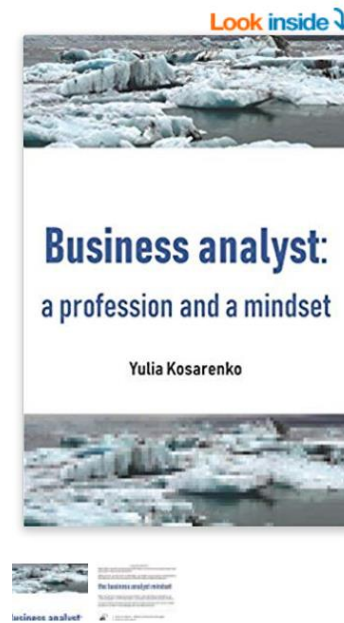# The art and science of managing stakeholders

Yulia Kosarenko

January 15, 2020

Based on the concepts from the book

"Business analyst: a profession and a mindset".

Look inside ↓

Business analyst: a profession and a mindset Paperback – May 6, 2019

by Yulia Kosarenko ˅ (Author)

★★★★★ ˅ 2 ratings

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What does it mean to be a business analyst? What would you do every day? How will you bring value to your clients? And most importantly, what makes a business analyst exceptional?This book will answer your questions about this challenging career choice through the prism of the business analyst mindset — a concept developed by the author, and its twelve principles demonstrated through many case study examples."Business analyst: a profession and a mindset" is a structurally rich read with over 90 figures, tables and models . It offers you more than just techniques and methodologies. It encourages you to understand people and their behaviour as the key to solving business problems.

What's the big deal about managing stakeholders?

To them I'm just an IT guy who is there to take notes

They tell me not to solution things, but I'm the only one who understands what business wants

The PM tells me I'm too detailed and that analysis is taking too long. But the developer tells me the requirements are too high-level

I feel like one of my stakeholder groups is doing everything they can to slow the project down

Why didn't they tell me earlier about this?

Why won't they review the requirements? How do I know if what I captured makes sense?

I'm automatically expected to take notes at every meeting I attend

I keep hearing "just write what we say, you are not really expected to understand".

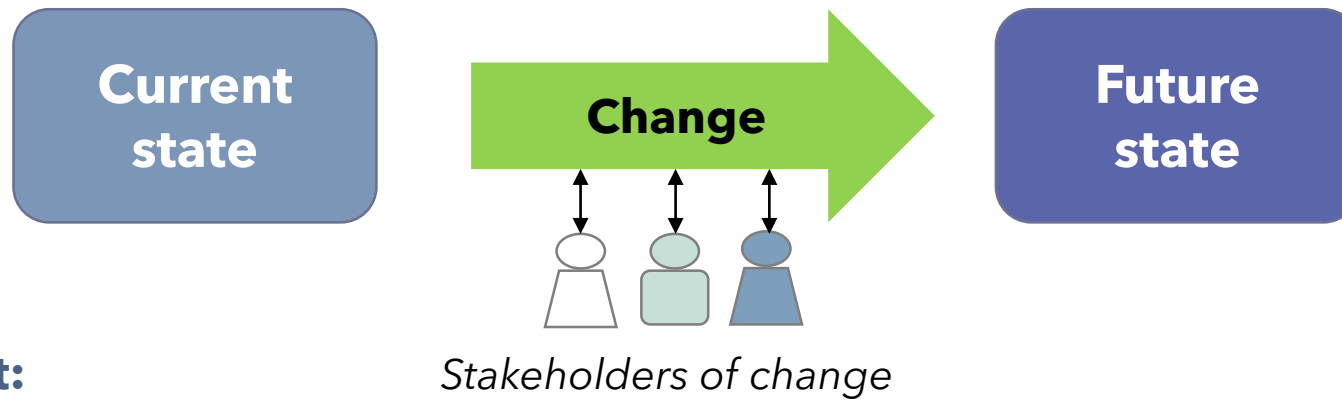My key business SME keeps skipping requirements sessions

Are you ready to deal with:

Stakeholder resistance

Distrust

Lack of support

Misplaced expectations about the business analyst role

Who are the stakeholders?

Current state	Change →	Future state

Stakeholders of change

Business analyst:

- Analyses current state and the business problem that needs to be solved

- Determines future state that will satisfy the needs of the business

- Determines **what** needs to change to achieve future state

- The details of the "**what**" become business requirements

Stakeholders of Change: anyone who is involved in change, influences it or is impacted by change

Discovering stakeholders of change

Who asked for the change?

Who needs the change? Who will benefit from it?

Who will have to do more work? Less work?

Who will have to change how they work today?
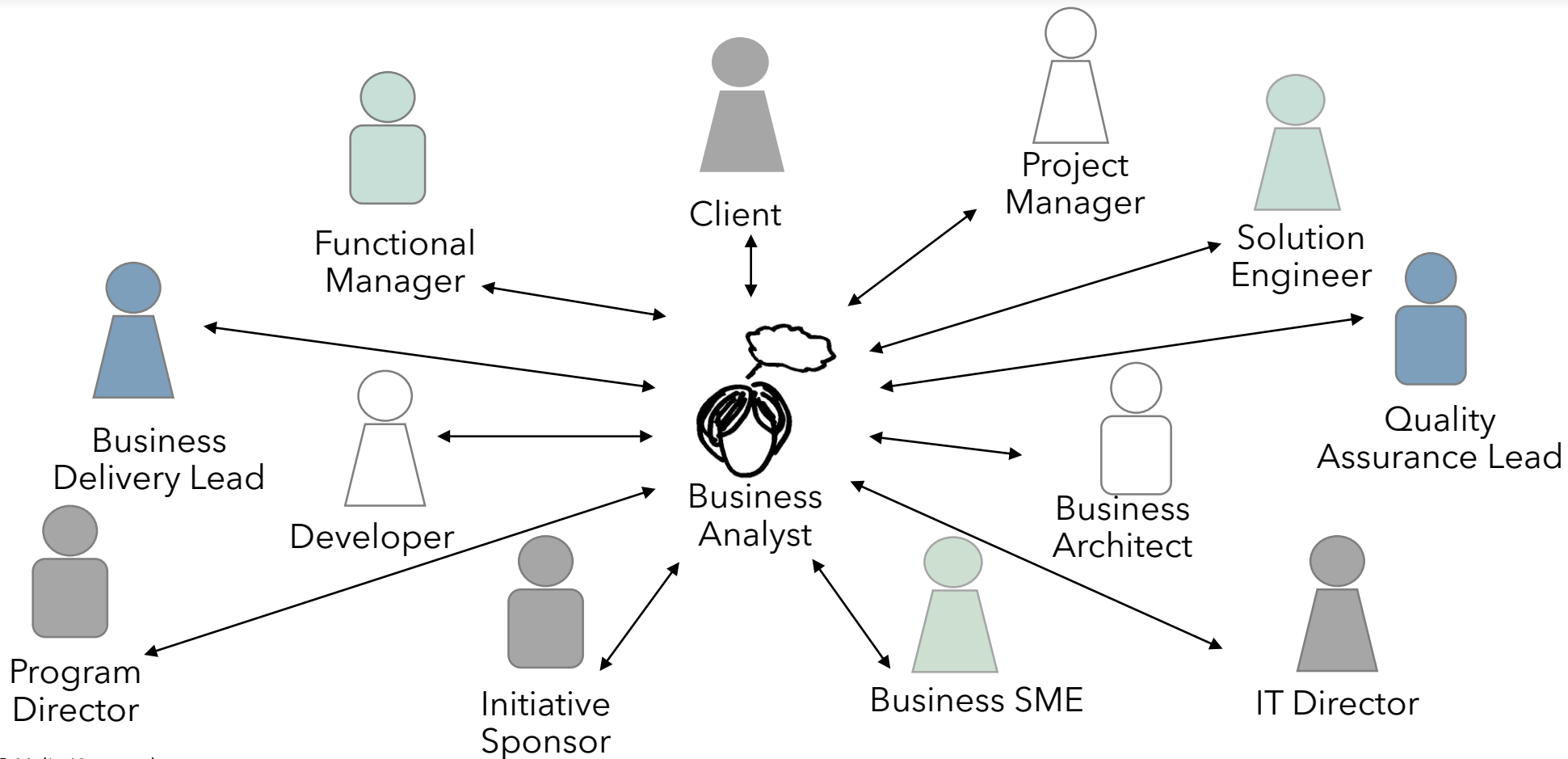
Who is responsible for the success of the initiative?

Who is accountable for complying with applicable rules and regulations?

Who will influence the acceptance of the proposed changes?

Who is accountable for implementing the change?

Who carries the risk if the change fails?

Stakeholder circle

Functional Manager

Client

Project Manager

Solution Engineer

Business Delivery Lead

Developer

Business Analyst

Business Architect

Quality Assurance Lead

Program Director

Initiative Sponsor

Business SME

IT Director

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Stakeholders classified

Business	Solution
External business stakeholders Regulators Customers Partners Distributors Agents	**External solution stakeholders** Solution vendors Consultants Service providers
Internal business stakeholders Business owner Users Line managers SMEs Organizational units	**Internal solution stakeholders** Architect Business analyst Project manager Tester Scrum master Developer Release manager Trainer

(Row labels: External, Internal)

Business analysis...

...is a social activity:

- Requires collaboration
- Depends on other people

Why isn't it easy?

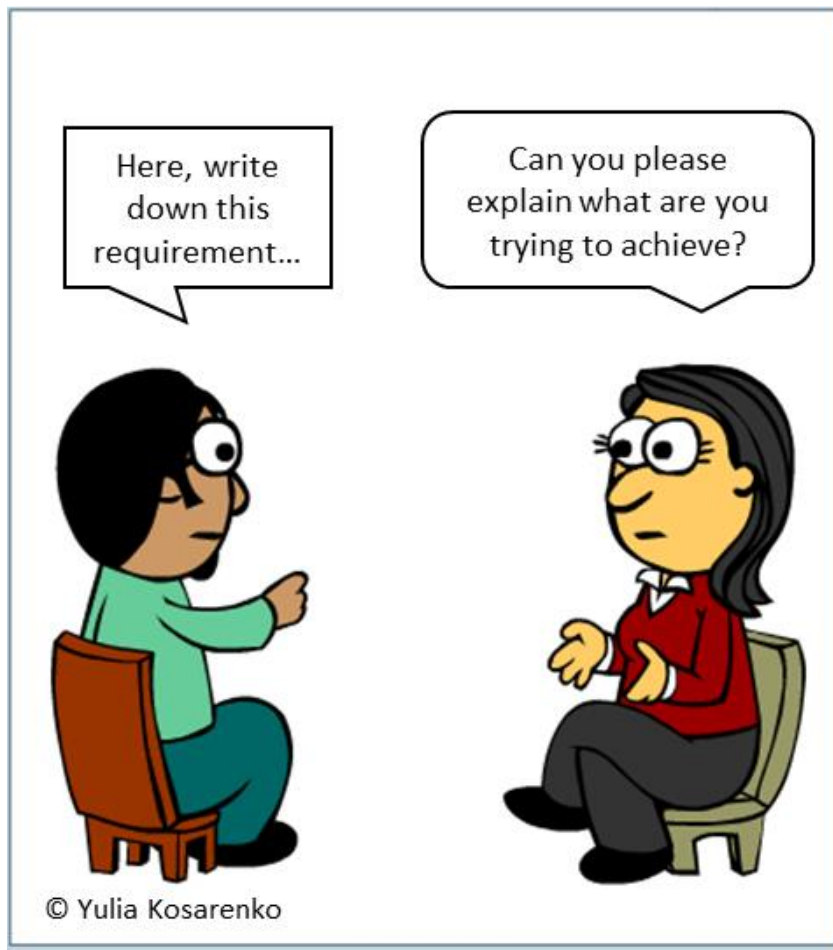|	Business	Solution
External	**External business stakeholders** Regulators Customers Partners Distributors Agents	**External solution stakeholders** Solution vendors Consultants Service providers
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Business stakeholders :

- Have never worked with a business analyst before

- Have never been on a project team

- Have been on other projects that were managed badly or failed

- Have provided requirements to another analyst before and found the information misrepresented and lost in translation

- Don't want to see their process of job automated

- Think that all big projects are a waste of time

- Be involved in a high priority activity that they believe takes priority

- Expect that "IT should know what to do"

- Think that business analysis is "just documentation"
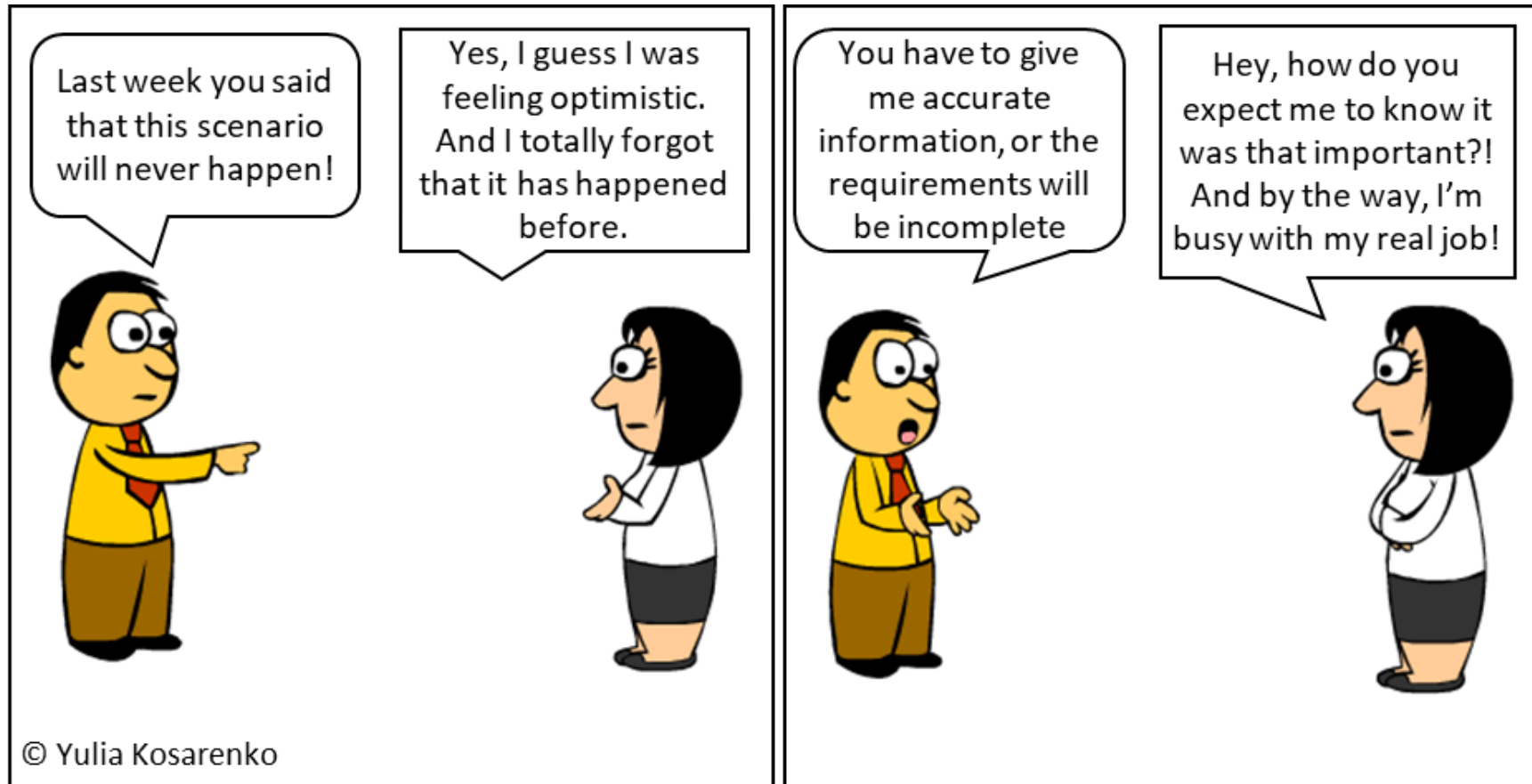
Has this ever happened to you?

Does this ring any bells?

Why isn't it easy?

	Business	Solution
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Solution stakeholders:

- Be impatient and just want to get on with development

- Have prior experience where requirements were poor or changed too frequently

- Be under a lot of pressure to deliver

- Have made promises to executive sponsors too early

- Think that "agile" means that requirements are not necessary

- Be motivated by the "times and materials" contract to maximize their profits

- Be interested in creating a larger need for their services in future

You may sometimes
feel like this.
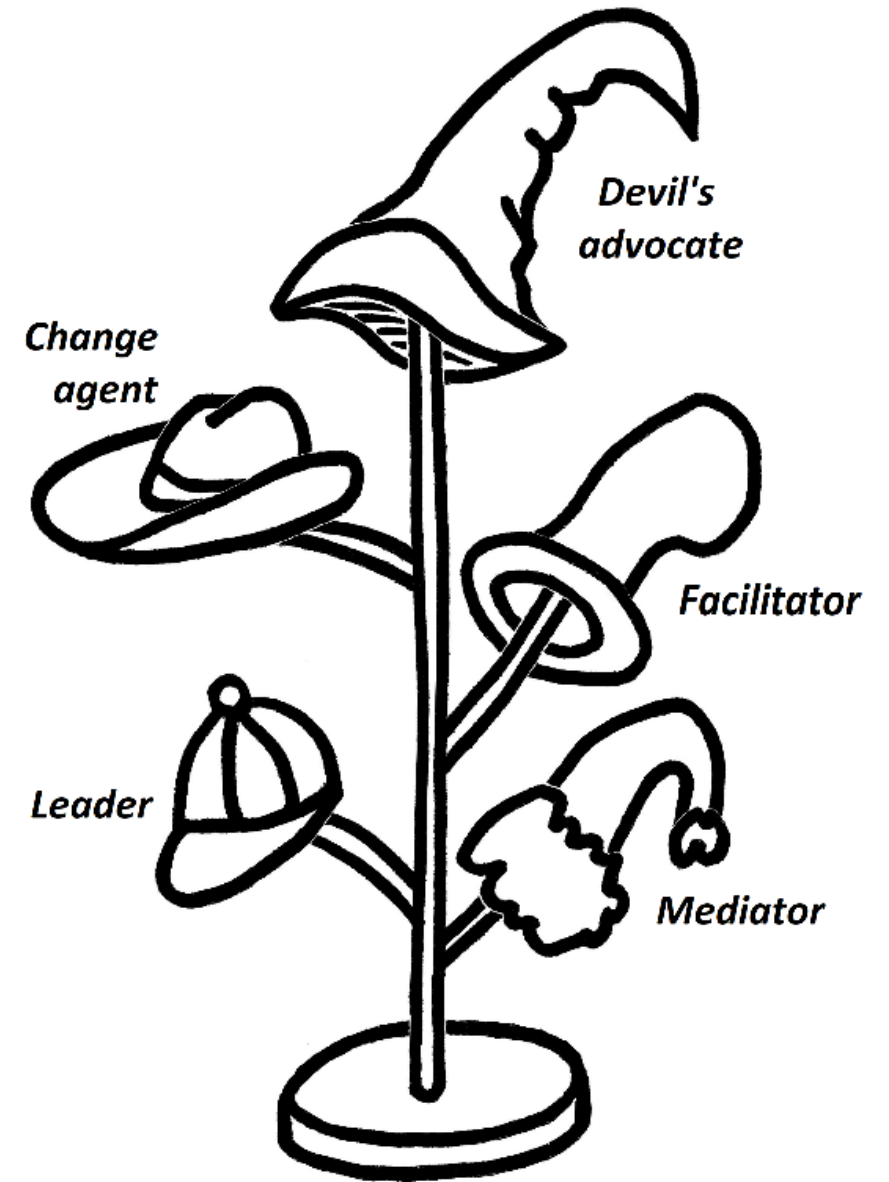But you are not alone

How do you:

Build trust

Overcome resistance

Get support

Manage expectations about your role as business analyst
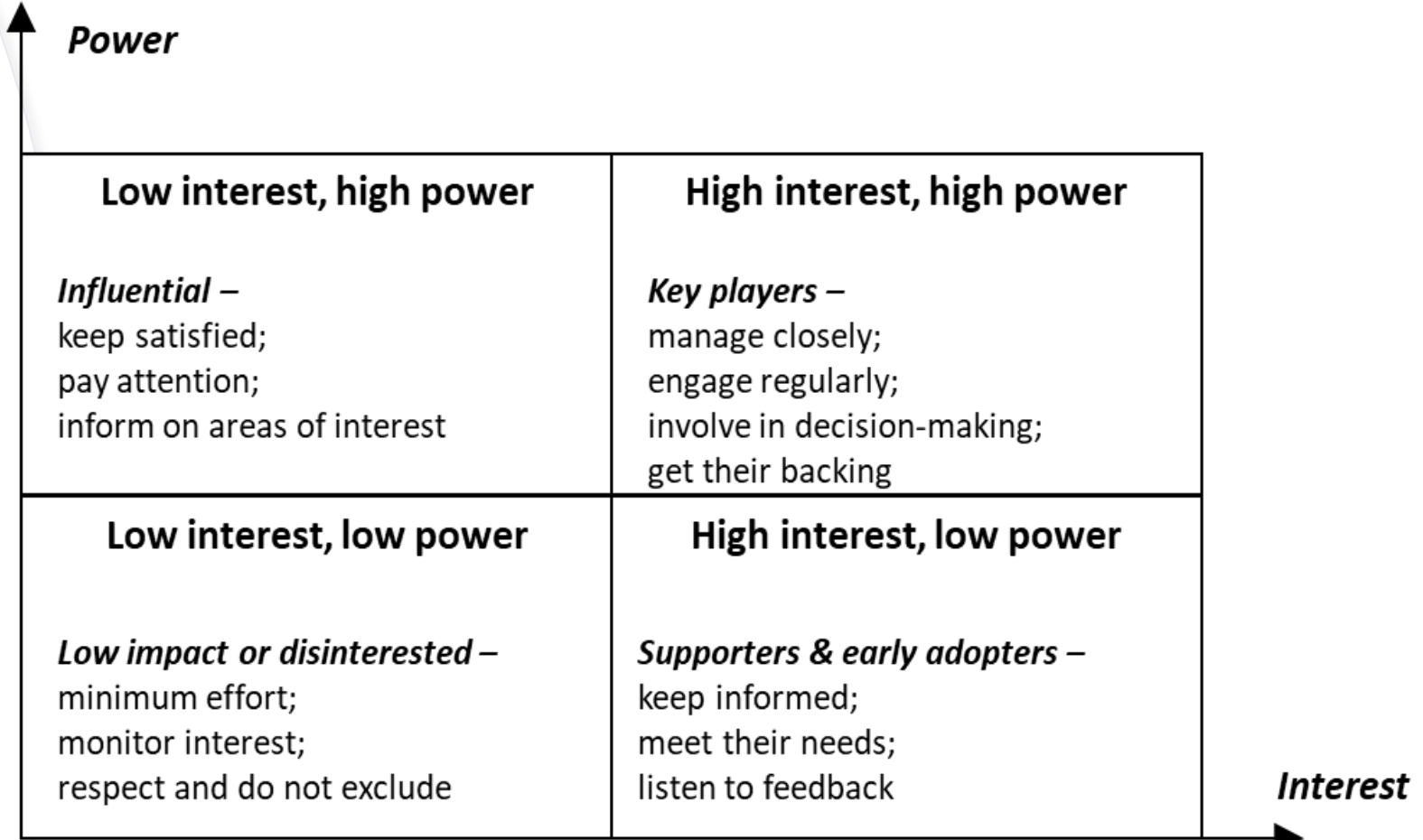
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Wear many hats

- Constantly manage relationships
- Play the intermediary
- Be a diplomat
- Subtly lead those that are much more senior
- Influence without criticism
- Listen with empathy
- Broach and deal with sensitive issues
- Sometimes deliver bad news

Analyze stakeholder needs

What you can get from them →

Power

Low interest, high power	High interest, high power
Influential – keep satisfied; pay attention; inform on areas of interest	*Key players –* manage closely; engage regularly; involve in decision-making; get their backing
Low interest, low power	High interest, low power
Low impact or disinterested – minimum effort; monitor interest; respect and do not exclude	*Supporters & early adopters –* keep informed; meet their needs; listen to feedback

Interest

What they need ↑

Manage interactions

Facilitate meetings

Lead diverse groups of people

Listen a lot

Ask many questions

Explain difficult points many times, many ways

Tailor communication to a variety of audiences

Speak and write very concise or very detailed, as needed

Resolve conflicts

Share and communicate

Power

| Low interest, high power	High interest, high power
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Interest

Meetings and walkthroughs

Presentations and reports

Email updates, alerts and notifications

Online communities and shared repositories
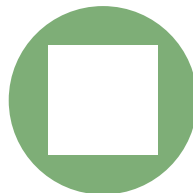
Demonstrations

Personal contacts

Apply business analyst mindset

1. Focus on business – calibrate solutions to business goals

2. Solve the right problem

3. Question everything

4. **Lead and facilitate**

5. Analysis before synthesis; information before requirements

6. Uncover gaps – do not cover them up

7. Simplify until nothing can be removed

8. **Take responsibility for shared understanding of business requirements**

9. Accept and embrace business change

10. Be part of the solution

11. **Expect human behavior from human beings**

12. Learn, adapt and thrive

Be accountable for your deliverables

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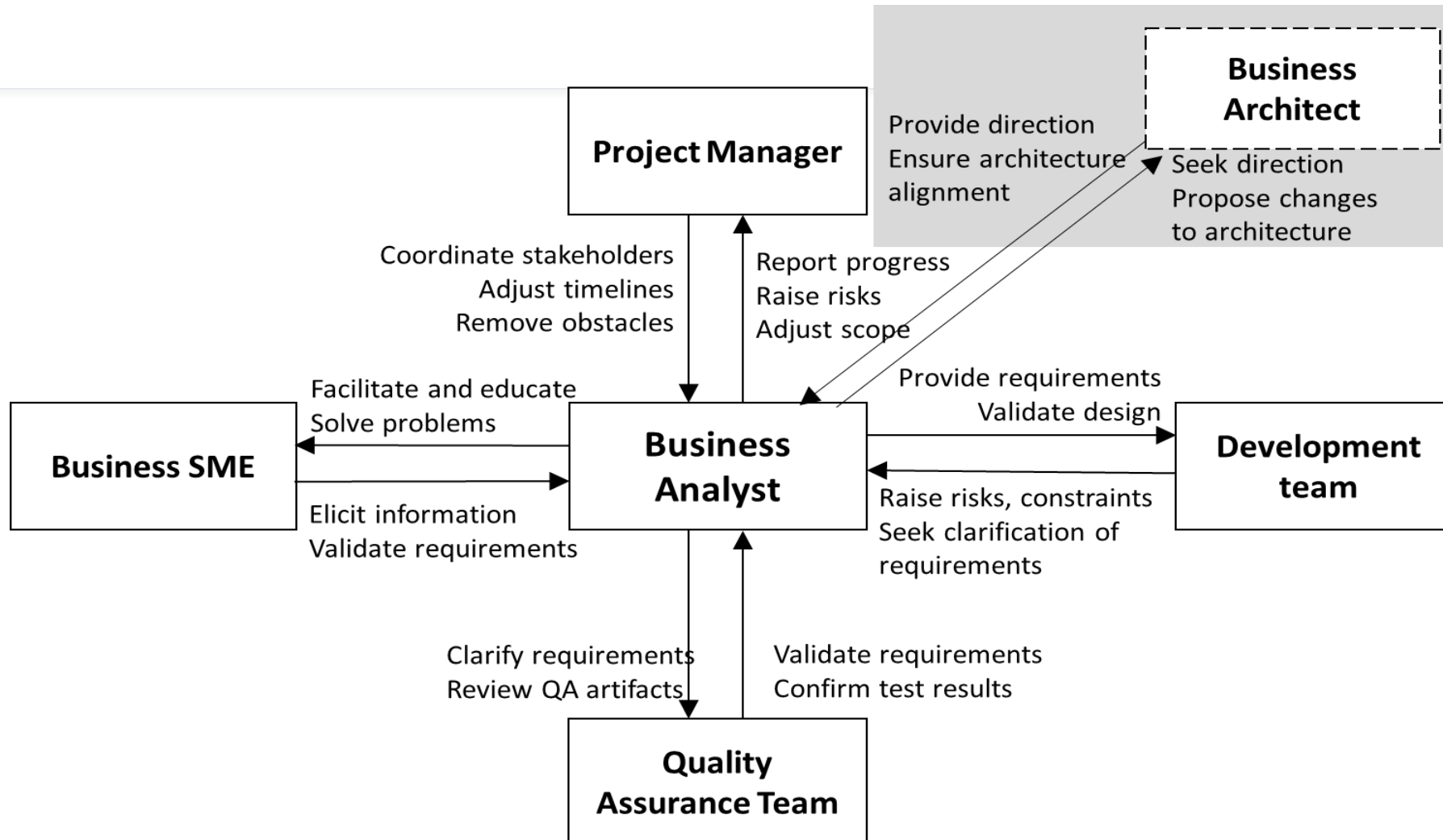
Do

Wear many hats

Understand stakeholder needs

Manage interactions

Share and communicate

Use your business analyst mindset

Be accountable for your deliverables

Don't

Miss or ignore stakeholders

Make assumptions about what they need

Focus on impressing others and sounding smart

Take over the ownership of requirements

Avoid accountability

Forget that you are dealing with human beings

Do

Respect stakeholder needs

Don't

Forget who is your client

It pays off to work on relationships

About

Yulia has spent most of her career alternating between IT and business engagements, with more than 15 years as a senior business analyst and business systems analyst, before changing focus to business architecture. She has worked in many industries, including transportation and logistics, insurance, education, energy, pensions and payments. Yulia has managed teams of business analysts and architects, as well as cross-functional project teams.

Yulia's passion for business analysis culminates in her recently published book, "Business analyst: a profession and a mindset". She likes to blog about business analysis, architecture and change management on her blog https://why-change.com and has recently recorded a podcast with the BA Academy's Voices of the Community about the value of the business analyst mindset. In her spare time she mentors business analysts and works on a new college course on business analytics.

Yulia holds a degree in Computer Science and Math from the Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv, as well as ScrumMaster, SixSigma and Pega Business Architect designations and an Advanced Certificate in Business Analysis from McMaster University.
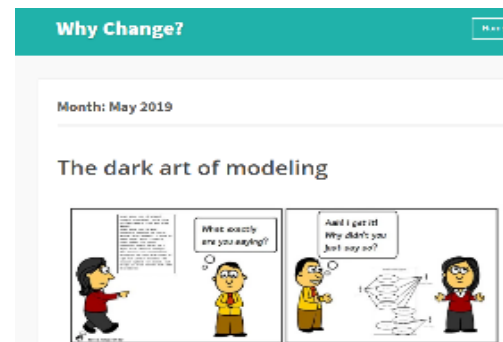
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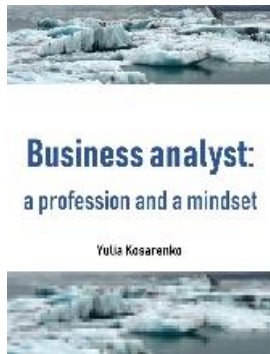
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https://why-change.com
Articles on business analysis,
architecture and managing
change

Voice of the Community
(VOC) podcast
Episode 1 - The Business
Analyst Mindset

Thank you for this hour from your life.

I hope it was time well spent.

Until next time!