



Analyst roles (Part 2)

In the previous part, we only covered the foundation layer of the vast and multifaceted field of analytics.

In this part, we'll cover the spectrum of analyst job titles crucial for those looking to forge a career in this dynamic and ever-evolving field.

Types of Analyst Roles

1. Data Analysts :

What they focus on: Works with large datasets; collects, cleans, processes data; finds trends & patterns; makes reports to help business decisions.

Special skills or knowledge: Strong in data tools (SQL, spreadsheets, maybe Python/R), data cleaning, visualisation, statistics; ability to explain findings simply.

2. Business Analyst :

What they focus on: More about business processes & systems: understand company operations; find inefficiencies; propose improvements; act as a bridge between business stakeholders and tech/IT.

Special skills or knowledge: Skills in process modelling, requirement gathering, stakeholder communication, understanding business operations, sometimes domain-knowledge (e.g. in marketing, supply chain). Less raw statistical modelling, maybe.

3. Financial Analyst :

What they focus on: Evaluates businesses, investments, or projects from a financial perspective; looks at profitability, risks; helps with forecasting & financial planning.

Special skills or knowledge: Good with finance/accounting fundamentals, financial modelling, understanding markets or corporate finance; often need to interpret financial statements; maybe risk analysis.

4. Market Research Analyst :

What they focus on: Studies market conditions: what customers need or want; how products might sell; competitor behaviour; helps with pricing, targeting, and product decisions.

Special skills or knowledge: Skills in survey/ data collection, consumer behaviour, statistics, qualitative research, maybe tools for market segmentation; more external focus (on customers, market) vs internal operations.

5. Operations Analyst :

What they focus on: Looks inward at how a company works: production, workflows, supply chain, internal efficiency; finds bottlenecks, cost leaks; optimises operations.

Special skills or knowledge: Knowledge of operations/process improvement, sometimes logistics; tools for process mapping; understanding of how different parts of the organisation interconnect; may need quantitative skills plus project management.

6. Quantitative Analyst ("Quant") :

What they focus on: Very technical; uses advanced mathematical/statistical models; often in finance; works on risk, pricing, algorithmic decisions; dealing with complex math, predictive models.

Special skills or knowledge: Deep math or statistics, probability, perhaps knowledge of financial instruments; programming/modelling; often very quantitative; less about business-process or market behaviour (unless specialised).

Similar Roles That Are Actually Different

Pair / Group	Why do they seem similar	Key Differences
Data Analyst vs Business Analyst	Both deal with data, and both help decision making.	A Data Analyst is more focused on the numbers : data cleaning, analysis, and visualisation. Business Analyst is more focused on processes & stakeholders : how things are done, what systems are used, aligning tech/business, specifying requirements. BA often has to translate between business and tech.
Financial Analyst vs Quantitative Analyst	Both may work with numbers, models, risk, etc.	Quantitative Analyst is much more technical/math-heavy and often focused on modelling, algorithms, probability, etc. A Financial Analyst might do forecasting and financial planning, but not always build complex models or do advanced statistics.
Market Research Analyst vs Business Analyst	Both look at "what to do next", and both may gather data.	Market Research is externally focused: customers, market demand, and competitors. Business Analyst is more internally focused: processes, operations, systems. The methods may differ (surveys, consumer insights vs internal process mapping).
Operations Analyst vs Data Analyst	Both might analyse data and identify trends.	Operations Analyst is specifically about optimising internal workflows/processes/supply chain, etc. A Data Analyst could be anywhere (marketing, product, finance) and is more general: just finding insights from data, whatever the domain.

Roles Slightly Outside “Analyst” but related (/ Likely Confused)

These are not exactly “analyst” but are often confused or seen as alternatives:

1. Data Scientist :

Uses more predictive modelling, machine learning, big data; often more technical/statistical than many analyst roles.

2. Business Intelligence (BI) Developer :

Builds tools/dashboards/reports; focuses on making data usable for others; more development of analytics infrastructure.

3. Management Consultant :

Gives advice on business problems, strategy; may use analytics but is more external, broader in scope; less about maintaining internal data pipelines, more about delivering solutions / recommendations.

4. Operations Research Analyst :

More mathematical / optimisation methods applied to operations/supply chain; often more specialised in methods.

What's in part 3?

In the next part (last), 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.