Trusted advisor 🟢🟢🟢

Strategic alignment 🔴

Business architecture 🟢

Trend and competitor awareness 🔵

Project or non-project based 🔵🔵

Business domain knowledge 🔴

Process knowledge 🟢🟢

Organisation understanding 🔴🟢

Business finances / business case 🔴🔵

Consulted and accountable 🔵

Available to the team 🔵

Competitive / market awareness 🔴

Commercial and contract negotiation 🔵

Outcome definition 🔴🔵

Professional Toolkit / Professional Skills

Process modelling 🟢

Data modelling 🟢

Requirements definition / story writing 🔴🟢🟢

Environment analysis – PESTLE, 5 Forces, SWOT, Resource Audit, MOST, Boston Box 🟢

Requirements Engineering 🟢🟢

Business case development / options analysis 🟢🟢

Benefits management 🔵

Sprint backlog management and prioritisation 🔴🔴

MoSCoW 🔴

Product vision 🔵🔵

Product roadmaps 🔵🔵

Product backlog management and prioritisation 🔵🔴🔴

Product lifecycle analysis / management 🔵

Personal Qualities – Soft Skills	
	Influencing
	Relationship Building
	Problem solving
	Saying NO!
	Selling
	Decision Making
	Leadership
	Motivator
	Visionary
	Negotiation
	Analytical skills and critical thinking
	Stakeholder Management
	Team work
	Political awareness
	Commercial Awareness
	Curiosity
	Presentation skills
	Listening Skills
	Written and verbal communication
	Attention to Detail
	Saying Yes
	Story Teller
	Other….

Professional Toolkit – Professional Skills	
	Change Management
	Process Modelling
	Process Re-engineering and improvement
	Data modelling
	Organisational analysis and design
	Technical and Solution Design
	Acceptance testing
	Requirement Definition/Story writing
	Environment analysis – PESTLE, 5 Forces, SWOT, Resource Audit, MOST, BOSTON BOX
	Requirements Engineering
	Business Case Development
	Benefits Management
	User Research and analysis
	Sprint backlog management and Prioritisation
	Collaboration tools: JIRA, Confluence, Trello, Miro, Skype, MS Teams, SharePoint Etc
	Visualisation Tools – Blueworks, Visio, Enterprise Architect.
	Service design
	MSCOW
	Pain Point analysis
	Product Vision
	Product Canvas
	Product Roadmaps
	Product Backlog management and Prioritisation
	Release planning
	Value Stream Analysis
	Marketing
	Product Lifecycle Analysis/management
	Kano Analysis
	WSJF
	Cost of Delay Analysis
	Cycle time/Touch time
	Road mapping tools – Prodpad, Jira, Aha
	ITIL
	Other…

Business Skills – Business Knowledge	
	Any Business delivery/change framework
	Trusted Advisor
	Responsible
	Business Architecture
	Project or Non Project Based
	Risk management
	Business domain knowledge
	Process Knowledge
	Organisation understanding
	Business finances/Business case
	Supplier Management
	Project management
	Consulted and Accountable
	Co-located
	Available to the team
	Competitive /market awareness
	Forcasting and budgeting
	Commercial and contract Negotiation
	Other….

Personal Qualities – Soft Skills

Business Analyst
- Listening Skills
- Written and verbal communication
- Attention to Detail
- Saying Yes
- Story Teller

Shared
- Influencing
- Relationship Building
- Problem solving
- Analytical skills and critical thinking
- Stakeholder Management
- Team work
- Political awareness
- Commercial Awareness
- Curiosity
- Presentation skills

Product Owner
- Saying NO!
- Selling
- Decision Making
- Leadership
- Motivator
- Visionary
- Negotiation

Business Skills – Business Knowledge

Business Analyst
- Any Business delivery/change framework
- Trusted Advisor
- Responsible
- Business Architecture

Shared
- Project or Non Project Based
- Risk management
- Business domain knowledge
- Process Knowledge
- Organisation understanding
- Business finances/Business case
- Supplier Management
- Project management

Product Owner
- Agile Only*
- Consulted and Accountable
- Co-located
- Available to the team
- Competitive /market awareness
- Forcasting and budgeting
- Commercial and contract Negotiation

*Product Management role is a delivery framework agnostic role

Professional Toolkit - Professional

Business Analyst
- Change Management
- Process Modelling
- Process Re-engineering and improvement
- Data modelling
- Organisational analysis and design
- Technical and Solution Design
- Acceptance testing

Shared
- Requirement Definition/Story writing
- Environment analysis – PESTLE, 5 Forces, SWOT, Resource Audit, MOST, BOSTON BOX
- Process Mapping
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Product Owner
- Product Vision
- Product Canvas
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- Product Backlog management and Prioritisation
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- Value Stream Analysis
- Marketing
- Product Lifecycle Analysis/management
- Kano Analysis
- WSJF
- Cost of Delay
- Cycle time/Touch time
- Road mapping tools – Prodpad, Jira, Aha
- ITIL

Round table discussion

What are the challenges for a BA Manager in relation to the PO role?
- Career development or training support
- Longevity of the role
- Demarking the responsibilities
- Perception of the career i.e. seniority, progression and/or salary

Pick your top   challenge   how to overcome the challenges?

NOTES FROM FLIPCHARTS:

Group 1

Challenges	How to overcome the challenge
Poaching PO is a sexy new role Visibility Maturity of BA role versus PO role BAs filling in gaps Progression ladder for PO Subordination Consistent definition hierarchy Terms of reference for PO role Perception of duplication between roles Industry benchmark	Positioning – where BAs sit Career pathway for BAs Consistent roles across organisation Pay BAs more Block moves (from BA to PO – internal transfers Move roles around – "musical roles"

Group 2

Challenges	How to overcome the challenge
Domain knowledge Decision making Resource management Product silo Ways of working 'Ownership' title / sexy / power	Not sexy – "with great power comes great responsibility" BA apprentices to mitigate BA to PO movement Get BAs more involved in strategy Make people more aware of what we do Measurable outcomes of analysis

Group 3

Challenges	How to overcome the challenge
Losing BAs to products Blurring the line Performance management Become less versatile Losing to different career path Overshadowing the BA	Going holistic Focus on the differences (sales pitch) - Process driven - Relationship building - User stories - Service design