

SFIA Forum continues to grow

Membership continues to grow; the web site (www.sfiauser.ning.com) has more than 1250 members and there are nearly 650 members of the [LinkedIn group](#). The LinkedIn group is attracting more interaction but the Ning group has facilities for uploading collateral for sharing. A new LinkedIn sub-group is about to be launched for Accredited SFIA Consultants.

The SFIA User Forum is run on a voluntary basis by Peter Leather (peter.leather@ex-co.uk). Peter welcomes contribution from new and experienced SFIA Users.



Skills for Digital Business 7 March 2013

In addition to opening up new marketing opportunities, digital technology offers impressive cost reductions: the ratio of costs of digital, phone and paper transactions has been reported as 1:20:50.

The extent to which organisations can transform themselves to embrace digital business is a determinant of their future success. This event, comprising conference and exhibition, addresses the practical actions that can be taken to make sure the organisation has the right skills to make that change.

Ron McLaren, The SFIA Foundation's Operations Manager, says: "I am really looking forward to this conference. We have an excellent line-up of speakers. In one way or another it has always been true that the difference between success and failure depends on skill. In today's world, that increasingly means information skills."

Our keynote speaker is Andy Nelson, the UK Government's Chief Information Officer. He understands more than most people the criticality of digital business and its dependence on the right skills.

Speakers from Government and Industry, from user organisations and from service providers, explore practical aspects of the challenge facing us all today. The conference looks at case studies of aspects of management, including recruitment, assessment, deployment, training and qualifications.

The conference will conclude with an explanation of our future approach to the development of SFIA. Keeping SFIA relevant is a key aim of the Foundation. Delegates will hear how a more formalised approach to the capture of requirements for change and for the implementation of change will help contributors participate in the process.

Who should attend?

- **Managers and HR managers** working with IT people will hear ideas and experiences which relate to having the right skills in the right place at the right time
- **Training managers** will gain an understanding of SFIA which can be used to make sure training spend is focussed on developing the capabilities that are actually needed
- **Organisations providing service** to IT users will learn of opportunities to gain leverage from SFIA
- **Independent consultants** will gain an understanding of the advantage of including SFIA in their portfolio of services; attendance at the consultant's forum should be of interest
- **Awarders of qualifications** will hear about the benefits of publishing information about the mapping between SFIA and their qualifications.

Exhibition

A skills-focused exhibition will enable delegates to see the product and service offerings of The SFIA Foundation's Accredited Partners.

Where and when

Tickets can be obtained from the SFIA web site. www.sfia.org.uk
Date: Thursday 7 March 2013

Registrations: 9:15 am, Start 10:00 am, End 4:30 pm approx.

Address: BIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET (by Westminster Abbey)



“ Chile needs a Human Capital standard for Information and telecommunication technologies: SFIA, an International Model”

Miroslav Pavlović Director of Strategic Innovation at Segacy



On Tuesday 16TH of October 2012 Segacy alongside Inacap and ACTI (The Chilean association for IT industry) organized a big SFIA event at the Sheraton Santiago. Miroslav Pavlović Director of Strategic Innovation at Segacy said:

“We covered all of Chile through video broadcasting which was very interesting and I am now exploring new prospects.”

The event’s title was “Chile necesita un estándar para el Capital Humano en Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación: SFIA, un Modelo Internacional” or translated “ Chile needs a standard for Human Capital for Information and telecommunication technologies: SFIA, an International Model”

The objective was positioning the SFIA like industry standard for ITC competences and showing that the model has practical use in different enterprises and aspects and Targeted Industry. Currently, information technology and telecommunications industry

requires professionals with profiles specific, in keeping with the new global reality, which implies higher levels of management, analysis and design, along with a greater understanding of the needs of their customers. It is therefore necessary to have skills that will enable to project a wide professional vision.

Professionals and outstanding companies in the world of information technologies, confirm that Skill Framework for the Information Age (SFIA), framework that establishes definitions of abilities and maturity levels demanded by the industry internationally. Through the Conference INACAP, the Chilean Association of information technology companies (ACTI) and Segacy sought to support the generation of trusts in the key players in the industry, in order to build consensus on the importance of implementing a model that promotes the development of skills and professional abilities, projecting this model towards industry and institutions responsible for the training of these professionals.

This was an opportunity to learn about strategies to incorporate a model that promotes the development of skills and professional abilities of human capital in information technology and communications (ICT).

The Event included presentations from the following Speakers:

- Karin Quiroga – Inacap – Welcome
- Marcelo Roman, General Manager, ACTI – Las necesidades de la industria TI en Chile (The needs of the IT industry in Chile)
- Miroslav Pavlovic, Segacy – Análisis de habilidades y perfiles profesionales TIC en un Contexto Internacional (Analysis of ICT skills and professional profiles in an International context)
- Marko Knezovic, Area Manager, Global Citi development center Chile – Importancia de la Gestión por Competencias en los Servicios Globales (Importance of Competence Management in Global Services)
- Ricardo Jara, Financial IT Service Manager, Entel SA – SFIA en la Gestión Financiera de TIC (SFIA in ICT Financial Management)
- Jorge Maturana, Planning and Control Manager, Falabella – El Factor Humano en la nueva filosofía de las organizaciones (The Human Factor in the new philosophy of the organizations)

For more information about this event, please visit the mini site at:

<http://www.inacap.cl/web/2012/conferenciaInformatica16OCT/informatica16OCT.html>.

Deconstruct roles into skills

By Simon Roller, Managing Director, Adaps Consulting September 2012



The SFIA framework is not just for individuals; it has tangible organisational benefits too!

After almost 50 years in the IT recruitment industry, we are constantly amazed at the 'hit and miss' approach many organisations have in relation to IT roles and recruitment in general.

At a recent Australian Computer Society (ACS) roundtable we discussed the challenges young people have in entering an industry where roles change so quickly in relation to other industries, and how IT graduates maintain their relevance in such a fast moving industry.

One of the recommendations was to have organisations look at the underlying skills that make up these roles, and focus on these rather than the roles. Some prominent universities in the UK include the SFIA (Skills Framework for the Information Age) skill codes associated with

each course, to assist students in career development and skills management, as does the ACS with their courses and events! Deconstructing roles into their component skill parts does not only assist with role definition, it can significantly assist with both recruitment and the value each role provides.

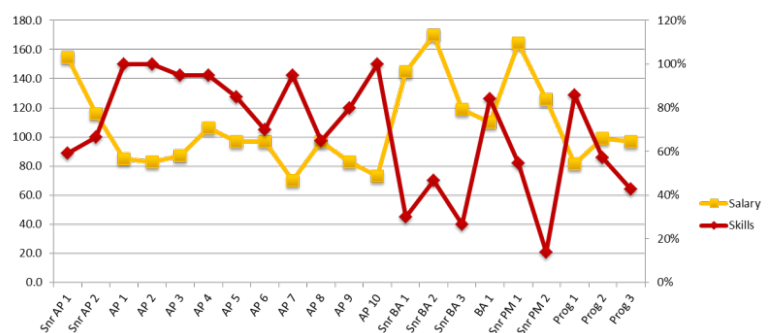
At an individual level, the benefits of SFIA are obvious; in that understanding the skills you have allows you easily see where you are lacking and set a path for professional development. However it is at an organisational level where the benefits of SFIA are tremendous.

Real World Analysis: Skills & Salaries have Poor Alignment

We have just finished an interesting study where we compared the salaries and skills for a set of individuals within one of our clients. We looked at Analyst Programmers, Business Analysts and Project Managers that had been placed in the organisation over the past 2 years.

When we look at the correlation between skills and salaries of the individual, there is poor alignment. The graph has the salaries on the left and the skills alignment on the right.

First of all there was a variation in the salaries paid for the types of role, which could be as high as an additional 30%. And secondly, there were many roles where the required skills were absent, although the salary of the successful candidate remain unchanged. This led us to consider a number of different scenarios that could explain the difference in alignment between salary and skills.



- **Scenario 1: Work being performed by another individual.** In this case, the skills required to perform the work are present in another individual, and they are performing the activities associated with the role. In this case, there is a hidden cost which has been transferred to another person.
- **Scenario 2: The activities associated with the skill are not being performed adequately.** This is most often the case, and in the case of the project managers in the case study, this would result in poor risk management with regards to the project, a lack of skill with benefits management and business case management, and poor change planning. This also becomes a risk issue, and there are a number of audit findings that could be applied.

Skills Update

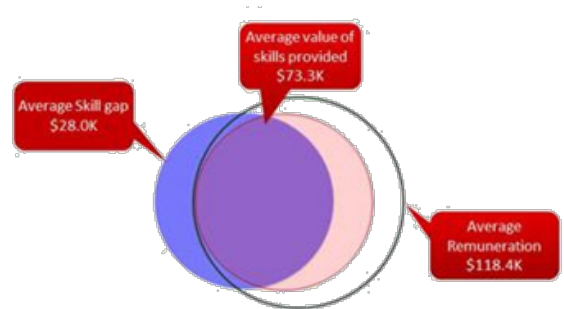
The COBIT 5 controls APO05 (Manage Benefits Achievement), APO07 (Manage Contract Staff) and EDM04 (Ensure Resource Optimisation) all relate to skills and capabilities. APO05 and APO07 reference SFIA directly as related guidance.

- **Scenario 3: Skills were not really required in the first place.**

This is the most unlikely outcome, as why would an organisation include a requirement for a skill that was not really required? If this is the case, then the role should be re-scoped and the skill removed.

Translating missing skills into dollar value

On average, there was \$28K worth of skills missing in each role we assessed, and \$73.3K worth of value being provided. The average salary for each role should be \$101.3K, but the actual average remuneration is \$118.4, a difference of \$17.1K. Therefore, the combined saving if a person was aligned to each role would be \$45.1K. To put it into perspective, with an organisation of 1000 IT staff, the saving would be \$45M per annum, or approximately 31%.



Skills not only provide the fabric of our roles, they help us embed best practice into our organisations

There is great value in adopting frameworks like ITIL, Prince2, COBIT and the like to standardise on process and implement good governance. Unless we define the roles that support these frameworks effectively, then people will be challenged in performing their tasks and being effective in their roles. By implementing a Skills Framework like SFIA, we can better align the skills required for the roles we build, and justify the cost of skills development and career

progression. If we understand the value of a skill or set of skills, we can

Choose whether to build the capability ourselves or buy it in. We can track where our human assets are, and calculate the return on our human capital.

Finally, by aligning the roles people have to the skills they require, we are much more likely to get them to adhere to the processes they need to follow. SFIA is truly the missing or forgotten framework, and a critical component to both embedding and delivering IT Governance.

If you are interested in reading the full white paper, then please email me and I will pass it on. My email address is Consulting@adaps.com.au

SFIA in Amsterdam



Ron McLaren spoke at IFIP's World Computer Conference in Amsterdam on 26 September. The skills stream was particularly well attended, with delegates from around the world. A range of skill-related topics was addressed. The SFIA presentation focussed on the decade of successful progress that has been made by The SFIA Foundation.

Ron was also able to meet up with Michiel van der Voort, who is now with the International Software Quality Institute. Michiel will be speaking at the SFIA conference in March.

The Use of SFIA in Reward Management (or, Getting Pay right)

By: Trevor Morriss, Reward Management Consultant, CELRE Consultancy Ltd

Introduction

SFIA's own documentation very clearly and correctly points out the value of SFIA in many aspects of IT management. In "Working with SFIA 5" the ways in which SFIA integrates into many aspects of IT management is well documented, pointing out SFIA's uses in:

- The production of job descriptions and role profiles
- Resource management – profiling both existing and future capability requirements
- Recruitment – giving clear skill requirements of candidates
- Deployment – fitting "square pegs into square holes" in terms of matching the skill requirements of jobs with the skill capabilities of staff
- Assessment – providing an underpinning framework to enable assessment of an individual's performance against job/skill requirements
- Development – providing a "road map" for career development in terms of skill levels to be acquired
- Remuneration – mapping IT jobs into salary scales



And there is a further, valuable use for SFIA which has helped us to assist our clients in our specialist arena of reward management.

First, a Bit of History

Before becoming a Reward Management Consultant I had a proper job! For almost 30 years I worked in a variety of Human Resources roles in HSBC and in the final 14 years was Head of Compensation and Benefits for a major division of that company.

In the late 1980s my IT managers kept telling me that we weren't paying our IT staff enough. Putting aside my customary cynicism and assumption that they were suffering from the Oliver syndrome ("please sir, I want some more") I investigated and, sure enough, found that our system of one size fits all pay scales no longer fitted our needs. IT pay had accelerated beyond the pay levels for more administrative roles (I also found that pay for accountants, lawyers and other specialists were developing lives of their own).

Two years later we introduced a whole new approach to pay across our organisation. General pay scales

went into the dustbin and instead all roles were allocated what we called a Pay Practice Level. This was set by analysing what was actually being paid to people in equivalent roles and setting a market related pay scale specific to each job or group of similar jobs. This was seen as being fair to the organisation in deciding pay levels in terms of what we needed to pay in order to compete in the recruitment market and also fair to our employees in that we were paying them the "going rate" for their job.

Key to a market related approach to pay was the ability to be able to compare like with like in terms of job responsibilities, skill and experience requirements and the like. And this was where SFIA entered the picture.

The Three R's

Most organisations employing IT staff will wish to set their pay at levels sufficient to enable them to achieve the three R's – recruitment, retention and reward.

They want to be able to offer levels of pay that mean that they can **recruit** the right candidates to their organisation, with the right combination of skills and experience.

Having recruited the right candidates they want to be sure of being able to **retain** appropriately skilled and experienced staff. One element in this is to ensure that they continue to pay those staff at a competitive level.

They will also wish to be able to **reward** their staff with appropriate pay progression that maintains their competitive position. And SFIA helps with all of these areas.

How SFIA Helps

Key to any assessment of where a job fits, both organisationally and in respect of the levels of pay that would be appropriate, are two factors:

- The level of **responsibility** of the role: where it sits in the hierarchy and what level of influence and control it wields
- The area(s) of **functional specialism** in which the role operates

SFIA addresses each of these factors with, firstly, its generic levels of responsibility and secondly, with its skill categories which define the functional specialism of role(s).

How We Use SFIA to Help Our Clients

At CELRE Consultancy we are often asked by clients to advise them on market pay levels for their staff – a process known as benchmarking.

When we are commissioned to look at IT pay levels and the client already uses SFIA we can interrogate and analyse our databases starting from an agreed point of reference for each role, namely its SFIA positioning. (We will then factor in other variables such as the geographic location in the UK of roles being looked at, organisation size and business sector)

Our process entails using the UK's premier database of IT pay – the salary survey produced by XpertHR – and then analysing/modelling the raw data to achieve best fit with the specific circumstances of the client organisation. The results of our work give the client a very clear “health check” on where their remuneration levels compare to market practice and

Using the SFIA framework therefore provides a near enough perfect method for matching jobs for market pay comparison purposes as each of the SFIA categories can provide a direct read-across to salary survey data in order to establish with confidence what pay levels apply to which roles.

This is an ideal scenario for us reward management consultants when dealing with clients who use SFIA in their organisation as we can provide them with very reliable guidance on where to pitch their IT pay levels based on the sure underpinning provided by SFIA.

all this is based on the start point of SFIA ensuring that we and our clients are talking exactly the same language.

This common language approach has been cemented by our being able to work with clients who are SFIA users in refining and ensuring that the read-across between SFIA and our pay data has reliable validity. We particularly worked on this initially with Hampshire Police and have subsequently been able to apply the approach most effectively with other clients, notably the Cabinet Office and also Hampshire County Council. Perhaps **you** could be next?

In summary, SFIA gives us and our clients the ability to benchmark remuneration levels with confidence and enables us to advise our clients on any action that they may wish/need to take based on the results of our work.

More Information

If you would like to know more about pay benchmarking and how it could help your organisation please visit www.celreconsult.co.uk or e-mail the author at trevormorriss@aol.com CELRE Consultancy consultants are each SFIA accredited.

BCS 'Making it Work'

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, has been working with large global private sector companies not just to implement SFIA, but to make good use of it.

These exciting global opportunities have taken us all the way to the US and even as far as Brunei. Over the past 14 years, BCS has considerably grown its consultancy offering. We know how to add real value, adding to the great IP that SFIA has with SFIA**plus**, and using industry experts to enable businesses to get so much more from SFIA than they first imagined. bcs.org/sfiaplus



David Devine
Enterprise Sales Director

Making objective assessments of skills

From Kevin Tibbs, Managing Director, validateskills

The approach taken by *validateskills* is to offer objective assessments on-line using the SFIA framework. In the last newsletter you may remember I asked for organisations to come forward and assist us in proving our new venture. Step forward Hudson.

Hudson, well known in IT Recruitment around the globe, had a critical position to fulfil for a very important client. Traditional skills screening processes were proving to be less than adequate for this high end level 6 role.



We firstly set about assessing the job role specification against the SFIA framework, looking at overall responsibilities and level descriptors. This exercise gave us a series of codes aligned directly with the role and our questions. Four codes at level 6 were chosen, plus the level evaluator. In combining these five question banks into one assessment we carried out benchmarking with existing employees within the clients team.

This gave us confidence that we were asking the right questions. The pass rate was set; in recruitment terms, the candidates who were above the benchmark would be shortlisted for further interview.

Using the *validateskills* online application we were also able to view the skills code areas. Each code had an indicator to let us know how well each candidate did within each SFIA code. With a combined analysis report delivered to the client at the end of the process alongside traditional competency based Interview reports from Hudson, a full evaluation could be carried out against each candidate looking at cultural fit as well as skills and experience fit, it was proven that the top achievers in the assessments, when viewed with traditional evidence such as CV, psychometric testing etc, were indeed top of the class and put forward for interview.

I'm pleased to announce *validateskills* identified the top scorer, which after the final round of interviews was offered the position.

This process has been commended by the client who had previously gone to market three times without success, this innovative way of assessing candidates has opened new conversations with Hudson's client base and already Hudson and *validateskills* have been consulted on the next assignment, this time a more senior post, more complex and business critical.

If you wish to know more please e-mail kevin.tibbs@validateskills.com or Gary.fay@hudson.com We will also be attending the SFIA Conference 7th March 2013. Further information. <http://uk.hudson.com/it-recruitment>

Hudson is a global talent solutions company with expertise in leadership and specialised permanent and contracting recruitment, RPO, talent management, eDiscovery and project solutions. We believe in working closely with you to help you solve your toughest people challenges. Our business and market knowledge, together with our proprietary assessment tools, helps us deliver the right talent for your business. Our extensive country presence and on-going relationship with millions of specialised professionals worldwide — and across a wide range of functions and industries — allows us to provide you with talent solutions, quickly and efficiently.

China

The Foundation's Chairman, Mike Bridgefoot, has recently spent some time in the Far East. His travels have taken in India, Singapore, Hong Kong and Beijing. He has found strong interest in SFIA in all of these places, and at least one of the users he met is now making arrangements to get help from a SFIA Accredited Consultant. The users in China are thinking of setting up a local conference, using the materials from the forthcoming SFIA Conference.

We do have simplified Mandarin and Cantonese translations of an earlier version of SFIA.



Changes at the SFIA Council

The SFIA Council is the official channel for input to the SFIA Board. It provides a mechanism to keep the Board in touch with the industry's priorities and how those changes may affect the development and adoption of SFIA. It recommends strategic actions and encourages the collection of feedback on the current and future use of SFIA.

The Council has been in place since 2003 but until now has been primarily UK based and reliant on 6 monthly face to face meetings. In recognition of the growing international base of users the Council is widening its membership to include representatives from Australia, United States, Europe and South America. It is also looking to increase the quantity and quality of feedback

If you have any questions about the SFIA Council please contact Andy Thompson, Chair of the SFIA Council. (andy.thomson@qa.com)

it obtains from SFIA Users, Partners and Accredited Consultants and to extend attendance at the 6 monthly meetings by using teleconferencing to enable international Council members to attend.



SFIA Registration

You may be interested to know that the SFIA name is extensively protected around the world. Our cover is official in European Union (all 27 Member States), Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea S, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Singapore, South Africa, UK, USA.

Our name is also covered in the 89 countries that are signatories of the Madrid Protocol – listed below. (There is some overlap.)

Our approach to IPR does not stop at the protection of our copyright, logo and name. We recognised from the outset that many users of It would need help in addressing the area of skills management. That is why we developed the Accredited Consultant concept, and why we required consultancies to have two Accredited Consultants on their staff before they can become Accredited Partners.



Signatories of the Madrid Protocol

Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Zambia

The Last Word

Well what can I say...? The last 6 months since I joined SFIA have been busy! Things are going really well! Interest in SFIA continues to grow across the globe particularly across Asia Pacific. Work continues on the development of our 'new and improved' website.

And the SFIA conference 'Skills for Digital Business' is growing ever closer. After the initial feedback on content, with a strong line-up in place and numerous stands reserved by various SFIA Accredited Partners we anticipate a fantastic event. Make sure you get your tickets early to avoid disappointment!

Tickets can now be ordered from the SFIA web site. www.sfia.org.uk

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all A Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

I look forward to seeing you all at the conference in March.



Lucy Ryan
Business Administrator

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www.sfia.org.uk
Editor: Lucy Ryan busadmin@sfia.org.uk

Registered in England 04770377
Reg. office 5 Fleet Place, London, EC4M 7RD (not for correspondence)

A not-for-profit organisation whose members are:
The Chartered Institute for IT, e-skills UK, IMIS, itSMF, The IET