Insider’s Guide to Careers in Intelligence Analysis

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December 17, 2009
Overview

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• Overview of Intelligence Analysis
• General Qualifications
• Training
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Presenter’s Background

- US Coast Guard (civilian) counterdrug intelligence (prior to 9/11) (1 year)
- DIA - Joint Intelligence Task Force for Combating Terrorism (JITF-CT) (7 years)
- 15 year career as freelance writer (intel/defense issues for Jane’s Intelligence Review, etc)
- Current doctoral candidate, Henley-Putnam, DSS Program
- Henley-Putnam University, Adjunct Professor (Terrorism)
- Author: *Targeted Killing: Self-Defense, Pre-emption, and the War on Terrorism* (Nov 2009)
- Currently Senior Intelligence Analyst, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Dept of Homeland Security.
Intelligence Analysts – An Overview

• Analysts, also known as Intelligence Analysts or Intelligence Officers (depending on your office’s preference), manage and produce intelligence on regional, transnational, scientific and technical, missile, medical, and literally dozens and dozens of other topics. What is your favorite area as far as a subject for analysis? If you have one, there is almost certainly an analytic specialty for it.

• Key functions include conducting research and gathering information, identifying intelligence gaps, interpreting and evaluating information from multiple (and sometimes contradictory) sources, monitoring trends and events related to a particular country or issue, and preparing written and oral assessments based on current events.

• Your customers (the term for the individual or entity for whom you are to send your finished intelligence report) may include national policymakers (POTUS, JCS, Combatant Commanders (formerly “CINCs”), other senior military commanders, and other Intelligence Community members. Other customers may include the deployed warfighter, FBI special agents, special operations force (SOF), or any group or individual that you can imagine!
The Intelligence Cycle – the analyst, depending on agency, has a role in almost every step...
Intelligence Analysis by Agency

• CIA
• DIA
• NSA
• Energy
• State Dept.
• Treasury (Dept of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence)
• Military Commands (SOCOM, NORTHCOM, etc.)
• FBI
• Local, State LE
• Justice (US Marshals,
• Etc.
What are some of the areas covered by intelligence analysis?

- Counterterrorism (CT)
- Counterdrug (CD)
- Organized Crime
- Homeland Security
- Detainee Support
- Political-Military
- Counterfeiting
- Presidential Protection
- Geospatial
- Imagery
- Foreign Military Equipment
- Human Factors (Foreign Heads of State profiles, etc.)
- Counterintelligence (CI)
- Medical Intelligence
- Targeting (support to the warfighter)
- Regional Desks (Middle East, South America, etc.)
- Economic & Financial

There are intelligence analysis opportunities for virtually any topic and field of interest to the US government.
Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)

- Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)
  - Top intelligence agency for the US military worldwide
  - Global mission, global problem sets
  - Opportunities for deployment and/or overseas duty stations
  - Contributor to all major intel reports (Presidential Daily Brief, Joint Chiefs of Staff, etc.)
  - HQ: Wash. DC

- Approximately 50% military, 50% civilian workforce
Intelligence Analysis Opportunities in the Dept of Homeland Security

- Department of Homeland Security
- As of 2002 (Homeland Security Act), incorporates the following agencies with intelligence interests...
  - Customs and Border Protection
  - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
  - Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
  - US Coast Guard
  - US Secret Service
  - Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) (formerly INS)
  - And many other bureaus and departments
Training

- Most agencies have training programs for analysts at all stages of their careers.
- Training varies based on agency, no common training program.
- Some agencies have their own internal “universities” – CIA (CIA “University”), DIA (National Defense Intelligence College) – extensive joint training.
- Training exists for virtually every aspect of intelligence analysis – generally, offices are very supportive of training, and some courses are often mandatory.
- Some agencies offer tuition assistance for undergrads!
- Example: DIA’s Undergraduate Training Assistance Program (you can Google it, it is not classified) https://diajobs.dia.mil/PSOL/htmldoc/eng/ic_dia_help/er/vacat/utap.htm
Qualifications/Requirements

- Each and every agency is different with regard to what they are looking for
- College degrees required for senior positions
- Internships widely available throughout the IC
- Security clearance is one of the sole requirements that is mandatory across the entire IC – even for analytical positions that deal only with unclassified information (unclassified analysis can quickly become classified – even using only open source!)
College Degree/Major?

- Again, each and every agency is different with regard to what they are looking for
- What might preclude you from one job might qualify you for another
- Degrees/majors are as varied as the field itself
- The ability to write is important; however, the IC needs analysts of all types – including economists, language experts, regional expertise, etc etc etc!
- Focus on your interests!
Intelligence Community Clearances

• Most positions within the Intelligence Community require that employees possess a security clearance. Hiring for these positions is done contingent upon the employee applying for and subsequently being granted such a clearance. The criteria for granting personnel security clearances vary depending upon the level of clearance and the particular IC member doing the hiring.

• Here is an excellent, one-page resource on the clearance process and related information:
  – http://www.intelligence.gov/3-security.shtml
What are the official clearance levels?

- **Confidential** – This refers to material, which, if improperly disclosed, could be reasonably expected to cause **some measurable damage** to the national security. The vast majority of military personnel are given this very basic level of clearance. This level needs to be reinvestigated every fifteen years.

- **Secret** - The unauthorized disclosure of secret information could be expected to cause **serious damage** to the national security. This level is reinvestigated every ten years.

- **Top Secret** - Individuals with this clearance have access to information or material that could be expected to cause **exceptionally grave damage** to the national security if it was released without authorization. This level needs to be reinvestigated every five years.
What are the official clearance levels?

• Top Secret/SCI (Secure Compartmented Information). SCI clearances are granted only for those approved for Top Secret clearances
  – Termed “SAPs” (Special Access Programs) in the military
  – SCI and SAP are highly restricted programs which require special clearance, usually a brief program introduction and a formal, signed “read on”
  – Most common are HUMINT and Gamma (imagery-related)

• Top Secret/SSBI (Single Scope Background Investigation)
  – SSBI often required for TS, SCI, and Q access
  – In addition, CI jobs (incl analysis) almost always require a polygraph.
How does the clearance process work?

• Often, a new analyst can be hired after undergoing an NAC (National Agency Check), and work under a temporary SECRET clearance until the process is completed – 6 months to 1 year.

• TS (incl. TS/SCI and TS/SSBI) clearances can take up to 18 months, depending on the individual's background and the backlog workload at DSS or other approving body.

• There is usually preference for individuals who already possess a clearance, for obvious reasons – your clearance is GOLD – never jeopardize it!

• Honesty is the most important element of your background check

• The clearance process does not expect “perfect” people – it allows for mistakes, as long as you are truthful.
Why is a clearance so important for a job?

• Currently, there are more than 500,000 background investigations pending for security clearance approval.

• When an individual is going through the process for clearance, it may take up to a year before a determination is made (more so if you have extensive overseas travel, etc.).

• This makes a military candidate who already has clearance even more appealing to a hiring company – esp for DIA, NSA, NRO, and NGA (all of which are DoD agencies).

• If the company hires a person who will need to gain a clearance, they may wait over a year before the person is eligible to work on the project for which they were hired.

• This is a lot of lost time and money to a company. If they can identify a person who has the necessary clearances, such as a candidate with a military background, that person immediately becomes more valuable.
What does GG indicate?

• GG typically replaces GS designators in the intelligence and national security fields
• GG is most commonly found at CIA, NSA, DIA, State Dept, and the FBI
• GG indicates excepted service – meaning that employees are not part of the standard competitive process for job promotions, appeals, and other specific aspects of federal employment.
• This also permits faster advancement owing to the special needs of national security.
Suggested Intelligence Analysis Job Websites

- **USAJOBS.gov** – This is the US government’s official job website, and it includes a variety of intelligence analysis positions throughout the government. This site merits bookmarking and regular checking. These include most government agencies, including the US Secret Service (USSS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other Dept of Homeland Security agencies. [http://www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)

The following links will take you directly to intelligence analysis positions, where possible (some agency websites require a visit to an initial main page on their website):

- Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) - [http://diajobs.dia.mil/](http://diajobs.dia.mil/)
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) - [https://www.cia.gov/careers/opportunities/analytical/view-jobs.html](https://www.cia.gov/careers/opportunities/analytical/view-jobs.html)
- National Geospatial Agency (NGA) - [https://www1.nga.mil/NGAJobs/Pages/default.aspx](https://www1.nga.mil/NGAJobs/Pages/default.aspx)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) - [http://www.fbijobs.gov/03.asp](http://www.fbijobs.gov/03.asp) (Intelligence analysis positions fall under the “Professional Staff” subheading)
Questions?

For more information, visit the Intelligence Community’s website at http://www.intelligence.gov/

This could be you!