



The effective analyst

Part 3: Attitude

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In this 3rd article in a series of four articles, Janet takes us through the findings of [research](#) by her and Mark Kebbell on what makes intelligence analysts effective.



In this issue I will continue to talk about the findings of the effective analyst study focusing on attitudinal factors that indicate an effective analyst and since this issue is focused on the intelligence cycle I will also describe how the findings from our study tie into the intelligence cycle.

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First and foremost: A do-er

While attitudinal factors have been considered in previous research the importance of attitude has been underestimated. The want or desire to be in intelligence has not been recognised previously and factors like being a do-er, being intelligent, motivated, independent and being a decision maker in their own right is largely ignored. In our study attitudinal factors incorporated comments that describe the analysts disposition to intelligence work and analysis. The most frequently sighted attitudinal factor is what we called the do-er. A do-er is someone who is energetic, willing, proactive, achievement oriented and accomplishes a lot.

Second: passion for intelligence

Another important factor that describes an effective analyst is a per-

son who has a passion for intelligence and has chosen to be there. Many who participated in our study reported that having staff that are in intelligence positions for the 'wrong' reasons has a negative impact on their peers and analysts described being demoralised by those that showed no interest in intelligence work.

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

Winston Churchill

Decision-makers felt that analysts in intelligence for the 'wrong' reasons tainted the whole of intelligence analysis with a poor work ethic. The examples included people placed in Analysis because they could not cope in other areas.

The intelligence cycle and the effective analyst study

The 'intelligence cycle' has four distinct areas and in our study, only two of those (analysis and dissemination) were raised by the participants as relating to analyst effectiveness. Interestingly, they do not deem skills in data

collection/collation or direct involvement in the direction phase of the intelligence cycle necessary for the analyst's effectiveness.

Rather, it seems as though analysts view the amount of time spent on collecting and collating data as "dead time" which does not contribute to their effectiveness. Many of the analysts interviewed sees collection as the responsibility for others in the unit, rather than themselves.

The absence of the analyst from the direction phase of the intelligence cycle may be negligible in operational and tactical analysis because the analyst works within the intelligence unit or the operational team and has regular contact with management.

However, the absence of the analyst from the direction phase of the intelligence cycle when considering strategic intelligence would be very problematic. In strategic analysis the analyst also manages strategic product and would need to negotiate the terms of reference for the analysis directly with the client who in most cases would not be their line manager. The role of the analyst in the direction phase of the intelligence cycle needs further consideration. •