

How SFIA works

■ Do it your way

Defined by IT professionals and employers, SFIA contains definitions of recognisable IT skills: not jobs, not roles, but skills. These are incorporated in the job descriptions or role profiles used by an organisation.

■ The definitions

SFIA is a simple two-dimensional matrix. The skills are mapped across seven standard responsibility levels. Each level has a full generic definition and a memory-jogging tag.

SFIA levels	SKILL DEFINITION
7 Set strategy/inspire	
6 Initiate/influence	
5 Ensure/advise	
4 Enable	
3 Apply	
2 Assist	
1 Follow	

Each skill has an overall definition, then a more specific definition at each of the levels at which the skill is recognised (individual skills are not generally recognisable at all seven levels).

■ Diagnostic

The definitions answer the practical need to determine what level of skill a role needs, or an individual possesses. They are succinct, containing enough information to satisfy this diagnostic purpose.

About SFIA

■ Practical and widely-used

SFIA was produced by the industry for the industry, so it is an effective, practical tool.

It is now in use worldwide in all sectors of industry and Government as the preferred way of describing IT skills. SFIA has been translated into Japanese and Chinese.

SFIA underpins the UK Government's approach to professionalism in IT.

■ Ownership and regular updates

SFIA is owned and maintained by The SFIA Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation whose members are BCS, e-skills UK, The IET, IMIS, and itSMF.

Regular updates keep the framework relevant.

■ Licence and use

The licence to use the framework is free of charge, though the Foundation requires a royalty from those using it to support a commercial offering.

■ Training and accreditation

The SFIA Foundation accredits consultants and partners, and provides training.

Further details of these and many other matters can be found on the SFIA website:
www.sfia.org.uk

Getting IT right with SFIA



Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) is an effective, practical tool produced by the industry for the industry.

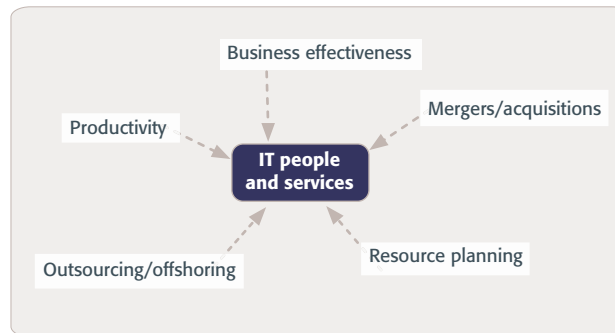
SFIA can underpin the approach to IT professionalism in your organisation, as it does in many organisations around the world, including the UK Government.

SFIA provides the most widely accepted description of IT skills, across 7 levels of attainment – from new entrant to director.

The SFIA Foundation accredits consultants and partners, and provides training.

Find out more online: www.sfia.org.uk

Key drivers on corporate IT



1. Business effectiveness

Understand your skills and capability; deploy capability where it gives best business value. SFIA is at the heart of any company's ability to do this, providing the base language and structure to assess skills, develop capability and align work with appropriate individuals.

2. Productivity

Optimise resources: putting the right skills in the right place at the right time enhances effectiveness; better skills mean faster work and fewer mistakes.

3. Resource planning

SFIA provides a structured common language for planning, business, HR and IT – to state needs, recognise skills, identify gaps and determine how the gaps will be filled.

4. Outsourcing/off-shoring

SFIA helps you know your own capability – the essential platform for quality decisions about exploiting external resources.

5. Mergers and acquisitions

Enable a common view among managers and HR, to enable the new organisation to be built rapidly.

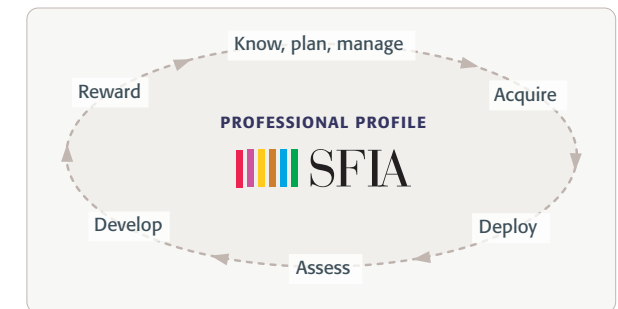
Responding to these forces means having a clear knowledge of the workforce's capabilities, ideally by classifying people by professional profiles that indicate the type of contribution they can make.

Know the capabilities: professional profiles

Professional profiles can either be used as the prime role profile in resource management, or they can provide the 'person specification' section for traditional job descriptions.

Either way, these definitions are the currency of the organisation's capability. They are the units of measurement of that capability – or of the gaps in it.

How SFIA helps



■ Clarity and objectivity

Any description of the skills and capability of an individual or category of individuals must be clear about the skills required, and objective about the level at which the skills should be exhibited. SFIA provides the most widely accepted description of IT skills, with succinct definitions positioned across seven levels of attainment.

■ Include corporate competencies

A professional profile will need to state other requirements of the role such as the organisation's preferred behavioural competencies, knowledge, qualifications, etc.

The clear definitions of SFIA's seven levels help ensure that this information is included at the right level.

The completed profiles are then reference points to give coherence and consistency to all stages of the capability management cycle.