

BA621

P - Identify the Point E - Explain the Point E - Give Examples of the Point

QUESTION ONE

Q1. A business analyst is currently defining a set of changes to the current state of an organization that allows the organization to take advantage of a business opportunity. Explain what is most likely being defined **(10)**

P | Strategy Analysis

E1 | Strategy Analysis focuses on gaining an understanding of the organizations objectives, capabilities and stakeholders and aligning those with the business strategy. The BA(business analyst) must identify and evaluate strategic options to make certain that the business analysis efforts are aligned with the organizations goals and objectives.

E2 | An agency, lets call it RealSense, specializes in making websites. The company wants to grow by offering new packages that articulates different level tiers with different service offerings. The business analyst needs to speak to the agency upper management and elicit the requirements by finding out why they want to offer these new packages. After gathering intelligence the BA must assess the capabilities of the business looking at personal skills and business resources. Next the BA should identify risks and challenges associated with this change. After that the BA must evaluate the options available to the business considering factors such as market demand, competition and the agency's skill cap(expertise).

Q2.What knowledge area contains the next most logical steps after the business analyst has built a business case and gained management approval for a project? **(10)**

Solution Evaluation

Solution evaluation is focused on assessing and validating present or future proposed solutions before, during and after the projects life-cycle. A BA's attention is fixated on the value that the solution will provide to the organization. The solution evaluation task list includes: *1. defining solution performance measures, 2. collecting and analyzing solution performance data, 3. assessing solution limitations, 4. assessing organization limitations, 5. encouraging actions to increase value.*

Requirements Analysis and Design Definition: This step involves further analyzing and refining the requirements identified in the business case. The business analyst works closely with stakeholders to elicit, analyze, and prioritize requirements, ensuring they are clear, concise, and measurable. The requirements are then documented and organized for effective communication and subsequent solution development.

Solution Evaluation: Once the requirements are defined, the business analyst is involved in evaluating potential solutions to address the identified business needs. This includes assessing alternative solutions, conducting cost-benefit analyses, and identifying risks and constraints associated with each option. The business analyst may collaborate with stakeholders to select the most appropriate solution that aligns with the organization's goals and objectives.

Requirements Validation: This step involves validating the requirements against stakeholders' needs and expectations to ensure they accurately represent the desired solution. The business analyst works closely with stakeholders to conduct reviews, walkthroughs, and inspections of the requirements documentation. Feedback is collected, and any necessary revisions or refinements to the requirements are made based on the input received.

Requirements Management and Communication: As the project progresses, the business analyst plays a critical role in managing and communicating requirements effectively. This involves establishing a requirements baseline, tracking changes to requirements, and ensuring traceability between requirements and other project artifacts. The business analyst also facilitates communication between stakeholders, ensuring that their requirements are understood, addressed, and appropriately prioritized throughout the project lifecycle.

Solution Assessment and Validation: Once the solution is developed, the business analyst participates in validating that the solution meets the defined requirements and provides the intended business value. This involves conducting acceptance testing, verifying that the solution aligns with stakeholder expectations, and identifying any gaps or deficiencies. The business analyst collaborates with stakeholders to evaluate the solution's effectiveness and recommends corrective actions if needed.

Q3.You are a business analyst measuring alternatives against objectives and identifying trade-offs to determine which possible solution is best. Discuss the factors most likely to be engaged in the various activities and those are most likely engaged in specific activities? **(10)**

As a business analyst, your role involves measuring alternatives against objectives and identifying trade-offs to determine the best possible solution. This process involves various activities and engages different factors + *stakeholders*. Let's discuss the factors and stakeholders that are most likely to be engaged in these activities.

1. Defining Objectives:

- **Factors:** The factors engaged in defining objectives include organizational goals, market conditions, customer needs, regulatory requirements, and industry trends.

- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders engaged in this activity may include senior management, business owners, marketing teams, product managers, and industry experts.

2. Identifying Alternatives:

- **Factors:** Factors engaged in identifying alternatives involve understanding available resources, technology capabilities, market research, competitive analysis, and feasibility assessments.
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders engaged in this activity may include subject matter experts, cross-functional teams, product development teams, research and development teams, and market research analysts.

3. Evaluating Alternatives:

- **Factors:** Factors engaged in evaluating alternatives include cost considerations, revenue potential, market demand, risk analysis, technical feasibility, scalability, and time-to-market.
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders engaged in this activity may include finance teams, operations teams, project managers, legal teams, technical architects, and domain experts.

4. Measuring against Objectives:

- **Factors:** Factors engaged in measuring alternatives against objectives include key performance indicators (KPIs), strategic alignment, customer satisfaction, market share, financial metrics, and return on investment (ROI).
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders engaged in this activity may include business analysts, data analysts, performance analysts, senior management, finance teams, and sales teams.

5. Identifying Trade-offs:

- **Factors:** Factors engaged in identifying trade-offs involve assessing the impact of each alternative on different aspects such as cost, time, quality, customer experience, risk, and resource allocation.
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders engaged in this activity may include business analysts, project managers, operational teams, subject matter experts, and decision-makers.

6. Selecting the Best Solution:

- **Factors:** Factors engaged in selecting the best solution include the alignment with strategic goals, feasibility, cost-effectiveness, competitive advantage, customer value, long-term sustainability, and risk mitigation.
- **Stakeholders:** Stakeholders engaged in this activity may include business analysts, project sponsors, senior management, executive decision-makers, and stakeholders from different departments or business units.

QUESTION TWO

1. You are a business analyst addressing who will receive weekly business analysis status reports containing performance against actuals for your current project. Explain each of the tasks that needs to be completed. **(10)**

P | Solution Evaluation E1:

1. **Measuring solution performance** - This is done to determine the best way to evaluate the performance of the solution and includes assessing how it aligns with the enterprise objectives.
2. **Analyzing performance measures** - Examine the performance of solutions within the context of how much value they provide to the stakeholders + evaluating how well a solution meets organizational needs
3. **Assessing solution limitations** - Examine the solution(s) for issues that would hold them back from optimally meeting business needs
4. **Assessing organizational limitations** - Investigate issues, outside the solution scope, with the organization which hold it back from accessing the entire value presented by the various solutions being considered or employed
5. **Recommend actions to increase the solutions value** - identify and document actions the organization can take to increase the value that can be gleaned from a solution.

1. Discuss what technique might be used when determining the business analysis approach on a project? **(10)**

Business analysis can be approached in one of two ways:

- Adaptively
- Predictively
- An *Adaptive approach* which entails focusing on quick delivery of business value in short bursts but in return accepting more uncertainty with regards to the overall delivery of the solution. An adaptive approach is preferable when taking an **exploratory** approach to finding the most appropriate solution or when pursuing incremental improvement of an existing solution.
- A *Predictive approach* entails focusing on reducing upfront uncertainty. The solution must be defined before it is implemented in an effort to maximize control and minimize risk. A predictive approach is preferable at times when requirements can be clearly defined before implementation begins, or when it is difficult to engage with the stakeholders, or when it is far too risky to allow for an incorrect implementation.

A technique that could be used to determine the business analysis approach on a project is called *"Financial Analysis"*. Financial analysis entails assessing how different approaches (+ supporting delivery methods) affect the value provided.

1. When identifying business analysis performance improvements, what technique allows you to determine the metrics used for measuring performance and determining how those metrics may be tracked? **(10)**

The Balanced Scorecard

The Balanced Scorecard is a strategic performance management framework that helps organizations translate their overall strategy into specific objectives, measures, and initiatives across various perspectives. These perspectives typically include financial, customer, internal processes, and learning and growth.

Steps to identify business analysis performance improvements using the Balanced Scorecard approach steps:

- 1. Define objectives:** Define the key objectives related to business analysis performance. These objectives should align with the overall business strategy and consider various perspectives. For example, objectives might include improving customer satisfaction with analysis deliverables, or enhancing the quality of requirements documentation.
- 2. Identify metrics:** Once objectives have been defined, identify the specific metrics that will help measure progress towards those objectives.
- 3. Set Goals:** Set realistic + achievable metrics for your goals. These goals should reflect desired performance levels and should be aligned with the business objectives. For example, you might set a target of 90% customer satisfaction, or a maximum of five defects per requirements document.
- 4. Identify data sources & collection methods:** Select the sources where the data will be acquired and decide how it will be acquired. Do this for each measure. Achieving this may require utilizing pre-existent systems, conducting surveys, setting up automated tracking tools. Take into account the viability and affordability of data collection methods.
- 5. Implement tracking mechanisms:** Once you have determined the data sources and collection methods, establish the necessary tracking mechanisms to capture the required data. This could involve setting up data collection systems, creating dashboards or reports, or implementing regular data collection processes.
- 6. Monitor and analyze performance:** Continuously monitor and analyze the collected data to assess performance against the defined metrics and targets. Regularly review the results, identify trends, and take corrective actions if needed to improve performance.

QUESTION THREE

1. According to the case study what output contains the results of the business analyst assessing the capability gaps between existing and new capabilities of the organization? **(10)**

The case study doesn't explicitly mention the output that contains the results of the capability gaps assessment. The case study focuses on the organization's goals and objectives in relation to the green initiative development.

The proposed solution to 'conserve 20 percent of the current energy and water resource consumption within the next 18 months' can be taken to be one of the outcomes of the capability assessment gap. During a capability gap assessment it can be found that the organization is extremely well equipped to implement the solution.

A capability gap assessment is done to identify where the organization currently is vs where it needs to be.

1. When analyzing the current state, the business analyst looks at the scope of decision making at different levels in the organization. Explain what elements of the current state are they looking at? **(10)**

When analyzing the current state, the analyst looks at various elements related to the scope of decision making at different levels in the organization. Some of the elements they may consider include:

- 1. Organizational Structure:** The business analyst examines the existing organizational structure to understand how decisions are currently made + the levels of authority and responsibility within the organization. Includes identifying the different departments, teams, and their reporting relationships.
- 2. Decision-Making Processes:** The analyst assesses the current decision-making processes in the organization. This entails understanding how decisions are made, who is involved in the decision-making process, and the level of involvement and empowerment at each level. They may also look at any existing frameworks, procedures, or guidelines that govern decision making.
- 3. Roles and Responsibilities:** The analyst examines the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders involved in decision making. This entails understanding the responsibilities of executives, managers, and employees in terms of decision making and their decision-making authority.
- 4. Communication Channels:** The business analyst looks at the existing communication channels and flow of information within the organization. This involves identifying how information is shared, who has access to information, and how decisions are communicated across different levels.
- 5. Decision-Making Culture:** The analyst assesses the prevailing decision-making culture within the organization. This includes understanding the organization's attitudes towards risk-taking, collaboration, and innovation, as well as any barriers or challenges that impact decision making.

1. Which business analysis technique allows the business analyst to leverage existing materials to analyze the current state of

the enterprise relative to a business need? **(10)**

Technique - Document Analysis

Document Analysis requires reviewing existing documentation. Documentation such as business plans, process flows, procedures, reports etc. The documents are reviewed as part of the process of crafting an understanding of an organizations current state. Analyzing these materials should reveal gaps, issues and oppoportunities related to the business need being addressed.

During the Document Analysis process relevant information is often sought after, such as business rules, requirements, key performance indicators, and organizational structures. The accuracy, completeness and relevance of the documents is examined to determine how much they align with the business need.

Document Analysis is a valued technique because it encourages the analyst to leverage existing organizational knowledge. This provides insight(s) into the current practices, processes, and systems. Doing this helps identify locations that need improvement or transformation to attain organizational goals.

****References:****

BABOK Guide v3

CBAP CCBA Certified Business Analysis Study Guide