



Business Analysis Certificates 2014

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Contents

Introduction.....	4
Management Summary.....	5
Certificates and Exams	7
CBAP® and CCBA® [1]	7
The IIBA® Certifications	7
The education or work experience requirements.....	7
Number of questions on the version 2.0 exam.....	7
The difference between CCBA and CBAP credentials	7
Why CBAP study materials can be used to study for the CCBA exam.....	8
The basis of the 2.0 exams	8
Signing-up for the exam and the related cost.....	8
Other sources along with the BABOK®	8
Formal class to prepare for the exam	8
Practice exams.....	9
Percentage required to pass the CBAP® or CCBA®	9
The overall first time pass rate of those taking the CBAP®	9
The best way to demonstrate that 7500 / 3750 hours are met.....	9
The online CBAP® and CCBA® application lists non-BA tasks for projects	9
Experience needed in the different Knowledge Areas.....	9
Typical time get approved to take the exam once you complete the application.....	9
Books to help prepare for the certification	10
Suggestions for study groups in local chapters.....	10
Where to get BABOK® book to study for the exam	10
What counts towards the required 21 hour professional development hours	10
Sending the CBAP® application without having the needed 21 hours.....	10
Recommended time frame for study prior to taking the exam	10
How the CBAP® prep course shortens the study time	10
CPRE [2]	11
Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering – Foundation Level [3].....	11
Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering – Advanced Level [3]	11
Benefits of a certification [4]	12

Personal Recognition.....	12
Increased Income	12
Professional Development Opportunities.....	13
Effective Business Analysis Execution	13
Does the value exist?.....	13
Outlook.....	14
References.....	14
About masVenta.....	15

Introduction

This White Paper provides an overview of the various education and training programs in the area of Business Analysis and as well of the related certificates.

Similar to what we have seen in the last two decades for the Project Management Professional (PMP®) as leading international certificate for Project Managers, there will be an industry standard for Business Analysts soon. The PMP® certificate published by the Project Management Institute (PMI®), Pennsylvania, USA, has gained world-wide popularity which is far beyond other certificates. In much recruitment, “the PMP” is mandatory, i.e., candidates not having this certificate are not considered anymore.

Business Analysis - which simplified can be understood as extended Requirements Engineering - is not as much institutionalised as Project Management. While many companies often maintain “Project Management Handbooks” or similar policies, Business Analysis is still a new, rarely developed area. There are only a few organisations which have established a standard knowledge around Business Analysis, two outstanding are the International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA®), Toronto, Canada, and the International Requirements Engineering Board (IREB e.V.) headquartered in Karlsruhe, Germany.

These two organisations and their corresponding certificates will be explored more in detail in this White Paper in order to provide some guideline for the modern Business Analyst who wants to further develop his or her professional skills.

Management Summary

The most established certificates for Business Analysis are CBAP®, CCBA® and CPRE (Foundation and Advanced).

Certificate		Published by	Preconditions (w/o details)	Cost in Euro (ca., w/o courses)
CCBA®	Certification of Competency of Business Analysis	IIBA®	3750 hours BA experience 21 hours BA-relevant Courses	435,-
CBAP®	Certified Business Analysis Professional	IIBA®	7500 hours BA experience 21 hours BA-relevant Courses	435,-
CPRE-FL	Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering – Foundation Level	IREB e.v.	None	300,-
CPRE-AL	Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering - Advanced Level	IREB e.v.	CPRE Foundation Level	650,-

While the mainly Germany-based CPRE certificates are focussed on software development and the related practises, the CBAP® and CCBA® are much broader regarding knowledge and international acceptance. As CCBA® is very similar to CBAP® we will be mentioning the latter one only. The same applies for the different levels of the CPRE.

Requirements Engineering is a part of the larger Business Analysis which comprises extended areas like Planning and Monitoring, Enterprise Analysis and Solution Assessment and Validation. Thus the CBAP® certificate much more proves knowledge and expertise than the CPRE certificate, especially in non-technical areas.

Typically, a CBAP®-like Business Analyst is closely working along with the Business, actively asking about the *Business Need* of each initiative. Besides gathering requirements, he or she is responsible for shaping the scope of the projects and for choosing solution approaches. Solutions can comprise of everything like process improvements, business rules, not necessarily (but mostly) including IT.

He or she is reporting to either IT or Business, depending on the organisational structure of the company.

The CPRE is embedded in the IT organisation and thus responsible for the documentation and analysis of IT related requirements. He is usually not primarily involved in project decisions related to solutions approaches but more focussed on working out requirements to make them ready for development and testing. Many Requirements Engineers have formerly worked as developers or testers and are still part of these technical IT teams.

The differences between CBAP® and CPRE are becoming clearer when looking on the requirements for the exams. While the IIBA® only approves a CBAP® exam application of candidates with a specific and proven professional experience, a CPRE exam requires no preconditions; everybody can sit for

the exam. Thus a CPRE exam cannot be considered as prove of expertise; it is more a certificate of participation.

The CBAP® exam is a comprehensive one (150 questions in 3.5 hours) and can be compared with exams at universities. It demands a significant study and preparation time, typically some weeks up to several months, depending on how much time the candidate is able and willing to dedicate.

The CPRE exam typically takes place in the afternoon of the third day of training, comparable to the ITIL® Foundation exam.

The CBAP® certification is based on the The Guide to the Business Analysis Body Of Knowledge (BABOK® Guide) which is available Version 2.0 in four languages (English, Portuguese, German and French). However, as of today the exam itself can only be written in English. Only accredited examination centres like Castle Worldwide Inc. are allowed to provide the examination services; after candidates have sent their application to the IIBA® the candidate has to pass the exam within one year.

CBAP® on one hand and CPRE on the other hand are playing in completely different leagues. While CBAP® can be considered as a world-wide accepted prove of expertise and professional experience, CPRE is an entry-level education for software-centric requirements analysts, open for everybody and very easy to accomplish.

There are currently more than 10,000 certified CPRE worldwide (a few CPRE-AL) while we have around 2,500 CBAP® (and a few CCBA®). At first glance it seems as if the CPRE is more popular, but taking into account that no preconditions have to be met and that CPRE exams are relatively easy to pass it becomes obvious why the IREB certificates grow much faster than the IIBA certificates.

However, the more Business-related CBAP® and CCBA® certificates provide consultants and analysts with a sought-after skill rather than a common one more or less owned by everybody who is somehow experienced in working in IT projects.

Certificates and Exams

CBAP® and CCBA® [1]

The IIBA® Certifications

The International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA®), has created the Certified Business Analysis Professional® (CBAP®) and Certification of Competency in Business Analysis (CCBA®), credentials awarded to candidates who have successfully demonstrated their expertise in this field. The CBAP® designation is awarded to business analysis practitioners with 7500 hours or more of BA experience, and the CCBA® is for those with 3750 or more hours of applicable experience. Both credentials require passing a comprehensive examination, based on the IIBA® Business Analysis Body of Knowledge® (BABOK®) that is designed to objectively assess and measure business analysis knowledge and experience..

The education or work experience requirements

To be eligible for CBAP® or CCBA® Certification, you must meet the following requirements:

Requirement	CBAP®	CCBA®
BA Experience	7500 hours BA experience in the last 10 years	3750 hours BA experience in the last 7 years
Knowledge Areas	900+ hours in at least 4 of 6 <i>BABOK®</i> Knowledge Areas	900+ hours in at least 2 of 6 <i>BABOK®</i> Knowledge Areas – or – 500 hours in 4 of 6 Knowledge Areas
Education	High school degree or Bachelor	High school degree or Bachelor
Professional Training	21 hours in the last 4 years	21 hours in the last 4 years
References	Two references from current or former customers or superiors or from a CBAP	Two references from current or former customers or superiors or from a CBAP
Additional	Signed “Code of Conduct”	Signed “Code of Conduct”
Fees	€95 application fee and €245 Exam fee (€340 for Non-members)	€95 application fee and €245 Exam fee (€340 for Non-members)
Re-certification	Every three years; 60 CDUs required	Every three years; Number of CDUs has not been published.

Number of questions on the version 2.0 exam

Both the CBAP® and CCBA® exams have 150 multiple-choice questions to be answered in 3.5 hours.

The difference between CCBA and CBAP credentials

Besides the hours requirements noted above, the two exams emphasize different things. The CBAP® exam has many situation-based questions that require candidates to apply their knowledge of the BABOK®. The CCBA® exam is mostly comprised of knowledge and fact-oriented questions about tasks

and techniques in the BABOK®. When the CCBA® was introduced, we revised our CBAP® Online Study Exam question bank and created over 140 new situational questions to address this need.

Why CBAP study materials can be used to study for the CCBA exam

According to the IIBA, the blueprint for the CCBA® exam is very similar to that of the Certified Business Analysis Professional™ (CBAP®) exam. Specifically, the CCBA® exam is different from the CBAP® exam in that the CCBA® exam presents mostly knowledge-based, factual questions drawing from the concepts presented in the BABOK® Guide. Because our CBAP® products and courses thoroughly cover the BABOK® Guide, they are an excellent tool for preparing you for the CCBA® exam.

The basis of the 2.0 exams

The CBAP® exam is based mostly on the tasks and techniques identified in the BABOK®, version 2.0, which was released March 31, 2009. As noted separately, the questions contain some knowledge and fact questions, and many situational questions. The latter will test your ability to apply the BABOK® information to real life. The current exam switched over to the 2.0 version on August 1, 2009. While most information for the CBAP® exam is contained in the BABOK®, it is not the sole source of questions on the exam. The BABOK® references other sources that CBAP® candidates may find helpful. The CCBA® exam is based solely on the BABOK®, with knowledge-based questions only. It was introduced January 1, 2011.

Signing-up for the exam and the related cost

The exam is the final requirement for CBAP® or CCBA® certification and anyone desiring to take an exam must first apply for certification and pass the initial screening process. Once the IIBA® determines your qualifications to sit for an exam, you must apply with the official testing agency to schedule a date for a computerized exam. You will receive an email with instructions once your application is approved. Visit www.TheIIBA.org for the complete process.

Total cost (application plus exam) for IIBA® members is approx. Euro 340.

Total cost (application plus exam) for non-members is approx. Euro 435.

Candidates can save money on the cost of the exam by applying for IIBA® membership. The cost of membership is approx. 72 Euro/year, i.e., it pays off immediately.

Other sources along with the BABOK®

The BABOK® should be your main resource and it will provide much of the reference materials you need. Watermark Learning's CBAP® Certification Study Guide (2nd Edition) is another resource we recommend, and is highly focused on the exam. Mastering the Requirements Process (2nd Edition) by Suzanne and James Robertson, and Software Requirements, Second Edition, by Karl Wiegers may also be helpful.

Formal class to prepare for the exam

masVenta Business GmbH has formal CBAP® Prep classes and CCBA® Prep classes scheduled throughout the year. We offer these classes in conference hotels, "Inhouse" in companies and live online over the internet (virtual classes). The training program can be explored under <http://www.masventa.eu/en/academia>. The IIBA® does not provide any formal training.

Practice exams

The IIBA® does not provide sample tests. There are some online exams available, and make sure you find exams developed by people or companies such as masVenta Business GmbH who have CBAP®-certified trainers. That way you will be more likely to have realistic CBAP® exam simulations. Our CBAP® Online Study Exam and CCBA® Online Study Exam are a great way to prepare, with three study modes including a realistic exam simulator. We have almost 800 questions available that will give you experience with the types of questions you will see on the 2.0 exam.

Percentage required to pass the CBAP® or CCBA®

The IIBA® has not published percentages yet. Our best guess for that is because the sample size of examinees is small enough so that they can't yet assign an exact "cut score" for either exam. Assume you will need to score 70% or better to pass.

The overall first time pass rate of those taking the CBAP®

The latest numbers we have heard put the pass rate at between 80% and 90%. Note that is not an official number, just our best guess. It is high partly because the IIBA® screens applications so well and demands so many years of experience. It is also high because examinees so far have been super-prepared to pass.

The best way to demonstrate that 7500 / 3750 hours are met

You need 3750 or 7500 hours spent on business activities, and not just working hours. IIBA® has online applications to complete with project information. The form asks for information such as project name, start/end date, your role, project organization and contact, and project hours spent doing business analysis tasks as well as describing the tasks and your deliverables. The IIBA® audits a certain number of applications, so the hours you list should be as accurate as possible. Visit our CBAP Resources page to download a complimentary application worksheet to help you organize your hours.

The online CBAP® and CCBA® application lists non-BA tasks for projects.

Here is the situation. If you indicate any non-BA tasks, the IIBA® will deduct a proportionate percentage of hours from your reported project hours. Let's say you worked 1000 hours on a project, and indicated 3 tasks, 2 of which were BA work and one was a PM task. The IIBA® will then deduct 33% or 333 hours from your 1000 hours, leaving you a net of only 667 hours to count towards your total. Take this into account as you report hours and tasks on your application. Our advice: only report BA tasks and only BA hours to avoid having any hours deducted. See the IIBA's own FAQs document for more information on www.TheIIBA.org for details on this.

Experience needed in the different Knowledge Areas

No, the IIBA® has established you need 900+ hours in at least 4 of the 6 core Knowledge Areas (KAs) to apply for the CBAP®. For the CCBA®, you need 900+ hours in 2 of the core KAs or 500+ hours in 4 of the 6 core KAs.

Typical time get approved to take the exam once you complete the application

Within two weeks of receiving your application package IIBA® will notify you that your application is being processed. The IIBA® will then assess the application for completeness and fulfillment of the

CBAP® or CCBA® certification requirements. The IIBA® will notify you, via email, of the results of this assessment within 21 days of receiving the application.

Books to help prepare for the certification

Watermark Learning's "CBAP® Certification Study Guide", Second Edition, currently used in our CBAP® and CCBA® Certification Preparation Course, contains over 200 sample questions. Our Guide also provides a trial subscription to our CBAP Online Study Exam, which contains 900+ questions for further practice. There are other books that focus mainly on exam questions, and a few are available through Amazon.com. Be prepared to spend 80-100+ hours to read, study, memorize, and take practice exams. Contact us if you'd like to receive a complimentary CBAP® Preparation Roadmap.

Suggestions for study groups in local chapters

We've heard it works best is to divide up the BABOK® section by section, and assign a section a week for the group to read and review. Have one person lead each section and prepare an overview of the section, and lead a discussion. Some groups practice by creating and taking exam questions and others use exam questions from our Guide or Online Study Exam for practice. If you participate in a book club, the process is similar, only you are reading to pass the CBAP® or CCBA®, not for fun!

Where to get BABOK® book to study for the exam

If you are an IIBA® member, you can download it from the IIBA® web site. Visit www.iiba.org and go to the "Professional Development" section. You'll see a link for the BABOK®, and another link to download the current version 2.0. That release of the BABOK® is the basis for the current CBAP® and CCBA® exams.

What counts towards the required 21 hour professional development hours

Any business analysis training topic, such as requirements elicitation, requirements analysis or modelling courses, requirements planning/managing, etc. Training on related fields such as project management or software testing do not count towards the 21 hours. Nearly every masVenta BA course applies to the 21 hours. Contact us if you have any questions.

Sending the CBAP® application without having the needed 21 hours

You must have the 21 hours of courses before you submit your application. You do not need to submit a course certificate with your application, but be prepared to provide one if you are audited.

Recommended time frame for study prior to taking the exam

An "ideal" span is around 3-6 months, depending on your approach. Plan on spending around 100 hours preparing, which is the average range we found in our research. You can lessen this time with a class or our Online Study Exam. If you plan on just using the BABOK® or joining a study group, plan on at least 6+ months. That gives you plenty of time to study in a relaxed manner and requires the least "overtime" to study. A person could also do it in 4-6 weeks, but then be prepared to study nights and weekends, or for taking entire days off to read, study, memorize, and take practice exams.

How the CBAP® prep course shortens the study time

Taking a CBAP® or CCBA® prep class, especially in conjunction with using an online exam simulator, can reduce your study time to less than 100 hours and the duration to 3 months or less. It does so because it will help you focus on the critical areas to study for the exam. It also helps you develop

your own best method for preparing for the exam vs. wasting time to discover your own method. Another benefit of a class is taking practice exams in a simulated test environment and discussing the rationale for the answers with your CBAP-certified instructor. There is also the added benefit of learning from the questions asked by other students.

CPRE [2]

The IREB Certification Model consists of three subsequent levels. Prerequisite for certification of a certain level is having obtained the certificate of the previous level.

IREB has stipulated an exam process for each level of certification and has defined the minimal requirements regarding the exam location.

IREB also provides the exam questions. Those are consistent worldwide and provided in several languages (see Foundation Level and Advanced Level)

According to the standard ISO/IEC 17024:2012 IREB is not involved in the certification process, this is under the sole responsibility of the Certification Bodies! Therefore the Certification Bodies licensed by IREB e.V conducted the exams, do the evaluation of the results and issue the certificates for examinees who have passed the exam.

Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering – Foundation Level [3]

Foundation level comprises basic knowledge of eliciting, analysing, specifying, documenting, validating and managing requirements.

A person with a CPRE FL certificate

- Is familiar with the terminology of requirements engineering/business analysis and requirements management.
- Understands the basic techniques and methods of requirements engineering and their application.
- Is familiar with the most established notations for requirements.

Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering – Advanced Level [3]

The Advanced Level consists of modules. A single AL module focuses a specific aspect, a technique, a task, a domain or a process.

The holder of a CPRE AL certificate

- is familiar with the specific terminology within to field covered by the Advanced Level module
- is mastering the specific techniques and methods of the partial discipline of Requirements Engineering covered by the Advanced Level module

- possesses sound knowledge within the partial discipline of Requirements Engineering covered by the Advanced Level module and has proven that in a practical examination.

The Syllabus CPRE AL Requirements Elicitation and Consolidation in Version 1.0 as of December 20th 2012 is available in English and German.

The Syllabus CPRE AL Requirements Modelling in Version 1.0 as of March,1st 2011 is available in German only.

The following Advanced Level syllabi are in preparation and will be available in 2013/2014:

- Syllabus CPRE AL Business Analysis
- Syllabus CPRE AL Requirements Management

Benefits of a certification [4]

The question has been asked in many different forms.

- What is the value of certification?
- Are employers and/or clients looking for people to be certified?
- Will I get paid more if I'm certified?
- I already have something else (such as a certificate from a training provider); why should I also get certified by IIBA?

Each of these questions boils down to the same thing: if I invest my time, energy, and money in seeking an IIBA certification, what am I going to get out of it?

Let's look at some answers to the questions on value.

Personal Recognition

I had been a BA for two or three years when I started looking for something to recognize me in my role as a professional. In essence, what I meant was that I saw myself in a certain way: that I was able to execute the various aspects of my job effectively, I had the requisite knowledge to do the job, I acted ethically and in the best interests of my employer, etc. If I was an accountant or an engineer or a project manager, a professional certification would have been the obvious next step. So, why should it be different for me as a BA? Once I was eligible to obtain my CBAP® designation, it gave me the sense of recognition as a professional within my field that I had been seeking.

Increased Income

In these difficult economic conditions, organizations know that they can ill afford to make the wrong decisions. As such, they're willing to pay to get the right people in the right positions. CBAP® recipients are identified as the senior members of the BA profession, and organizations have begun to compensate them as such. You can see this for yourself with this salary survey. You'll notice CBAP® recipients are receiving a premium, and one that is significantly more than the cost of the certification itself.

Professional Development Opportunities

One of the challenges for senior BAs that is recognized by their employers is the limited number and types of professional development opportunities there are. For an entry-level BA, an "Introduction to Business Analysis" course makes sense, but certainly this course would not be appropriate or beneficial for a senior BA. The work required to seek professional certification-getting the right opportunities for work experience, studying for the exam, etc.-would certainly be both appropriate and beneficial for such staff. In addition, professional certification itself represents a significant opportunity to recognize senior BAs for what they have accomplished.

Effective Business Analysis Execution

When it comes to business analysis, organizations face many challenges: finding the right people, getting them on the right projects/tasks, and ensuring that they do the work as effectively as possible. Professional certification addresses a number of these concerns:

- Hiring/retaining a professionally certified business analyst gives the employer/client the comfort of knowing that an independent organization has assessed the knowledge, skills, and expertise of the individual.
- Employers/clients have the knowledge that they can place professionally certified BAs on the appropriate projects (e.g. CBAP® recipients working on the largest, most complex, most risky projects).
- Employers/clients have the knowledge that their staff is using industry standard techniques-as documented by the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge® (BABOK®) Guide-to execute their business analysis activities.

Does the value exist?

The CBAP® designation has been around for more than 6 years. Yes, it will take time for the value of it to be easily identified. But, does that value exist today? Absolutely! For the individual, the recognition received from obtaining the CBAP® or Certification of Competency in Business Analysis (CCBA®) designation is of intrinsic value. Increased income is a benefit we're starting to see, making the financial investment in certification easier to justify. Do we need to ensure employers/clients are aware of our certifications in order to enhance the value of it? IIBA as an organization certainly has a role in this. At the same time, it becomes easier for organizations to see the value in it if they actually experience it, and they will only experience it if they have certified BAs amongst their staff. Increasing the population of certified BAs is the most direct way of doing so.

In late 2010, IIBA has launched the Certification of Competency in Business Analysis® (CCBA®) designation, targeted to intermediate-level business analysts. While the name recognition of CCBA® will be low upon initial launch, the high demand for the designation from both individuals (those who want to be professionally certified but are not yet eligible for the more elite CBAP® designation) and employers (those who want to professionally certify their intermediate-level BAs) will result in a fast uptake of the designation. This, in turn, will cause the value of the designation to be seen quickly, as it becomes the standard BA designation. It won't be long before the value of both the CCBA® and CBAP® designations snowballs such that BAs will be seeking certification in significant numbers, and employers/clients will be demanding that their BAs be certified.

Outlook

Business Analysis will become more important in 2014, there is strong, world-wide growth, refer to the illustration below. In Europe, and especially in the German-speaking countries, we can still see an under proportional number of certified analyst which will lead to a growing training and exam preparation demand. New formats like Online-Trainings will be more frequently booked.

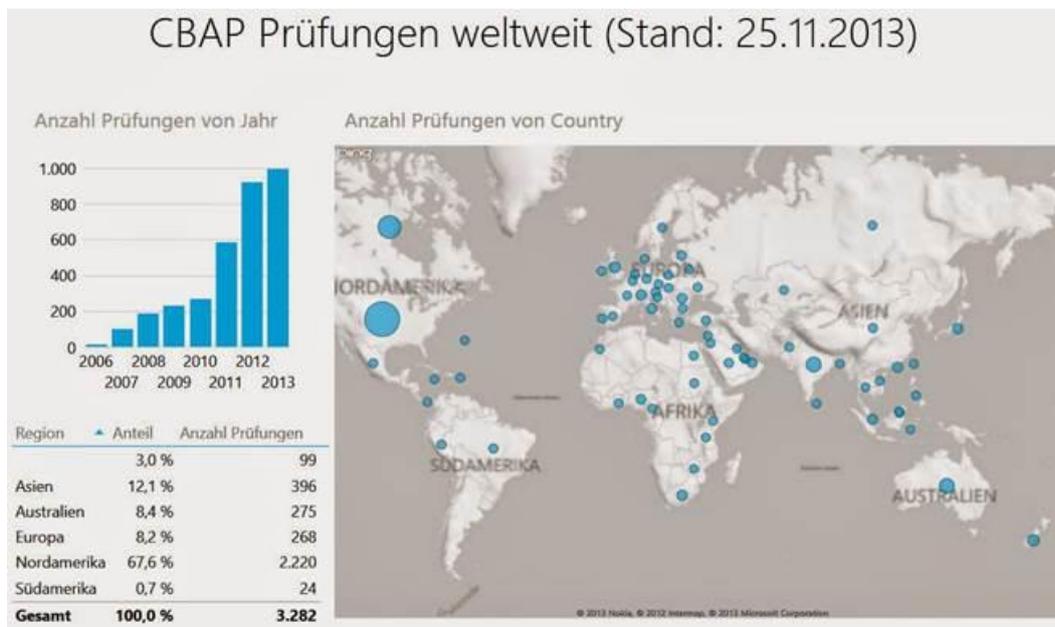


Bild: CBAP® Exams world-wide, with permission by Volker Heck, CBAP. Source: www.iiba.com

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- [1] <http://www.watermarklearning.com/cbap-faqs.php>
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- [3] <http://www.certified-re.de/en/syllabi.html>
- [4] <http://www.batimes.com/iiba/iiba/why-should-i-get-certified.html>
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About masVenta

masVenta Business GmbH is an innovative consulting and IT services company in Germany with focus on Business Analysis, Business Process Management and Project Management. This includes provisioning of highly qualified and experienced IT-, Project- and Change Experts and professional Human Resource development through training programs and curriculums.

masVenta provides special preparation programs for those who want to achieve the Certification of Competency in Business Analysis, CCBA[®], the Certified Business Analysis Professional, CBAP[®] and Project Management Professional PMP[®]. masVenta is one of the leading IIBA[®] Endorsed Education Provider (EEP[®]) providers for training courses in Business Analysis according to BABOK[®] Guide, both, in German and English.

Apart from analysis and conception masVenta offers also Project Management and implementation of IT solutions. The senior experts of masVenta have decades of practical experience in the conducting projects, Requirements Management, conceptual design and implementation of IT projects in the branches Automotive, Banking, Energy, High-Tech and Telecommunications.

We support internal change projects in process and structural organization through our profound methodical process knowledge and experience in the development of new organizational structures. This includes sourcing concepts for both, Nearshore and Offshore.

The Company's headquarter is in Alsdorf near Aachen, Germany. It has been founded and is privately owned by Managing Director Rainer Wendt, CBAP, PMP.

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