6 business analyst resume tips

Fruhlinger, Josh . CIO ; Framingham (Nov 18, 2021).

🔗 ProQuest document link

ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

[Discover the 5 essential traits of elite business analysts and the top business analyst certifications that can help advance your career. | Deliver deep insights with the 7 keys to a successful business intelligence strategy and find out why you're failing at business intelligence. | Get the latest business intelligence and IT strategy analysis by signing up for our newsletters.] 1. Diane Davidson, owner of Clever Fox Advisory, agrees with this project-oriented approach. [...]she structures each project on her resume using what she calls the VAR (vision, action, result) format: * Vision: "The desired goal of the initiative." * Action: "The role that I played in the project." * Result: "This is the outcome of the project, and the most critical part. [...]it's not just your results that can (and should) be quantified on your resume, says Kirschbaum; it's everything that led up to them as well. [...]you should be digging deep into everything you've done to make it clear what you know how to use and what you'll be ready to do by day one.

FULL TEXT

Maybe you're interested in a job as a business analyst (BA), using data analytics to bridge the gap between IT and business. Maybe you've already got a BA gig but are looking for greener pastures —or a higher salary. To get your job search really underway, you need to get your resume together, so your LinkedIn profile and the email you're about to send to your future boss puts your best foot forward.

We've given you resume advice before. But after speaking to a number of current and former business analysts, as well as career specialists and those who work with (and hire!) BAs regularly, we came away with some tips tailored for business analysts.

[Discover the 5 essential traits of elite business analysts and the top business analyst certifications that can help advance your career. | Deliver deep insights with the 7 keys to a successful business intelligence strategy and find out why you're failing at business intelligence. | Get the latest business intelligence and IT strategy analysis by signing up for our newsletters.]

1. Target your resume

One of the oldest cliches in the book is to "dress for the job you want, not the one you have." When looking for a job, your resume is the outfit you're showing off to potential employers —and you need to match their sense of fashion. As Courtney Kirschbaum, a corporate career strategist who specializes in preparing corporate professionals for career pivots and upward career transitions, puts it: "A resume is written for the reader, not the candidate."

"Pay attention to the job requirements that you are applying for," says Dr. Maria Mirzaei, a career and leadership consultant who started her career as a business analyst, "and make sure it's in alignment with the job description. If they want a more technical business analyst, then highlight your technical skills. If they are more interested in a business-oriented BA, then elaborate on your industry knowledge —and use language that demonstrates your deep understanding of their industry."

Kirschbaum is even blunter about tailoring a resume for the specific job you're applying for: "Your reader will not respond to what you write unless they see their own words on the page or the LinkedIn profile." She's seen plenty of resumes and knows that far too many are nowhere near specific enough.

"The advice I would give any business analyst who is serious about their career: Don't load your resume and

LinkedIn with catchphrases like 'highly motivated self-starter and team player' or 'proven servant leader who helps organizations with transformation,'" she says. "They don't work, and they communicate that you have no idea how you add value or how to say how you add value."

2. Use projects as the building blocks

While it may not seem intuitive or comfortable at first, the best way to be ready for a career pivot is to document what you're doing now so you can brag about it later. For a business analyst, that means keeping track of specific projects to which you've contributed, not just maintaining a list of employers.

"Diarizing your accomplishments and creating a thorough portfolio of the results you've helped deliver is one of the best things you can do to ensure your resume is the best it can be," says Zoë Morris, president of Mason Frank International. "Keeping this achievement log up to date should be a weekly exercise —you should see it as a touchstone rather than a chore. It's easy to forget projects and the achievements that resulted from them, so keeping a record is extremely important."

Having material to draw from makes it easier to focus your resume for each job opening. "Charting your wins means you can see your own growth and personal strengths as you go, making it much easier for you to pull out the most relevant skills when customizing your resume for a particular business analyst role," says Morris.

Diane Davidson, owner of Clever Fox Advisory, agrees with this project-oriented approach. Moreover, she structures each project on her resume using what she calls the VAR (vision, action, result) format:

* Vision: "The desired goal of the initiative."
* Action: "The role that I played in the project."
* Result: "This is the outcome of the project, and the most critical part. I always try to tie the benefit to a dollar value or other metric."

Davidson shared a bullet point from her own resume to demonstrate what the VAR format looks like practice:

Continuous improvement manager leading the process improvement initiatives related to the centrally managed procurement (CMP) process and virtual legal entity strategy. Provided recommendations to unlock trapped value in the CMP process to achieve the benefits realization schedule of $7 million for Q3/Q4. Transitioned to the deployment lead responsible for managing the Performance Improvement team to address operational and systematic issues.

3. Use numbers for context and storytelling

Other experts we spoke to agreed with Davidson that numbers are important. As a business analyst, part of your job will be nailing down the numbers that illuminate the outcomes of business processes, so it's all the more important that you show those results on your resume.

"If your efforts improved certain measurables, percentages, and revenues, or saved time, make sure you list these numbers," says Matt Collingwood, managing director at VIQU. "These tangible successes make your experience stand out."

In fact, it's not just your results that can (and should) be quantified on your resume, says Kirschbaum; it's everything that led up to them as well. "Get the budget for every project," she says. "Count the team members and vendors you worked with or supervised. How large was the company you worked for? How many employees did they have? What is their market value? All these matter."

4. Show your process, and your tools

Anything that showcases on your resume how you delivered results can only help you. "While nearly all resume-writing articles agree that showing results on your resume are critical, explaining how these results were achieved is frequently the differentiator," says Alan Jacobson, chief data and analytic officer at Alteryx. "A candidate who knows how to re-engineer a process, leverage analytics and process automation techniques, with the ability to execute in a data-driven manner is incredibly important to most organizations."

Explaining the *how* can also give other items on your resume extra weight and authority. "Almost every applicant will say they are advanced in things like Excel or Python," says Lindsay Francis, a business analyst in the publishing industry in New York City. "But are they really? Maybe, but maybe not. Be sure to specify how you use

such programs and describe the results you produce."

In fact, you should be digging deep into everything you've done to make it clear what you know how to use and what you'll be ready to do by day one. Anton Derkach, delivery manager of Intellectsoft, says that tech leaders involved in the hiring process will particularly want this information. "It would be great to specify what artifacts the analyst had to work with (backlog, epics, user stories, project scope breakdown, scope of work, change requests, etc.) and what tools were used for documentation (Confluence, Jira, Spreadsheets, emails, UML Diagrams, etc.)," he says.

That said, tailoring your resume to fit its readers means being inclusive of various levels of technical knowledge, given that will likely be more than one reader of your resume anywhere you apply. "Many times, an HR rep will be the first to review your application, so feel free to briefly describe what software and programs you use," says Francis. "If you use Tableau, you could add that this is data visualization software. Not only will this give the HR rep an idea of the software if they are unfamiliar with it, but it will also help get your resume through any automated filtering programs the company may be using."

5. Sell your skills

Even if you don't have experience specific to the industry you're applying for, tailor your application to the job as best as you can by figuring out the skills you can boast about that might apply. "The beauty of being a business analyst is that it is possible to move around different industries," says Francis, whose career began in healthcare before she moved to publishing. "Presenting adaptable and versatile skills on your resume is a great way to stand out. A hiring manager may want an applicant who is familiar with the industry —but more times than not, they want someone who is adaptable and capable of doing the work."

This is true whether you're a business analyst new to your target industry or you're looking to lock down your first BA job, says VIQU's Collingwood. "Where have you displayed requirement gathering abilities, probed for details, illustrated good attention to details and people management skills?" he asks. "Think about where you have used these in your previous jobs or even through your degree."

6. Keep it short, recent —and free of errors

We've given you a lot of suggestions here, but don't take that to mean your resume should be an epic tome. "Keep it concise," urges VIQU's Collingwood. "Your CV should be two or three pages at most. Don't be tempted to write more."

One way to pare that down is to showcase your latest successes: "Make sure your most recent projects get more detail, and roles from a decade ago only get a single line," he says. (Though that doesn't mean everything should be a strictly chronological list; remember what we said about pulling out the most relevant projects for your target job.)

And finally, Collingwood offers the same (very good) advice that job seekers have gotten since time immemorial: "This sounds obvious, but proofread your CV. I've lost count of the number of times clients have pulled candidates up for their attention to detail, and as a business analyst, attention to detail is very important."

Correctly spelling the name of the company you want to work for won't get you that job on its own, but spelling it incorrectly will certainly lose it for you.

More on BA:

* What is a business analyst? A key role for business-IT efficiency
* 5 essential traits of elite business analysts
* 10 business analyst certifications to advance your analytics career
* 7 steps business analysts can take to earn more
* CBAP certification: A high-profile credential for business analysts
* ECBA certification: An entry-level credential for business analysts
* 10 boot camps for business analysts

DETAILS

Subject:	Newsletters; Software; Vision; Careers; Automation; Managers; Information management; Business intelligence; Intelligence (information)
Business indexing term:	Subject: Careers Automation Business intelligence; Corporation: LinkedIn Corp
Company / organization:	Name: LinkedIn Corp; NAICS: 518210
Publication title:	CIO; Framingham
Publication year:	2021
Publication date:	Nov 18, 2021
Publisher:	CXO Media, Inc.
Place of publication:	Framingham
Country of publication:	United States, Framingham
Publication subject:	Business And Economics--Computer Applications
ISSN:	08949301
Source type:	Trade Journal
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	News
ProQuest document ID:	2598838509
Document URL:	https://www.proquest.com/trade-journals/6-business-analyst-resume-tips/docview/2598838509/se-2?accountid=44910
Copyright:	Copyright CXO Media, Inc. Nov 18, 2021
Last updated:	2021-11-19
Database:	ABI/INFORM Collection