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**COMP 361 – Skills and Knowledge of Systems Analysts**

In the textbook, they mention the three skills needed by systems analysts: business skills, people skills, and technical skills[1]. The authors do not specifically mention any set of skills as being more important than any other. Each set of skills is discussed in the textbook regarding relevancy and the need to keep them current. However, it is clear from the amount of discussion dedicated to each skill set which shows the reader that technical skills are clearly the most important set for an analyst.

If we look at amount of space given to each set of skills on pages 11-13 of the textbook, we can clearly see that the section entitled "Technical Knowledge and Skills" has the largest amount of space dedicated to it. The section "Business Knowledge and Skills" is a close second, but the section "People Knowledge and Skills" is a distant third. This arrangement allows the technical skills to be discussed in more detail, which is clearly broken down into overall skills, tools, and techniques needed. The other two sections are much less comprehensive in their approach. The people section is essentially a vague description of general interpersonal skills that are required in almost any job.

In addition to the textbook, I have looked at a few job descriptions on the internet and discovered some important skills not mentioned specifically in the textbook. Writing seems to be one of the most important. Writing is necessary for business documents and reports. Without an effective ability to effectively communicate through writing, an analyst will have a very troubling time getting the job done. According to the site prospects.ac.uk, writing is also important for user manuals and training documents [2]. Users will not always have direct communication with developers and analysts, especially as the system continues to age. If instructions and documentation are not clear, fixing problems and using the system will be difficult and system adoption will be discouraged.

In general, the job of a systems analyst seems to be very fluid, with skills needed in many areas[2]. To be an excellent analyst, it would seem that excellent skills are required in all areas. However, new systems analysts may not have developed all the necessary skills yet. They may have to rely on team members and supervisors to ensure that projects are developed correctly. Nevertheless, as job experience increases, good analysts will undoubtedly get chances to work on many of the skills they need to become better.

**References**

[1] J. W. Satzinger, R. B. Jackson and S. D. Burd, Systems Analysis and Design in a Changing World, 5th ed. Boston, USA: Thomson Course Technology, 2009.

[2] "Systems Analyst: Job Description," *Prospects.ac.uk.* accessed December 6, 2013, <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/systems_analyst_job_description.htm>.