A Day in the life of...

Financial Services

Business Analyst

Viral Vyas
Lead Data/Business Analyst – Risk Management, HSBC

MY ALARM GOES OFF...

My day starts at 6am with a cup of tea. I get ready and have breakfast, during which I check my blackberry calendar for the day's meetings. As you can see, multi-tasking starts right from breakfast! There may be urgent meetings that have come up, in which case I will login early. Since my role involves speaking and working with senior colleagues over video conference, my attire is business formal. I prefer using public transport to get to work as it gives me time to catch up with family or friends or prepare updates for meetings that day.

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR...

I lead the Requirements team. The main focus of my job is to gather and provide functional and business requirements for IT. To gather and create requirements, my team and I work with colleagues across different countries, as we have to look deeper into data and understand business patterns. We are also responsible for documenting requirements in a detailed and consistent way so that it is easier for people to read and understand.

I GOT MY JOB...

I grew up in India and went to University in Mumbai. I always knew I wanted to do something related to business and technology, so undertook a Bachelor of Commerce followed by a Master's Degree in Economics and Management. On the technical side, I have taken several international software exams in addition to a three year diploma in Technology Management.

I started my career with an internship in CitiBank. Since then I have always been in the financial services industry, particularly in Banking. The last 15 years of my career have been in data and analysis and management reporting. Fortunately for me the data analysis industry grew globally during this time, and data is now very vital to all organisations.

When I was working in India I worked on global projects with colleagues across the US and Europe. In 2014 I heard about my current role advertised in HSBC UK from a colleague who also happens to be my mentor. It was an extension of what I was doing but with additional learning in terms of project management. I applied, got selected for the role and here I am!

Learning is an incremental journey of your professional careers, first know what you want, next work towards it taking one step at a time.

AT SCHOOL I STUDIED...

The key subjects I studied during my academics were business management, economics, information technology and software programming. Subjects I have studied are highly relevant to what I am doing today, and knowledge acquired during my academics helps me immensely in my job today.

MY TYPICAL DAY...

My day starts around 8a.m with a project status meeting. I am very busy throughout the morning with further meetings with Developers, Modellers and Testers. In these meetings we address challenges they are facing and discuss how my team and I can help resolve these challenges. Lunch is often a working lunch, meaning I pack something and eat it at my desk or during a meeting. In the afternoon I catch up with my team, to review their work and help them. These meetings could involve resolving a complex logic or giving them functional help regarding tasks they are working on. In the afternoon and early evening, I catch up on my own work. This includes replying to emails, creating plans, or data analysis. The evening is also the best time to catch up with senior management. In these meetings we review project progress, identify potential challenges, and discuss new work that needs to be done.

THE KEY SKILLS I USE IN MY JOB...

The key skills I use in my job are Technical, Business, Interpersonal and Planning.
- **My technical skills** include programming skills, developing codes and logic. I have acquired these skills through academics and years of on the job experience.
- **My business skills** include functional knowledge of banks products, product features, banking process and user requirements. These skills is acquired partly through academics but primarily through experience.
- **Interpersonal skills** include the ability to communicate effectively, both through verbal and written communication, writing and delivering presentations and managing people and expectations. I primarily learnt these skills through experience.
- **Planning** is a life skill and perhaps all of us do some planning every day. It is also developed and polished on the job.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB IS...

My current project is about developing a Data Model that houses varied data which can used by various different users in the bank. The best part of my job is that I get to use my creativity and innovation to create solutions. Developing this data model is a highly complex and challenging task. It gives me the opportunity to utilize my technical, people and business skills.

My role requires me to work with colleagues across levels and geographies in the bank. Being a people person, this is something I highly appreciate.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB IS...

The worst part of my job is managing people and failures. As a technical lead, I work with various different people and not everyone thinks alike. Some are co-operative and understanding while some are not. I have to manage people and move forward with their buy-in. At times when I propose a change, it meets resistance from those who don't fully understand the rationale and merits of the change. It really tests your patience and ability to negotiate.

At times, even after putting lot of effort, the team finds that we are still not able to deliver successfully. This is because a part of the project is failing. As a professional, one has to take failure in his or her stride, instead of getting demotivated.

MY ROLE MODEL GROWING UP WAS...

When I was young and at University, I used to read job advertisements for Software Professionals. These jobs were my source of inspiration and I always imagined myself doing one of those jobs or something similar. In particular, my role model was Mr. Narayan Murthy – Chairman and Co-founder of Infosys Technologies which is a global software company. He was not only my technical role model but also role model for life - I liked his simple approach.

AFTER WORK...

I finish work by 7 pm. On the bus on my way home, I catch up on daily news on my mobile. I am passionate about global politics and internal and external affairs. When I get home, I like to cook because I find cooking a stress buster. After dinner, I enjoy anything light and refreshing like catching up with friends and family or watching the 9pm BBC News broadcast. I have enjoyed the BBC 9 p.m. count down music since childhood!

MY PLAN B...

Had I not been a business analyst, I would have been into teaching, working with a University or a Business School as a Professor. I am highly passionate about teaching, coaching and guiding students. I am a very social person and enjoy roles where I get to interact with people. I would happily work with students helping and teaching them technical, business and life skills. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing your mentees do well in their lives using the skills and knowledge they have acquired from you.