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SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE NEEDED TO BECOME AN ANALYST

The purpose of this **article** is to give some light to students who study Data what they can after graduation and to inspire them to do their best to obtain one of the most demanding and prestigious professions worldwide – an Analyst.

Not a secret that IT sector is huge and lots of people want to be part of it for different reasons. It is well paid and huge variety of skills might be handy. One of the most exciting and high-status professions in IT sector these days is definitely an analyst. This profession is comparatively new and it is getting more and more popular every year. Amount of Data processing by companies is unbelievable and it is only growing every year. So the demand of specialists who can work with Data and be able to provide insights on it is increasing as well. Should be said that this profession requires sharp brain that can think out of the box. What is also prominent that it is a new trend when specialists within IT decide to change their carrier to become an analyst.

But what is AN ANALYST? How to become one and what skills do you need to have to be a great analyst?

There are different types of analysts. It is Data analysts, Business Analysts, Digital Analysts, Financial Analysts… One thing which is in common that all of them work with Data. Data analysts probably most technical focused and who work with Data itself, such as collecting, cleaning, analyzing, producing reports etc. Business analysts work more with business processes, they stand as a bridge between Dev and Business. Digital analysis is even newer segment then 2 previous ones and concentrates particularly on analyzing user behavior on websites.

The career path might be various and involves not only different types of analytical roles but also different spheres. Let me share my experience: I started to work in Stock Company as Financial Analyst, moved to Data Analyst role in finance, and then moved to IT become a Digital Analyst, after that working in Health Company as Data analyst, and going back to Digital Analyst. Well I should admit that working in different areas might be challenging and requires some knowledge of it but might be learned on the way in short terms.

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Should all knowledge come from work experience? Of course not! What can't be learn quickly and requires deep knowledge is **hard skills** or technical skills. Work of any analytical role usually starts from **identifying and recognizing business objectives**. This is only possible with broad-minded professionals. University degree usually helps to build this type of thinking while studying different models and situations in general and practicing. I believe that some hard skills should be learned in University and will give a student a great fundament for years. **Excel** skills are essential to have even if these days most of stuff is done in more advanced tools (discussed later). Another a must have skill for any analyst is definitely **SQL**. There are different variety of it these days such as one used for Big Query. However having a deep knowledge of any SQL version gives an advantage on the job market as it is used almost everywhere. As been said in Digital Analytics it is used in Big Query – service from Google which helps to collect all information from the website, every click, page views… In Data analytics it is used as core in visualization programs such as **Tableau, Power BI**.

Depends on the Focus of an analyst different skills might be more important than another. For Data analyst, besides from SQL it is good to know at least one of the next languages: **R** or **Python**. For Digital analyst might be a good addition to have some experience with **JavaScript**. For Business analyst people skills or **soft skills** probably more important that hard skills and do require work experience.

What path can be next? Well, not only developers can move to analytics. Analysts, who of course have a variety of hard skills, can move to developer side of Data. A great example is a *Data Engineering* which involve even deeper Data knowledge combined with Development skills. Another one which is very wanted profession this days is *Data scientist.*

Of course, that is not all and pathways are unlimited for specialists who can compete on the job market. And the best way to start your career is to acquire those core skills which will stay with you for a lifetime.