

Project Management and Business Analysis Maturity in Canadian Organizations

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Abstract

This white paper presents the results of a survey completed during 2007 and 2008 whose goal was to gauge the level of project management and business analysis maturity in Canadian companies. This survey was completed by 96 respondents working in 21 different organizations within Canada.

Based on the responses from participants the maturity level of formal Project Management is greater than that of Business Analysis.

Overall, the results confirm that Project Management methodologies are more mature within Canadian companies than Business Analysis methodologies, but also show that Business Analysis is emerging as an important corporate methodology.

Introduction

Project management methodologies in North America have been guided almost solely by the Project Management Institute's (PMI) Project Management Body of Knowledge. PMI, located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was created in 1969 and currently has over 260,000 members in 171 countries. PMI is the registration body responsible for the Project Management Professional (PMP®) credential, the Certified Associate for Project Management (CAPM®) credential, and other credentials relating to Project Management. According to the PMI website, 70% of PMI members live in North America with 9% of these in Canada. There are also several other project management methodologies emerging in the industry in recent years such as PRINCE2™.

In contrast, a much younger organization, the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA) was created in 2003, and became a non-profit association in 2006. The IIBA currently has over 5000 members worldwide. The IIBA also manages the profession's credential called the Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP™), is the gatekeeper of the Guide to the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge, and the certification process, which has been granted to 100 individuals to date. The IIBA's headquarters are located in Toronto, Canada.

This paper analyzes the results from a survey completed over an 11 month period by members of Canadian organizations. The sample results show that project management methodologies have been used in Canadian companies for longer than business analysis methodologies. It also shows that although there is a high level of maturity and rigour in Canadian companies with respect to their project management methodology, many respondents indicated that their organizations were considering revising and upgrading their methodology in the near future.

In contrast, the survey results indicate that business analysis methodologies are much less formal and standardized, and that fewer organizations were considering revising and upgrading their methodology in the near future.

The Survey

Data Collection Method

Several collection methods were considered to gather the data required for this study. Based on the budget, timing, and response considerations, it was decided that several distribution methods would be used in order to elicit a greater response from a wider variety of organizations. A structured questionnaire was developed and provided to audiences of various talks and courses that were completed by our company. We circulated the surveys at various industry conferences and professional chapter meetings, as well as made the survey available online through our corporate website.

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was broken into two sections, one concerning project management and the other for business analysis. The questions in the two sections were very similar. Eight of the questionnaire items required yes or no answers, two required the respondents to indicate a number of years and the final, open ended question asked participants to indicate their company's line of business.

Results

94% of respondents stated that their organization has internal positions where the primary function is project manager, while only 67% claimed to have a position within

their organization where the main function was business analysis. This suggests that the maturity and ubiquity of business analysis methodology in respondent companies is lower when compared with their project management counterpart.

The numbers of organizations that have a formal Project Management or Business Analysis methodology, framework, or process are 77% and 34% respectively. These results are understandable given the length of time the respective formally documented body of knowledge has existed for each of the professions. The Project Management Body of Knowledge has existed for many more years than the newly emerging Business Analysis Body of Knowledge. These results also show, when compared to the results from the paragraph above, that in 32% of the organizations where there is a role dedicated to business analysis, no methodology exists to guide the actions of that role. The same can be said for only 17% of organizations who employ project managers, who answered our survey.

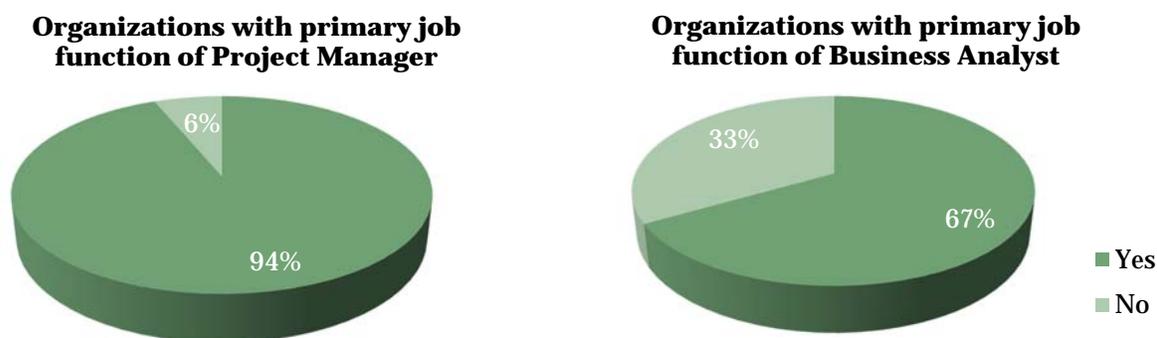


Figure 1.0 – Percentage of organizations with PM and BA roles within

The most positive results came from the question regarding the commitment to revisiting, revising, and increasing the methodology within their organization in the near future. Of the responses to this question regarding their project management methodology, 64% stated that their organization is planning on revising or upgrading their methodology. Of the organizations that responded to the same question with regard to business analysis, 45% of participants said that their organization was planning on increasing their business analysis methodology.

Conclusion

A great opportunity exists for organizations where both Project Manager and Business Analyst functions exist to formalize the methodology that both roles utilize. Many resources exist to help organizations interested in expanding or revising their methodology. Both the Project Management Body of Knowledge and the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge provide a good starting point for best practices that exist in business currently and can be scaled to fit each specific organization and its unique needs. Project Management and Business Analysis consulting and training services can also be utilized to develop, revise, and implement methodologies where the expertise or capacity does not exist within the organization.

A number of important points should be considered as an organization matures in its project management and business analysis methodology. The two roles can complement each other well and the methodology should be developed to encourage that complementation. In addition, there are several techniques and deliverables that exist or are referred to in both the project management and business analysis bodies of knowledge, such as developing a business case, stakeholder analysis, and change management. These should be specially noted and responsibilities should be clearly assigned between the two roles.

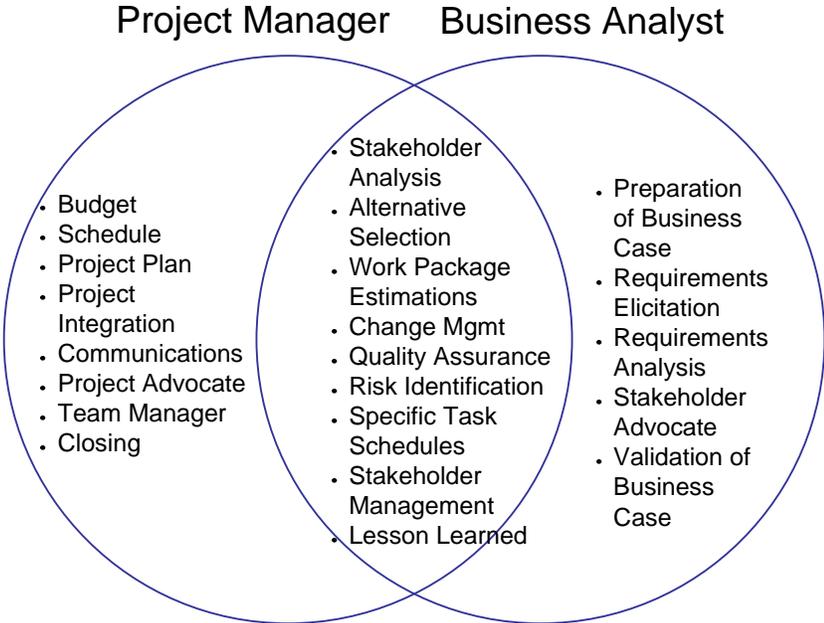


Figure 2.0 – Relationship between PM and BA responsibilities

Finally, for those organizations where a project manager role exists but a business analyst role does not, and where there is a need to create a business analyst role in the future, the project manager should be consulted as a key stakeholder. The project manager should be involved in the process of developing the skills, qualifications, and responsibilities that are required of the business analyst role. This is to ensure that there is a clear understanding of where each sphere of responsibility begins and ends, and to allow time for the integration of business analysis into the Project Delivery Methodology.