

Replacing Contractors With Ten10 Academy Business Analysts



Client: Top four retailer

Industry: Retail

Technologies: Multiple applications associated with fresh produce

Ten10 Services: Ten10 Academy: Business Analysts

A top-four retailer in the UK wanted to introduce agile work practices to projects that were updating its systems to better manage its supply chain, including manufacturing and stock levels. It had five streams that required updating and decided to focus on the 'fresh produce' stream to use as a template for the others.

What We Did

Driven by the project's need to reduce the reliance on contractors, build in-house knowledge and drive a new Agile approach to system development, Ten10 was approached to provide a Graduate Business Analyst resource for the project.

During their first few weeks on the project, the Ten10 graduate shadowed a senior BA contractor, then started taking responsibility for small areas of work before taking control of an entire workstream four months later.

Working Independently And Autonomously

The Ten10 BA now has responsibility for liaising between the internal product owners, six suppliers (including offshore) as well as other stakeholders in the business in order to define requirements, understand priorities and articulate clearly to all members of the project team. They contribute fully to each Agile sprint and have particular ownership for all planning sessions, making sure the right people are involved in decision making (Product Owner, Solutions Architect, Development and Test Leads) and leading sessions to turn outcomes into tasks, requirements and workflow diagrams:

- **Extracting business requirements and managing stakeholders** – Understanding what is required from a business perspective and their relative priority, the use of the system and who and how would it be used.
- **Backlog Refinement sessions** – Refining the backlog, agreeing on effort for outstanding tasks and understanding considerations for the next sprint planning session.
- **Sprint planning sessions** – Confirming which user stories from the refinement session should be included within a sprint, understanding any technical debt that should be cleared down, agreeing on sprint volumes, coordinating the team and tasks, updating Jira and team boards to reflect the agreed sprint scope.
- **Creating user stories** - Articulating the User Story within sprint planning meetings and communicating the stories with the Solutions Architect, Developers and Testers.

- **Defining acceptance criteria** – Sessions with stakeholders and the Product Owner to establish the acceptance criteria and articulating this clearly for developers and testers through meetings, ad hoc questions and through Jira.
- **Data modelling/workflow and activity flow diagrams** – Enhanced modelling for complex, sequentially performed activities to support User Story and ACs. Typically includes the tasks to be accomplished and decisions based on conditions that are encountered during the workflow.
- **Wireframing** - Providing context to express the functional requirements, often used within design sessions so that the developers can see how the system needs to work.

Challenges

- A history of poorly defined requirements and inconsistent requirement refinement across different contract resource.
- Collaborating with up to 6 suppliers including offshore teams.
- Moving teams from Waterfall to an Agile delivery methodology.

Benefits

- The ability to cost-efficiently build skills in-house for the long term and to replace expensive contractors.
- Developing a BA capability within the organisation, increasing consistency and quality of deliverables.
- Supporting and enhancing an Agile approach to project delivery, increasing deployment frequency and speed in a competitive marketplace.

The Ten10 Academy

With the shift in skillset required to support Agile transformation, together with recruitment challenges our clients are struggling to find the technical talent they need. The Ten10 Academy model addresses these challenges and cost-effectively provides clients with the in-house skills required.

The Academy allows our clients to bring in enthusiastic, driven and capable individuals who will relocate to their site and become embedded in their teams. Importantly, once the initial engagement is over, they have the option to retain Ten10 graduates as a permanent member of their team, building long-term capability and stability.