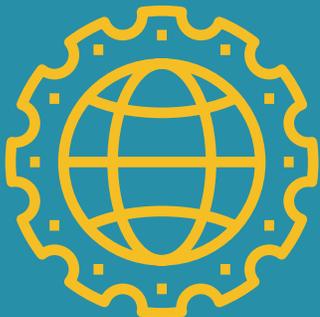


CAREERS IN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT



If you enjoy working with individuals involved in developing technical solutions but aren't interested in being a programmer yourself, consider the array of career pathways in information management. Information management jobs typically straddle the line between business and technical roles. Professionals in this field can communicate effectively between technical and non-technical teams, and they may have more involvement in company strategy and project management early in their careers. Though titles may vary and roles tend to overlap, we have outlined four specialty areas in the field of information management.

Roles in Information Management

BUSINESS ANALYST

The role of a business analyst centers on using technology to improve processes and eliminate inefficiencies in an organization. Business analysts look for solutions and improvements that can be achieved through new technology or different uses of existing technology. Business analysts often act as intermediaries between stakeholders, including customers, management, and software development teams. They assess and convey stakeholder needs by converting business requirements into software requirements and use testing and modeling to improve information workflow. Business analysts can typically speak both the language of business and the language of technology to clearly communicate project needs with various stakeholders.



SKILLS NEEDED: process modeling, stakeholder management, presentation skills, documentation and writing, strong listening skills





SYSTEMS ANALYST

Much like a business analyst, a systems analyst assesses business needs and looks for the appropriate technology solution to the problem. While a business analyst focuses more on the business process side, the systems analyst focuses more on technology and software. Systems analysts are heavily involved in projects that involve new software solutions or existing software modifications. They will look not only at how software will function from an end user perspective but at how the software is designed and configured. They may also do more data modeling to determine how systems integrate with each other. They may or may not be asked to code; however, even if they are not coding themselves, systems analysts have a strong understanding of how coding works in order to communicate effectively with members of the software development team.



SKILLS NEEDED: programming, investigation, analysis, critical thinking, familiarity with SDLC (software development life cycle) methodologies

NETWORK AND SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR

Network and systems administrators guide the day-to-day operations of an organization's data communications systems. Any company that uses multiple software platforms or computers requires a network administrator to connect and coordinate these various systems. Network and systems administrators train users, upgrade hardware and software, and plan for future technology upgrades. They keep the network operational by configuring hardware, managing operating systems and servers, executing security protocols, and overseeing network and cloud storage.



SKILLS NEEDED: budgeting, problem-solving, attention to detail, initiative

IT CONSULTANT

IT consultants are brought in as external analysts to review a client's IT processes. They evaluate and diagnose an organization's IT framework, gaining a firm understanding of that client's business needs and then developing and implementing technology solutions that meet those needs in an efficient and cost-friendly way. They may be brought in to improve an existing infrastructure or to offer strategic guidance on building a new system. They can oversee projects that focus on a wide variety of IT areas including systems analysis, information security, software development, and network architecture. IT consultants are often project managers, planning timelines, overseeing budgets, giving advice on best practices, producing reports and training staff on a new IT system.



SKILLS NEEDED: self-starter, ability to manage own projects with little oversight, multi-tasker, analytical