



ASUG Webcast:
**BPX Skills Focus - The Keys to Becoming a
Business Process Expert (BPX)**

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**ASUG's Business Process Expert
Webinar Series
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About Your Presenter – Jon Reed of JonERP.com

JonERP.com

- Blog and podcast on SAP industry trends - focus on SAP career and skills trends
- Writing on SAP skills trends since 1995
- Podcasting on SAP skills trends since 2007
- Serve as career expert for SearchSAP.com
- Blog on SAP skills trends on SAP BPX
- Serve as SAP mentor for 2008; recently named SAP mentor for 2009



What is a Business Process Expert in an SAP Context?

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- The “business process expert” is a newfangled SAP job title that serves as an “umbrella” for a diverse set of roles and skills
- All these “new”BPX roles are centered on one key concept:
business is now driving technology, not the other way around
- ERP systems, leveraging SOA and “web services,” are finally ready to realize this vision for companies

But, in order to do realize the vision:

A new kind of SAP professional is increasingly needed, a techno-functional “savvy” individual that is currently in short supply.

What is the Goal of This Webcast?

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Goal Number 1:

To provide a clear definition of who the “SAP Business Process Expert” is and why this person is needed.

Goal Number 2:

To give a useful view of the resources available to help with the Business Process Expert (BPX) skills transitions; and share practical ways to pursue this further after the webcast is over.

What is the Structure of the This Webcast?

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45 Minute Presentation, Then 10 Minute Q & A

Presentation has Six Sections:

1. Why does SAP need business process experts?
2. What are the skills needed to become a business process expert?
3. How does one obtain these skills?
4. What is the new SAP BPX certification all about?
5. What is the “Process First” BPX book about and how can it help?
6. How can we continue this BPX skills conversation?

Ready? Let's go!

1. Why Does SAP Need Business Process Experts?

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Or, “Why the so-called ‘BPXer’ isn’t just hype”
We must address the “skills hype factor”!

It is perfectly reasonable to ask whether BPX is just hype!

The answer?

It is not hype, **though there is healthy debate** over the exact nature of these roles and how long it will take from here (months, years) for the demand for these new BPX roles to reach critical mass.

Responding to BPX Skeptics, Round One

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Skeptical View #1:

“These kinds of well-rounded BPX skills you are talking about are what the best SAP consultants have always exhibited.”

Response:

That is largely true, BUT,
and this is a big BUT...
the difference now:

- *a set of modeling tools are rapidly maturing that require not just a commitment to being a well-rounded consultant,*
- *but learning new tools and the process-driven methodologies that guide them.*

Responding to BPX Skeptics, Round Two

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Skeptical View #2:

“I’ve reviewed these skills, and they don’t have anything to do with my current project role. Therefore, I’m in no rush to learn these new BPX skills. More than likely, the BPX fad will pass as many other skills fads pass, such as ‘Business Process Re-Engineering’ did.”

Response:

- *Some SAP projects, especially those running on older releases, are not that concerned with BPX roles and issues - yet.*
- *However, in consulting, it always pays off to be a skills leader rather than a laggard.*



There is an ongoing BPX skills and curriculum conversation going on right now at <http://bpx.sap.com>. Click on “skills and education” on the home page for more.

Another Clue that “BPX is not Hype”:

The Growth of the SAP BPX Community

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**The SAP BPX Community is now 450,000+ members
(and counting)**

- And, in a few years, when almost all SAP customers have upgraded to ERP 6.0...
- the technology driving BPX work will be in full swing.

Let's take a closer look at that technical evolution....

SAP Skills Trend: eSOA and BPM (Business Process Management) are Here to Stay JonERP.com

BPM is the key to SAP's "Business Process Platform" of the future:

- We are moving beyond rigid, "transactional ERP" to more flexible, intelligent and adaptive systems.
- eSOA, or "Enterprise SOA," is the "enabling technology" that allows SAP BPM to be properly executed.

Why does this provide customer value.....?

(answer on next slide)

eSOA is No Longer a “Paradigm Shift” Idea – It is a Proven Technology

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- eSOA is the “enabling technology” that allows BPM to be properly executed.
- “Reusability” of code and services works. Innovating on top of SAP, rather than excessive customization, is the best practice going forward.
- eSOA and “xApps” (Composite Applications) make this happen.



Free webcasts in the “Online Events” section of SAP.com show proven eSOA case studies from companies like Cardinal Health (which reduced coding time drastically using CE (Composition Environment) and Home Depot. Direct link to SAP.com Business Events: (registration required)

http://www12.sap.com/community/events/events_listing.epx

BPM Tools Are Maturing and Will Complement eSOA Tools

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We're now seeing the maturation of a range of process modeling tools:

- **IDS Scheer's "Enterprise Modeling" applications** are one example of a sophisticated modeling tool set, integrated with SAP Solution Manager (<http://www12.sap.com/solutions/solutionextensions/enterprisemodeling/index.epx>)
- Open source modeling tools such as **Intalio**, based on the BPMN (Business Process Modeling Notation) methodology, are also available

and, drumroll....

- c. **NetWeaver BPM**, set for "fast track ramp up" December 2008, also based on BPMN standards, will be SAP's model-to-execution system that will bring additional traction to the "BPM" skill set.

These tools are becoming a reality, but they will require a new kind of SAP professional:

The SAP "Business Process Expert"

Get more involved with SAP BPX (bpx.sap.com) and you will be able to collaborate with others who are actively defining this new skill set

2. What are the Skills Needed to Become an SAP Business Process Expert?

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“Business Process Expert” is actually a not-so-secret code name for a wide range of BPX flavors,

but they will all have these things in common...

They will represent:

- the convergence of business and IT,
- the integration of “technical and functional” skills,
- and the incorporation of modeling, composition, and visual UI tools **into the SAP skill set.**

Jon Reed's View of the SAP Business Process Expert (Part One of Two)

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- Mastery of Modeling Tools (Aris/Enterprise Modeling Applications, NetWeaver BPM, Visual Composer, Intalio (open source), even Visio (currently very common, though not a next generation modeling tool))
- “Web 2.0” skills (collaborative process definition and development)...
- “Soft Skills” (another umbrella area of many skills)
- Focused Industry Know-How
- Knowledge of the end-to-end business processes that rely upon your IT/SAP skills to be properly enabled



You are on the leading edge of Web 2.0 if you can apply it as “Enterprise 2.0.” At that stage, you have gone beyond knowing how to build and use tools like wikis. Using an “Enterprise 2.0” mindset, you also know how to harness such tools to enhance productivity and improve the corporate bottom line.

Jon Reed's View of the SAP Business Process Expert (Part Two of Two)

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- Ability to work as the “liaison” or “missing link” with functional and/or technical teams from the opposite side of the aisle.
- Change management skills (process-driven approach often means organizational changes).
- Project management skills and methodology know-how (lean manufacturing methodologies, Six Sigma, project management certifications, SAP implementation methods, including new business process methodologies): <https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/bpx-implement>

A bit overwhelmed by this comprehensive list? Don't be. There are Practical next steps that make the skills transition easier.



Don't rely solely upon a third party definition of a BPXer as your career template. Form your own skills profile that fits your role and skills priorities.

Next Steps to BPX Skills Acquisition

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Two simple keys:

1. Do a personal “skills gap analysis” - look at the range of BPX skills and figure out which areas you need to fill most urgently and develop a plan to fill them, **preferably in writing!**
2. Understand that the skills you need to pursue for BPX vary based on where your skills sit within SAP currently.



Putting your skills acquisition plan in writing allows you to return to it periodically and reassess your progress. The value of this kind of personal skills tracking cannot be overstated.

BPX Skills Profile #1: SAP (ABAP) Developer

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Next Steps for SAP Development “Skills Success”:

Become an ABAP/Java “hybrid.” Get a handle on....

- Object-oriented programming,
- next generation UI design (Visual Composer, Web Dynpro to ABAP and Java),
- Composition tools (SOA-based programming)...largely through:
NetWeaver Composition Environment (CE), building web services and, eventually, composite applications.

One potential job title for the “SAP Developer of the Future”:

“Enterprise Architect”



Although it's ideal to gain your skills in hands-on project settings, many of the skills recommendations here can be pursued via SAP's online communities and other self-education sources!

BPX Skills Profile #2: SAP Basis Specialist

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- Understand web-based, XML-driven integration (move beyond EDI to online B2B and B2C integration)
- Master SAP middleware options including, in particular, **NetWeaver PI (formerly XI)**, as well as best-of-breed messaging standards from IBM, Microsoft, and other leading vendors.
- Begin to master the design of technical architecture in accordance with business process requirements.
- Understand installation of next generation SAP tools, from Solution Manager to Composition Environment, from xApps to enhancement packages, as well as “the switch framework” for industry solutions.

One potential job title for the “Basis Specialist of the Future”:

“**NetWeaver Engineer**”



Basis Skills Tip: Make sure you are comfortable with NetWeaver BPM and other modeling tools, in particular, how processes that are modeled are then executed from a systems integration standpoint.

BPX Skills Profile #3: SAP Functional Specialist

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- Start getting a handle on modeling tools, even though none of them are truly “business user friendly” yet...grit your teeth and learn what you can...slicker tools are coming!
- Use NetWeaver BPM as the tool closest to the process modeling tools of the future for Business Users.
- Work more closely with technical teams to better understand the connection to functional specs, in particular the steps to composing web services to meet business needs.
- Do your best to follow business processes across departments rather than working in traditional functional “silos.”

One potential job title for the “SAP Functional Configurator of the Future”:

“Process Architect” or “Process Expert”



Functional SAP Skills Tip: Make sure you are comfortable with NetWeaver BPM on the trial CE download, in particular, how to model processes in NetWeaver BPM (don't worry so much about the technical execution of those processes, whatever you can absorb in that area is a bonus.)

Final “Skills Strategy” Tip: Keep it Simple!

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The range of BPX skills needed can be overwhelming, so don't let it get too complicated.

- Pick one area to improve and work it.
- **It's this simple:** If you can become a “marriage counselor between IT and Business,” a phrase first used on SDN/BPX by Denis Browne, then you are on your way to becoming a BPX!
- Want more motivation? Becoming a BPXer” is going to become a crucial component to staying relevant as an “on site’ SAP consultant.



I have done podcasts on all three main SAP skill areas and how the NetWeaver skills transition works. On SDN, look for my podcasts with Thomas Jung (ABAP) and Kent Sanders (Basis), on BPX, with Marco ten Vaanholt (more functional focus)

3. “OK, I’m Sold. How Does One Obtain these Skills”?

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Key Action Step: Get involved (or more involved) in SAP’s Online Communities!

- SDN, BPX, and now, the Business Objects Community
- <http://sdn.sap.com> (SAP Developer Network)
- <http://bpx.sap.com> (Business Process Expert Community)
- <https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/businessobjects> (Business Objects Community)

These communities are a great interactive way to take next steps in your BPX skills growth.



You can register as a new SAP user for all three communities at the same time, or you can add memberships to an existing profile by simply editing your profile.

Other Options for BPX Education

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- Online and in-person events from SAP and ASUG (including this new ASUG BPXwebcast series)
- BPX Community Day before SAPPHIRE and TechEd (TechEd Berlin and Bangalore are coming up!)
- Practice with modeling tools (some, like NetWeaver BPM and Intalio, can be downloaded for free)
- Book Study: new BPX themed books like “Process First” by Marco ten Vaanholt of SAP BPX
- The new SAP BPX Certification.

Let's take a closer look at BPX Certification and then the “Process First” book.



Those SAP professionals who are most aggressive about investing in their own self-education are invariably the ones who are the first to get real hands-on project experience using these new emerging skills.

4. What is the New SAP BPX Certification All About?

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Why is the SAP BPX Certification Needed?

Answer(s):

- To establish a new level of credibility for BPX skills in the eyes of all in the ecosystem
- To provide a structured approach to BPX skills expansion for individuals and project teams
- To move towards consensus around which BPX skills are most important to actual SAP implementations

About the SAP BPX Certification

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- The “BPM for BPX” certification is the first of five eventual BPX certification tracks.
- BPX certification is unique in SAP certifications - it integrates five separate tracks integrated into one umbrella certification.
- BPX certification is modeled on the new three-tiered SAP Certification structure (Associate, Professional, Master)

“BPX for BPX” Certification Availability:

- The Associate level is available now
- The Professional level will be available February 2009
- The Master level is underway and to be announced

More About the BPX Certification

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The five eventual BPX certification tracks will incorporate the following areas:

1. End-to-End business scenarios and software-certification for the BPXer
2. Application solution and industry knowledge certification for the BPXer
3. Software and IT knowledge for the BPXer
4. **SAP BPM Certification for the BPXer (now available)**
5. Soft Skills and experience certification for the BPXer

The Four BPX Certification Course Sections

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There are four course sections to the “BPM for BPX” Certification:

- 1. Basics**
- 2. Governance**
- 3. Methodology**
- 4. Tools**

- Each of the four sections has one to three classes, depending on the skill level of the participant.
- There is a lot to learn about the BPX certification. To get you started, there is a collection of links for more information in the Resources section of this presentation.



If you want to hear a recent podcast on the new BPX certification, check out the one I did with Mario Herger, BPX Community Alchemist, on the BPX web site: <https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/weblogs?blog=/pub/wlg/10893>

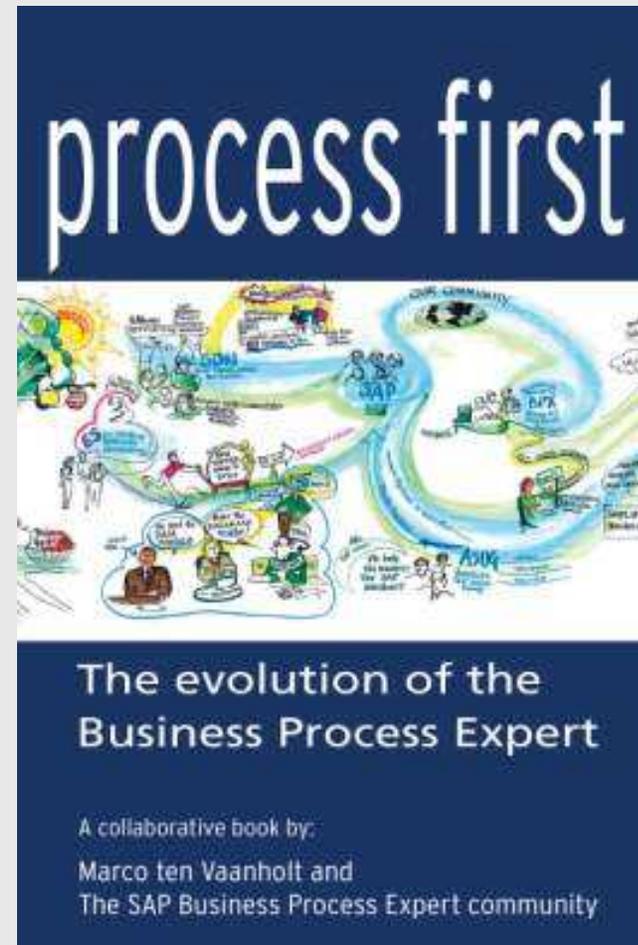
5. What is the “Process First” Book and How Can it Help?

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Process First describes the evolution of the **Business Process Expert**, a role that adds value by increasing effective communication across technical and business boundaries.

Visit bpx.sap.com today to download the free eBook from the BPX wiki

http://www.amazon.com/Process-First-evolution-Business-Expert/dp/0978921879/ref=sr_1_12?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1221575355&sr=8-12



Overview of the “Process First” Book

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“Process First” is the first book written by the BPX community, with an author credit to Global BPX Head Marco ten Vaanholt, who wrote, coordinated, and consolidated the community’s contributions into book form.

Preview:

- [Chapter 1. The Business Process Perspective](#)
- [Chapter 2. The Solution Creation Process](#)
- [Chapter 3. Completing the Definition of the Business Process Expert Role](#)
- [Chapter 4. The Business Process Expert Community](#)
- [Chapter 5. Organizational Change Management and the Business Process Expert](#)
- [Chapter 6. The Technology Environment for the Business Process Expert](#)
- [Chapter 7. Patterns of Success](#)

More About the “Process First” Book

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One of the strengths of the “Process First” book is that it goes into specifics on a range of BPX-impacted job roles:

- Process Experts
- Business Analysts
- End Users (Business Users)
- Project Mangers
- CIOs and CTOs
- Enterprise Architects
- Application Architects
- Technology Architects
- Engineers and Developers

The book goes into descriptions of how each of these roles, some older, some brand new, touch on business process expert skills.



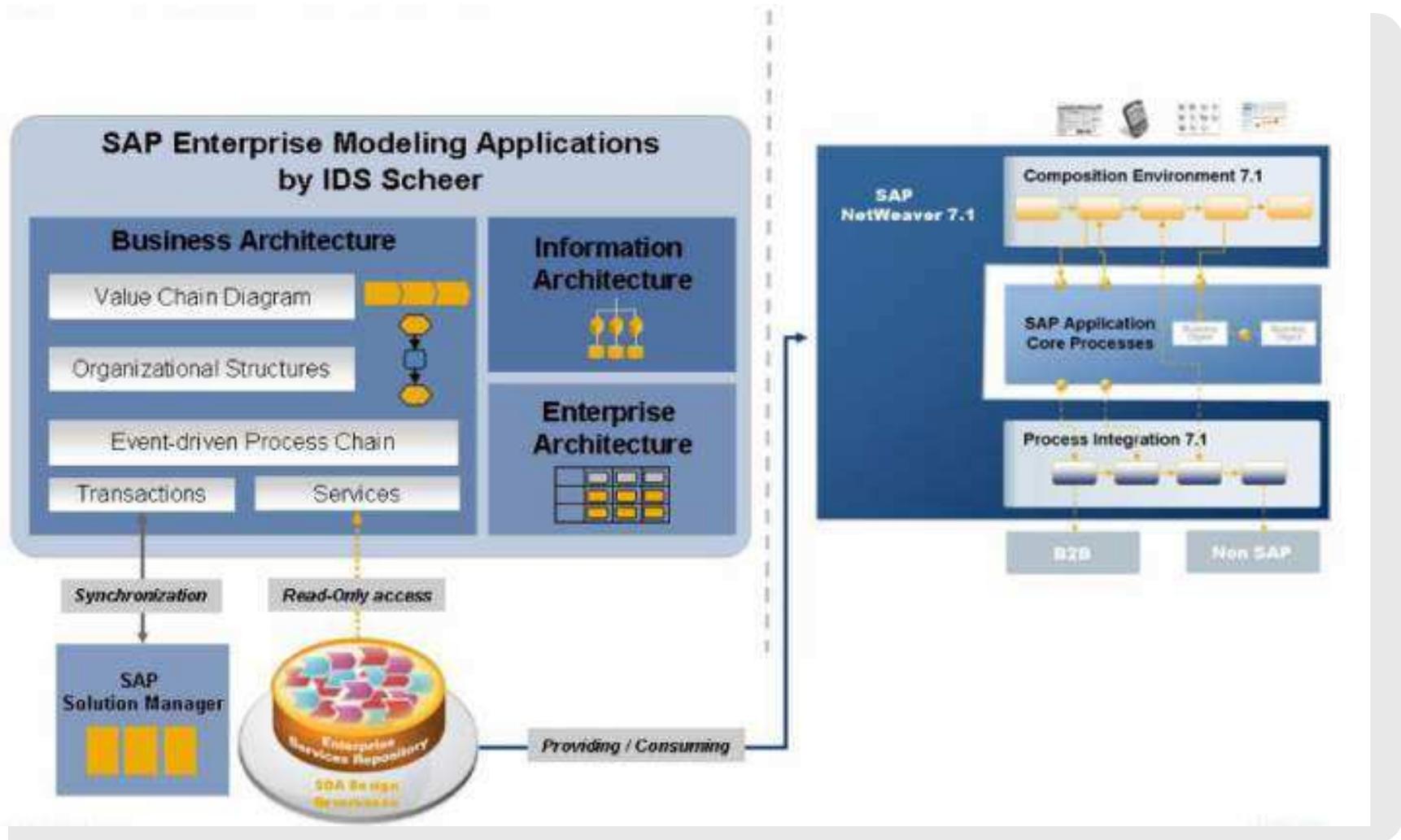
Check the links in the Resources of this presentation for the online “BPX” version of this book, which is a wiki-based version that is being actively commented on by BPX community members.

6. How Can We Continue This BPX Skills Conversation?

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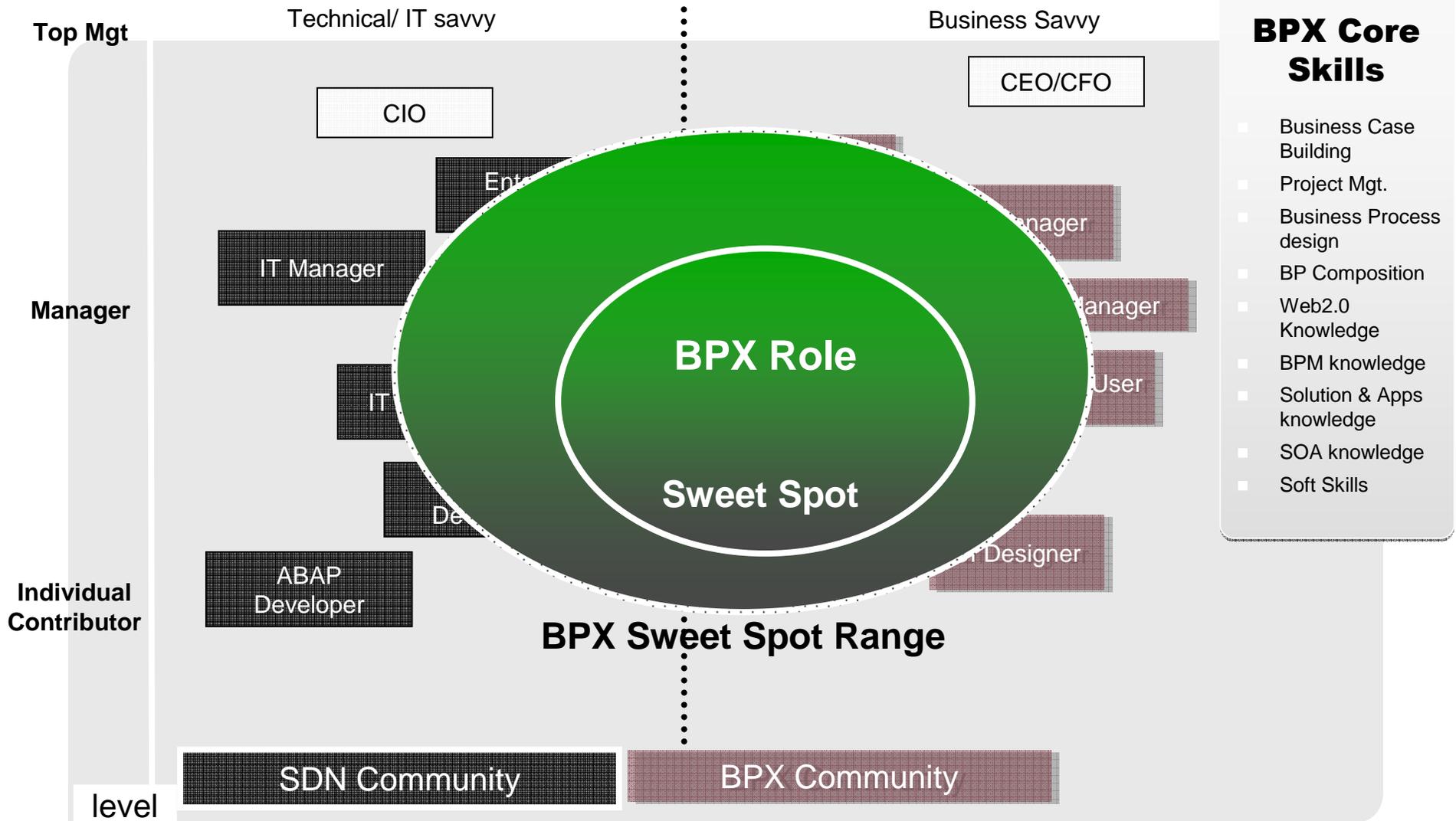
- By now, you know what my answer is going to be:
bpx.sap.com.
- Remember, you don't have to be an "expert" to get involved with BPX. If you need some behind the scenes coaching before you get involved...
- Helpful folks like BPX Community Evangelist **Marilyn Pratt** will be glad to get you going! Search on "Marilyn Pratt" on SAP BPX, or Marilyn wiki profile link:
<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/wiki?path=/display/profile/Marilyn%2bPratt>

Resources 1: IDS Scheer and SAP NetWeaver BPM Simplified Product Flow (IDS on left, BPM on right)



Resources 2: “The Ideal BPXer” Does Not Exist”: Skills Slide from Marco ten Vaanholt of SAP BPX and Puneet Suppal of Capgemini

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Resources 3: BPX Skills and Certification Links

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- **Link to download trial version of CE, as well as NetWeaver BPM and BRM (Business Rules Management):**
<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/weblogs?blog=/pub/wlg/11001>
- **SAP's Thomas Volmering on new BPM/BRM demo:**
<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/weblogs?blog=/pub/wlg/11001>
- **BPX Certification Podcast with Mario Herger:**
<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/weblogs?blog=/pub/wlg/10893>
- **Initial BPX certification announcement with many relevant links:**
<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/weblogs?blog=/pub/wlg/10536>
- **More details on BPX certification, including the project roles that are appropriate for BPX certifications:**
<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/bpx-education>

Resources 4: More on BPX Related Book Titles

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- **Online version of “Process First” book is here:**

<https://www.sdn.sap.com/irj/sdn/wiki?path=/display/SEB/Main>

From this book wiki, Marco and the BPX team are already incorporating input from the next edition - so you can get involved!

- **Another useful book: “Roadmap to Business Process Management,” November 2008, SAP Press, by Jim Hagemann Snabe, Ann Rosenberg, Charles Moller and Mark Scavillo:**

<http://www.sappressbooks.com/search.cfm?q=bpm>

(Ann Rosenberg was instrumental in creating the first “BPX for BPM” curriculum and is an excellent presenter – as soon as TechEd sessions are made available on BPX and SDN via the Virtual TechEd Library, I highly recommend her presentations on BPM-related concepts).

Conclusion

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The BPX skills transition is an evolution, not a revolution!

- Therefore, no “panic button” responses are needed.
- No way around it: skills enhancement is hard work.

But, the upside of creating a coherent career strategy is huge:

- Increased marketability for you, and:
- A greater sense of contribution to your project team!

Thanks for coming....I welcome your questions!

Question & Answer Period

JonERP.com

Ten minutes of Q & A.

Further questions can be directed to Jon Reed:

jreed@joneerp.com

You can also post questions and comments in the SAP Career Blog at <http://www.JonERP.com> and I will respond to them there.

See you at future SAP and ASUG events and online at bpx.sap.com!