I completed Analytics and Business Intelligence program at IIMB in 2019. This is a one-year program which is pretty involved. It starts with fundamentals of Statistics, and covers advanced topics including Deep learning and Reinforcement learning. The program is pretty comprehensive and well thought out and is useful for people who want to move into Analytics field, or would like to advance their career in Analytics.

The course is focussed on concepts rather than tools or Operationalization of Analytics. It does not cover Cloud Platforms either. For more information about the course visit <https://iimb.ac.in/eep/product/259/Business-Analytics-Intelligence>

Coming from Data background, my primary objective of taking the course was to get myself familiarized with Data Science, ML and DL, and get some hands-on experience in Python, R and other popular tools in advanced analytics.

Of course, I did realize that the course would not equip me with everything that is required to jump start an analytics career. However, it was a good place to start with, and given my experience in Data Engineering, the course was a nice complement to my existing skill set. The course helped me switch job and move into Head of Analytics role, which was one of my key objectives, and it was fulfilling to have found a new job while still doing the course

6 months into my new job, I realized that real-life challenges are not really about Data Science, Algorithms or selection of models. I noted that i could not simply put my knowledge and skillsets gained during the period of the Course to use.

My first challenge was to get Data. Sourcing, Profiling, Curating, Storing and then Governing data was my first challenge. This took nearly an year to sort out. Organizations go through Analytics journey in phases. First phase is the Data Phase - Consolidating Organizational level data into a central repository, Second Phase is BI: Doing basic descriptive Analytics, and Business intelligence to help in decision making, and monitoring KPIs. Third phase: Advanced Analytics: Predictive Analytics, Prescriptive Analytics and Final Phase where Data, BI and Advanced Analytics are seamlessly integrated and a stable platform is established, and robust delivery processes such as MLOps are established.

I found myself at the beginning of Phase 1 of the journey, but my course was relevant to Phase 3 or 4. The challenge was how to leverage my skill sets in the present scenario? I suppose many of my batch mates found themselves in similar situations. And in general a large number of organizations are in early stages of their analytics journey where the focus tends to be on Data and BI. And fair enough because these are low hanging fruits, and provide highest value to the organizations.

So, what now? I had two options - just focus on Data and BI only, and take up advanced analytics at a later time when both Data and BI are in stable state, and advanced. This would mean that there will be no advanced analytics project for next 2 - 3 years. The other option is to take baby-steps in advanced analytics while accelerating data and BI improvements. This will then take couple of years by which time Advanced Analytics practiced would have matured to a certain level. So, I hired a Data Scientist and set up a basic windows server with R, and Python installed in it. Data Scientists were now able to analyse data, and build basic models.

In my next blog, i will talk about how did things go? What went right and what went wrong? What are some of the things we should have done upfront before setting up Analytics practice etc.