

# Could you be Business Analyst of the Year 2016?

## Introduction: Why BA of the Year?

*Debbie Paul – Managing Director, AssistKD*

*Adrian Reed – President, IIBA UK*

The [BA of the Year Award](#) has been organised by AssistKD in collaboration with [IIBA UK](#) since 2010. This prestigious award recognises individual achievement in conducting business analysis work to the highest standards. The BAs entered for this award have demonstrated excellence in their work, typically exceeding the expectations of their stakeholders.

The award is important for several reasons. Many BAs feel, on occasion, that the contribution business analysis can offer does not get the recognition that it deserves. With a good BA on board, any project or initiative is much more likely to reach its objectives and deliver the outcomes that sponsors, organisations and stakeholders desire. It is often the case that business analysis forms part of the 'glue' that binds successful change initiatives together. When the glue works effectively, it is barely visible and a lot of good work may go unnoticed. Yet, just like glue, when it is absent, things can suddenly fall apart to the detriment of the project and the organisation.

It is important that within the business analysis community we are clear about our successes and are unafraid to broadcast them both inside our organisations and across the wider business world. It is important that we raise awareness of what our profession does, and the significant and irreplaceable role that it plays. The BA of the Year provides a focal point for celebrating success, allowing the BA community to applaud the role model BAs and the excellence of their business analysis work.

AssistKD and IIBA UK are proud to work with the BA community in offering this award. We want to receive applications from all BAs who can describe where their analysis work made a difference over the past year. Shortlisted finalists each win a ticket to the [BA Conference Europe 2016](#) (worth over £1500) — and there's always the chance of winning! The act of applying is an excellent way to reflect on the difference you have made to your organisation and the positive outcomes that you have helped to create. Participating in the BA of the Year Award is a great way to promote awareness of business analysis and celebrate achievement.

We look forward to receiving your applications!

In the meantime, here is a brief guide on how to apply, as well as some thoughts from the perspective of our current BAs of the Year, who have kindly written the short articles below.

## **A Guide to Entering the BA of the Year Award**

Anyone wishing to enter the Award for this year should firstly download the application form <http://www.assistkd.com/knowledge-hub/business-analyst-of-the-year/what-is-baoty/>. The

form requires entrants to provide details of their role and contribution in the delivery of their business analysis work. The application form is straightforward to complete with the judges looking for considered and succinct responses in just seven areas. Those shortlisted to the final interview stage will have demonstrated the most significant contribution in three key areas:

### **Collaborative working**

How have you worked collaboratively with your colleagues to deliver successful outcomes?

### **Prioritisation**

How have you supported your customers in prioritising business needs?

### **Visualisation**

What have you done to visualise the business needs or requirements on your projects in order to ensure understanding and clarity?

At the interview stage, the shortlisted finalists have the opportunity to elaborate on their abilities and achievements and impress a small panel of judges. Interviews are conducted early in September with all the finalists receiving free entry to the European conference. The winner is announced at the BA Conference Europe on 20th September.

Take the first step in showcasing your value as a BA and submit your application form.

## **What being BA of the Year means to me** ***Carline James, IT Business Analyst, Allianz Insurance*** ***BA of the Year 2015/16***

Applying for BA of the Year gave me an opportunity to reflect on my professional journey to date in the BA realms and a chance to share my views on a number of key topics, which the application was focusing on. I'm extremely passionate about building recognition for business analysis within and outside of my organisation and wanted to showcase some of this work.

I also want to get people talking about business analysis as a profession, particular with school leavers and those at university, it's an exciting space and I think a lot of people making career choices still don't know what we do! Having recognition as BA of the year is personally a great achievement at the age of 26 and it's brilliant to be able to share this with students and hopefully inspire them into a field which has such interesting development opportunities.

It was interesting to meet with the interview board and have some healthy debate around everything from how leadership roles align to business analysis to engaging solution architects on projects. The BA of the year role for me continues to drive my desire for change in the BA practice and how organisations should value the diversity of skills a BA can bring. I've also had the chance to sit on the Conference board working with colleagues outside of Allianz. It's been brilliant hearing from experts in the field what the industry is talking about. I'll be helping to facilitate one of the workshops at the conference which is

another personal development opportunity I'm looking forward to.

Fantastic experience from start to finish, I'd encourage applying!

### **What being BA of the Year means to me**

***Rachel Henry-Jones, Senior BA, Nationwide Building Society  
BA of the Year 2015/16***

Having been at Nationwide for just a year, it was a real honour to be put forward by my Practice for the BA of the Year award.

Reflecting on my year in the run up to the competition, it really was a breakthrough time for me in terms of achievements, recognition and most importantly, breaking through a lot of personal barriers that had held me back as an analyst for nearly 10 years.

I knew I had a lot to talk about in my application but when I first looked at the application form, that age-old crippling fear of failure took over. Would an external panel of BA professionals look at my application and instantly put it in the 'no' pile? Thanks for applying, but no thanks?!

I did worry (as I do about a lot of things!) whether this experience would potentially set me back and lead me to look at things that I was finally proud of, as not up to those achievements of industry peers.

I can honestly say that I'm so glad I got over that initial fear, as every step in the application process (and beyond) taught me a lot about myself. I can only now look back at my achievements and journey to BA of the Year with immense pride. Learning what peers and senior managers saw in me (that at the time I did not see myself) proved massively insightful.

By the time I had my interview, I felt like I'd already won! Hearing from the judges who were so open in their praise was something I will never forget. When I left the interview room (albeit shaking), I felt that (perhaps!) I did deserve to be a finalist.

The BA conference was the biggest highlight to me of the whole experience. The opportunity to attend three days - hearing from world-class speakers, meeting BA professionals from all over Europe, and sharing experiences and ideas was fantastic.

The best part was hearing my name called as a winner. I was lucky enough to have both my boss and my Head of Practice in the audience, rightly sharing in the euphoria of my win. I could not have achieved this accolade without these people by my side. In particular, my amazing boss Glenn whose coaching, mentoring and encouraging words when I was facing my toughest challenges made the real difference that gave me three key things - strength, confidence and reason to succeed.

Since winning, I have dedicated as much time as I can to maintaining the well-deserved spotlight on Business Analysis. I have most enjoyed sharing my personal journey with others both within and outside my organisation, to inspire people to realise (as I did) that we all have stories to share and achievements worth shouting about. I would wholeheartedly encourage analysts at any stage of their career to apply for this award and see where it takes them!