Below are the notes from a workshop on personal development for BAs held at the BA Manager Forum May 2015. This session focused on encouraging and maximising the opportunities for realising personal development.

How can you develop your personal learning and overcome issues?

- Evaluate learning styles and individual preferences
- Keep in mind what you are trying to develop – business needs
- Understand current position and where you want to be – goals
- Being aware of what you don't know
- Identify and clarify why you are trying to learn and what your end goal/motivation is
- Understand the tools available

- Learn to learn – what works for you?
- Broaden your view of what learning opportunities exist
- Make the most of opportunities that exist, even if less than optimal
- Consider team learning
- Be brave and seek out feedback
- Learning isn't just training
- Learn through mistakes

- Develop a culture of not being afraid to fail
- Using recommendations e.g. books and websites
- Find out what is valued to you, to your organisation, to the market etc.
- Have an inspirational person to follow
- Encourage further learning where there is natural interest in a subject
- Understanding various cultures e.g. internal/external or international/UK
- Immerse yourself in the area of learning
- Give yourself time to learn and reflect
- Understand your style e.g. verbal, visual etc.
- Have a buddy
- Present to others to reinforce and spread learning

- Benchmarking oneself with peers (professional networking/events)
- Immediate practical application of new techniques
- Engage a coach
- Take ownership of learning and career
- Understand corporate direction
- Balance personal drivers vs. other drivers
- Seek feedback
- Being open to change

How can you help your BA Practice Members to learn and develop?

- Lead by example
- Peer reviews
- Pairing with more experienced BAs
- Communication (both formal and informal)
- Confidence through training (both formal and informal)
- Mentoring
- Understand team development needs
- Reflective – what have you learnt

- CPD formalised
- Domain knowledge
- Capability frameworks to benchmark knowledge

- Appoint process champions
- Formalise coaching
- Formal training
- Sponsoring transformation activities
- Provide a support environment
- Deliver resources (e.g. time, budget etc.)
- Agreed goals, objectives
- Balanced scorecard
- Career – personal aspirations
- Use external input – e.g. ideas
- Awards, recognition, incentives
- Secondments – internally to other roles
- Site visits – shadowing
- Ongoing feedback

- Take risks – people on different projects – new learning
- Abstract experiences
- Have a variety of learning approaches
- Sharing experiences
- Flexibility in approaches
- Opportunities to use learnings
- Understand learning motivations
- Recognise needs – stages of career
- Direct staff to relevant resources
- Protect their time for development
- Being available to provide support

- Rewards and incentives
- Open community of practice
- SMART objectives relating to development
- Definition of goals
- Understand motivation of individuals – training requests
- Encourage staff to develop
- Provide opportunity to use training
- Helping staff to network
- Team goal/vision – overall uplift in knowledge

What formal, structured learning approaches are available to BAs?

- BCS diploma
- CBAP & CCBA – IIBA
- Certified IT Professional
- IREB – International Requirements Engineering Board
- Induction Courses
- e-learning
- Agile – scrum master
- Six sigma
- Industry qualifications

- Business product learnings
- Community practice events/team meetings
- Business qualifications e.g. finance
- Text books
- PID documents
- PRINCE lifecycle, methodologies etc.
- Internal + external courses
- Mandatory training
- Webinars on pre-specified topics – events from industry specific/BA organisations
- BABOK/SIFA

- Associated training e.g. project management, finance etc.
- Independent training providers (specialist) e.g. agile, sigma, scrum
- e-Learning
- Team based learning sessions
- Formal coaching

- Formal training – courses, BCS, e-Learning, classroom based
- Methods and tools
- Frameworks
- Soft skills training – in-house and external
- Domain/business knowledge – induction days
- Mentoring scheme – mentors and mentees
- Maintain professional record of development e.g. ambitions and career decisions
- Personal development plan
- Organisational training

What informal, holistic learning approaches are available to BAs?

- Internet research – e.g. Harvard Business Mentor or TED talks
- Observation
- Lessons learned from previous BAs
- Coaching/mentoring
- Best practice learning
- Forums/networking
- Feedback
- Work shadowing
- Business placements
- Books e.g. BCS
- Assist news letters
- Discussion forums
- Social media

- Online sources e.g. webinars, blogs, forums, social media (LinkedIn)
- Brown bag sessions
- Shared learning from peers
- Professional events e.g. BAMF or IIBA events
- White papers
- Daily stand ups

- Social media e.g. LinkedIn
- BCS membership – active member

- Feedback from events to peers
- Input into white papers
- Site visits
- Internet sites e.g. discussion boards
- Drawing on consultants experience and new colleagues
- BA internal community group (lunch and learn)

- New work assignments
- BA community engagement
- New job
- Wiki's/blogs
- Read a book
- Shadowing
- Learning from contract staff + new people
- Learn from others successes/mistakes
- Outside work skills e.g. youth clubs/government bodies