

# 60 seconds with...

**Rajjiv Fowdur**  
Senior Actuarial Manager



## What drew you to MBE?

It has to be the focus of MBE on its clients and consultants. As a company MBE supplies a framework which allows its consultants to provide the best possible solutions for their clients. MBE places a lot of value in providing its employees with industry-standard actuarial support and promotes their continuous professional development, through thought-leadership and company sponsored events. The work done by MBE in each client/project is unique. MBE invests time in understanding the specific requirements of their clients, designs a multi-disciplinary project team (actuarial, technology, process improvement) and provides ongoing professional support to its consultants, giving them the opportunity to deliver the most added value in their projects.

## What is your approach to working with a new client?

On my first few days with a new client, I start by understanding their culture and language. And by language, I don't mean English, German or French. I mean the language that has developed in a client's organisation over many years.

This probably comes from my first day in my Economics 101 class in university, where my lecturer said that the aim of this course was to develop a new language which would allow us to explore complex thoughts in a clear and constructive way.

Understanding the culture and the nuances in how people communicate in an organisation makes my work a lot easier. It shows me the best way to approach an issue, who's the best person to talk to, what are their expectations. This gives me more confidence that my solutions are correctly communicated to and adopted by my clients.

## How does the concept of change play a role in your work?

Change is the only thing which is constant in most of my projects. Change can be perceived in many different ways; change can help make processes more efficient, but change can break down systems which have been working well. It is always important to acknowledge that a lot of the existing processes may be working well, and this should not be lost in a transition.

I also find that clients don't like the idea of a new solution being dropped into their organisation. "Newer is better" is not a concept which actuaries tend to just adopt. I think that that our natural inclination to risk mitigation forces us to find out what has changed, why could it be better, why could it be worse, what's the catch.

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## What's your approach to working with people of different temperaments and experience?

In a business environment, “people with strong temperaments” is just another way of saying “people who are passionate about their work, who are not willing to compromise quality”. I find it inspiring how members of the profession are willing to voice their opinions and impose very high quality standards on their teams. This, in fact, works really well for me, because I tend to be just as passionate about my work.

I find that a mixed experience team can bring lots of ideas to the table when it comes to solving problems. From people who have built a long term career on a topic, people who have transferred from lateral lines of work, to the new joiners in the team – each of them would bring valuable inputs and criticism, for example, questioning any generally accepted simplifications.

## When you were a child, what did you want to grow up to do?

A fighter pilot! The F22 Raptor was my favourite fighter jet, I played every flight simulation game out there, watched every movie. I was particularly impressed with how people and technology would produce tools which are so fast, precise and sophisticated.

Am I doing my dream job right now? Well, maybe yes. When I boost the performance of actuarial models into solutions which become significantly faster or more accurate, I do feel like I'm sitting in a flight cockpit triggering on the afterburners.

## Which concepts do you admire most in your industry and why?

What I admire the most about the insurance industry is its role in society. In the presence of Insurance, society as a whole has grown more confident about the uncertainties in everyday life, business, large scale ventures.

Members of the insurance industry are well aware of how important this confidence is to society, and have put in place significant measures to make sure that this confidence is not broken. From actuarial guidelines, accounting practices to industry regulation – these for me represent the commitment of the industry to preserve the confidence society places on insurance.