

Analyst roles (Part 3)

In the first part and second part, we covered the foundation layer of the vast and multifaceted field of analytics & the spectrum of analyst job titles crucial for those looking to forge a career in this dynamic and ever-evolving field, respectively.

In the last edition, we'll explore how these roles evolve as professionals advance within the organisational hierarchy, highlighting the changing responsibilities, required skills, and strategic impact at each level.

(Read the previous parts before this one. Available in our hiring community. Join the community to get access.)

Entry level Analyst

(**Typical titles:** Junior Analyst, Analyst I, Data Analyst (entry), Research Analyst.)

Responsibilities and Focus :

- Collecting data from various sources, cleaning and validating.
- Performing routine analyses: summarising, creating basic reports or dashboards.
- Learning tools and techniques (e.g., SQL, spreadsheet modelling, basic visualisation).
- Supporting more senior analysts or teams: assisting in projects, perhaps doing parts of the analysis.

Skill Emphasis :

- Technical foundations: data manipulation, basic statistics, and reporting.
- Attention to detail; ability to follow instructions and deliver on tasks.
- Communication of findings (though usually to peers or direct team, less strategic).

Strategic Impact :

Impact is relatively limited. The focus is on execution rather than strategy, ensuring data is available and correctly analysed so that further decisions can be made by more senior folks.

The role is more about building credibility, learning the domain and the data, than shaping high-level decisions.

Mid level Analyst

(**Typical titles:** Analyst (standard), Senior Analyst (lower tier), Data Analyst II, Business Analyst (when moving beyond purely technical))

Responsibilities and Focus :

- Independently designing and executing analyses: modelling, trend identification, scenario analysis.
- Translating analytical outputs into insights & recommendations (not just "what the numbers are" but "what they mean for the business").
- Collaborating with cross-functional teams (e.g., business, operations, marketing) and presenting findings to stakeholders.
- Possibly managing smaller projects or parts of larger projects; beginning to lead efforts rather than just assisting.

Skill Emphasis :

- Stronger statistical/analytical skills, more advanced tools (predictive models maybe), better visualisation and storytelling.
- Business acumen: understanding how the analysis ties into business goals, being able to frame the "so what?" of the data.
- Stakeholder communication: presenting to non-technical audiences, making recommendations.

Strategic Impact :

The analyst begins to influence decisions, suggest improvements, and shape how business problems are addressed.

They might be expected to support strategy rather than just operations; their work has a more visible impact.

Senior Analyst / Lead Analyst

(**Typical titles:** Senior Analyst, Lead Analyst, Principal Analyst.)

Responsibilities and Focus :

- Leading major analytical initiatives: large projects, enterprise-level analyses, strategic business questions.
- Setting analytical frameworks, methodologies, ensuring quality of analysis across junior/mid colleagues.
- Engaging with senior management: presenting strategic insights, participating in decision-making forums.

- Mentoring and guiding others: coaching junior analysts, defining best practices in analysis.

Skill Emphasis :

- Leadership & people-management skills: hiring, mentoring, performance management.
- Strategic planning: aligning analytics with organisational goals, building roadmaps.
- Project/portfolio management: managing multiple analysis projects, ensuring delivery, and keeping quality.
- Advanced domain knowledge + ability to communicate across business functions.

Strategic Impact :

The impact is very high: The analytics function itself becomes a strategic asset. The manager leads how it is leveraged, ensures analytics drives competitive advantage, and that insights translate into action.

The role is less hands-on on actual analysis (though many still do some) and more about enabling others and shaping how analysis is used.

Director / Executive Level

(**Typical titles:** Director of Analytics, VP of Analytics, Chief Data Officer (CDO) in some cases.)

Responsibilities and Focus :

- Setting enterprise-wide data & analytics strategy: how data is collected, governed, analysed, and used across the organisation.
- Owning major decisions: investments in data platforms, analytical capabilities, big-picture use of data (e.g., data as an asset).
- Stakeholder management at the highest levels: board, C-suite, shaping business strategy via data.
- Governance, policy, culture: ensuring data quality, compliance, ethical use of data, driving culture change toward data-driven decision-making.

Skill Emphasis :

- Executive leadership: vision, change management, and influencing the entire organisation.
- Strategic foresight: understanding industry trends, data/analytics technology evolution, business model transformation.
- Governance & risk: data privacy, regulation, architecture, scalability of analytics across business units.
- Business/financial acumen: ability to tie analytics investments to business returns and align with corporate strategy.

Strategic Impact :

They're the ones shaping how the organisation uses data and analytics to compete, operate, and innovate. This role often determines whether data becomes a core part of business value or remains a supportive function.

The difference between leading analytics well vs poorly at this level can significantly affect the organisation's direction, agility and competitive edge.

Summary Table

Seniority Level	Typical Titles	Key Shift in Responsibilities	Skills Added/Enhanced	Strategic Impact
Entry Level	Junior Analyst, Analyst I	Data gathering → basic analysis	Technical basics, attention to detail	Execution support
Mid level	Analyst, Data Analyst II	Independent analysis → providing insights	Advanced analytics + business context	Informing decisions
Senior / Lead Analyst	Senior Analyst, Lead Analyst	Leading analysis → shaping frameworks	Domain expertise, mentoring, stakeholder-lead	Strategic influence
Manager / Lead	Analytics Manager, Principal Analyst	Managing people/projects → building analytics function	Leadership, strategic planning, portfolio management	Driving analytics as a business capability
Director / Executive	Director of Analytics, CDO	Ownership of analytics strategy & data asset	Executive leadership, governance, business transformation	Analytics embedded at the enterprise level