

**Editor's Note:** The following text is from Chapter 9 of ATP 2-33.4, *Intelligence Analysis*, 10 January 2020.

## Overview

Any echelon can conduct long-term intelligence analysis, which is simply analysis over a longer period of time (several months or longer). There are many forms of long-term analysis, such as long-term analytical assessments. Formal (authoritative or exploratory) long-term analytical assessments are usually associated with operational- and strategic-level intelligence units and organizations because these assessments are resource-intensive. Intelligence analysts at the tactical level can use some of the steps and substeps discussed in this chapter in order to improve their analysis, but they rarely apply all of the steps of the process.

Managing long-term analytical assessments, also referred to as analytic design in this chapter, ensures the analytical effort results in the best possible assessment. Analytic design ensures the analytical effort is properly focused, carefully planned and executed, and that the analytical results are effectively communicated to the requestor. The Defense Intelligence Agency published a helpful document, *Analytic Design: Analytic Tradecraft Guidance from the DI Research Director*, which served as the basis for this chapter.

Long-term analytical assessments are produced using a deliberate and specific execution of the intelligence analysis process over a longer period of time that closely complies with the Intelligence Community Analytic Standards (to include the analytic tradecraft standards) established in [Intelligence Community Directive] ICD 203. This form of analysis includes the careful management of the overall effort, dedicating significant resources to the effort (for example, analysis is conducted by an analytic team), executing various iterations of analysis, and applying advanced structured analytic techniques within the effort.

**Note.** Intelligence personnel should not use this chapter to develop criteria and standards for tactical-level intelligence analysis. This chapter covers the basics of analytic design but does not cover all the information needed to develop formal long-term analytical assessments. Specifically, some of the analytic techniques and the use of models and automated simulations are not discussed in this publication.

## The Basics of Analytic Design

Managing long-term analytical assessments is accomplished by performing seven analytic design steps, as shown in figure 9-1 (on the next page):

- ◆ **Step 1:** Frame the question/issue.
- ◆ **Step 2:** Review and assess knowledge.
- ◆ **Step 3:** Review resources.
- ◆ **Step 4:** Select the analytic approach/methodology and plan project.
- ◆ **Step 5:** Develop knowledge.
- ◆ **Step 6:** Perform analysis.
- ◆ **Step 7:** Evaluate analysis.

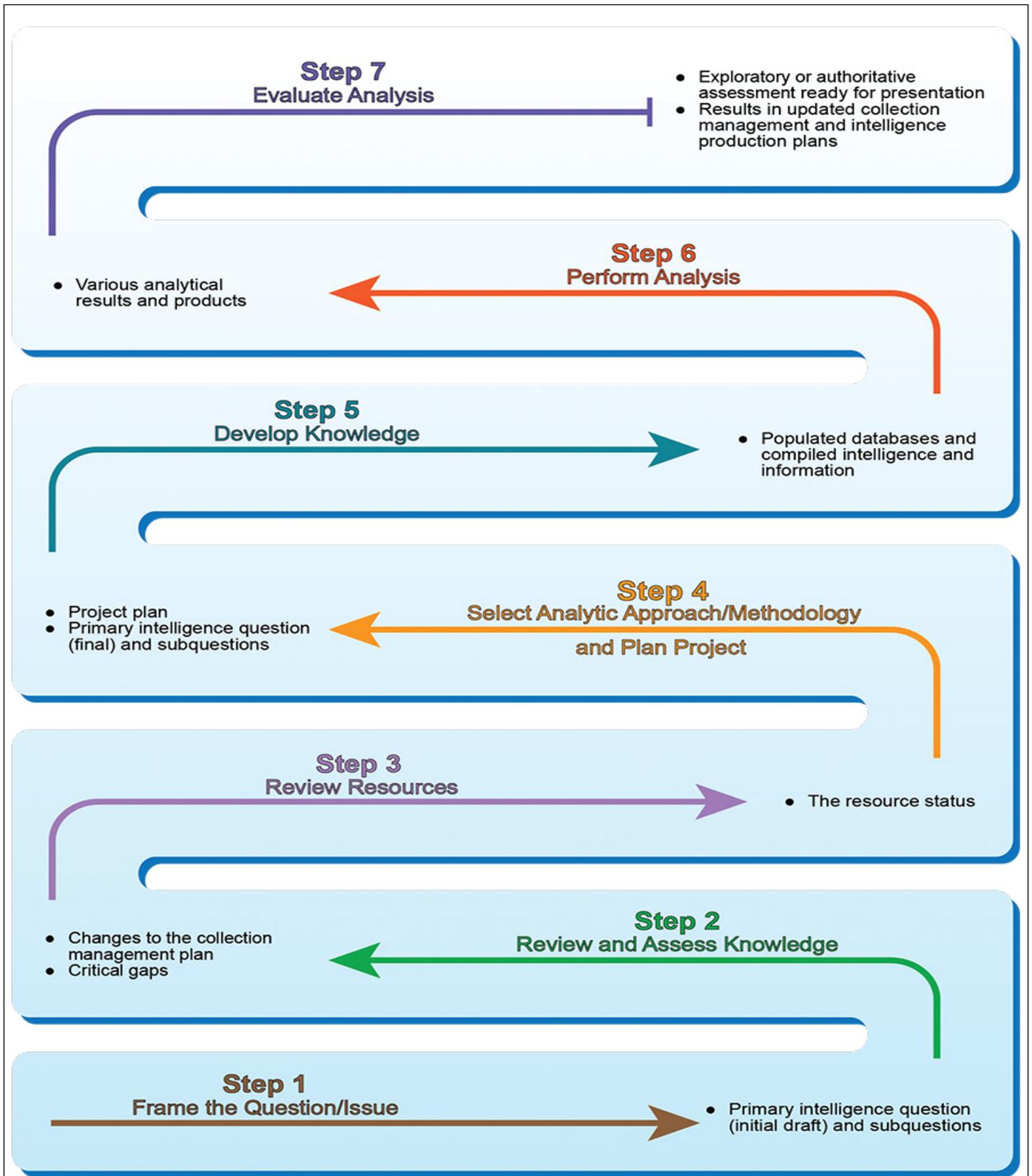


Figure 9-1. Analytic Design Steps



## Frame the Question/Issue

Properly framing the question greatly increases the chance of successful long-term analysis. The analytic team starts with understanding the requestor’s requirement by identifying relevant topics and issues that break down into a primary question that can be analyzed. Framing the question includes refining and scoping the question to carefully capture the requestor’s expectations, mitigate bias, craft an objective analytic question, and develop subquestions. This step results in an initial draft of the primary intelligence question and is followed by reviewing and assessing existing knowledge. (See figure 9-2.)

**Note.** Do not confuse the frame the question/issue step with the “frame” activities associated with the Army design methodology. (For information on the Army design methodology, see ATP 5-0.1.)

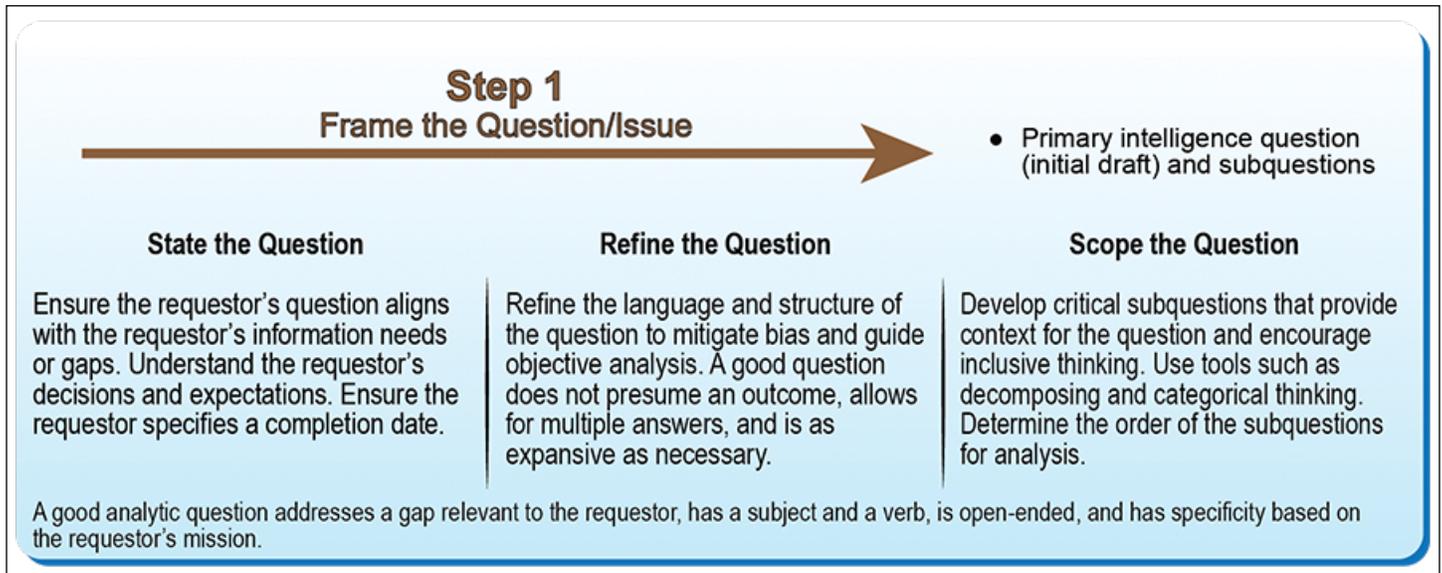


Figure 9-2. Frame the Question/Issue

## Review and Assess Knowledge

Reviewing and assessing knowledge involves an overlap of the analytical effort with collection management. Step 2 includes reviewing available information and intelligence, the collection management plan, and results of ongoing intelligence collection, as well as identifying information gaps. (See figure 9-3.)

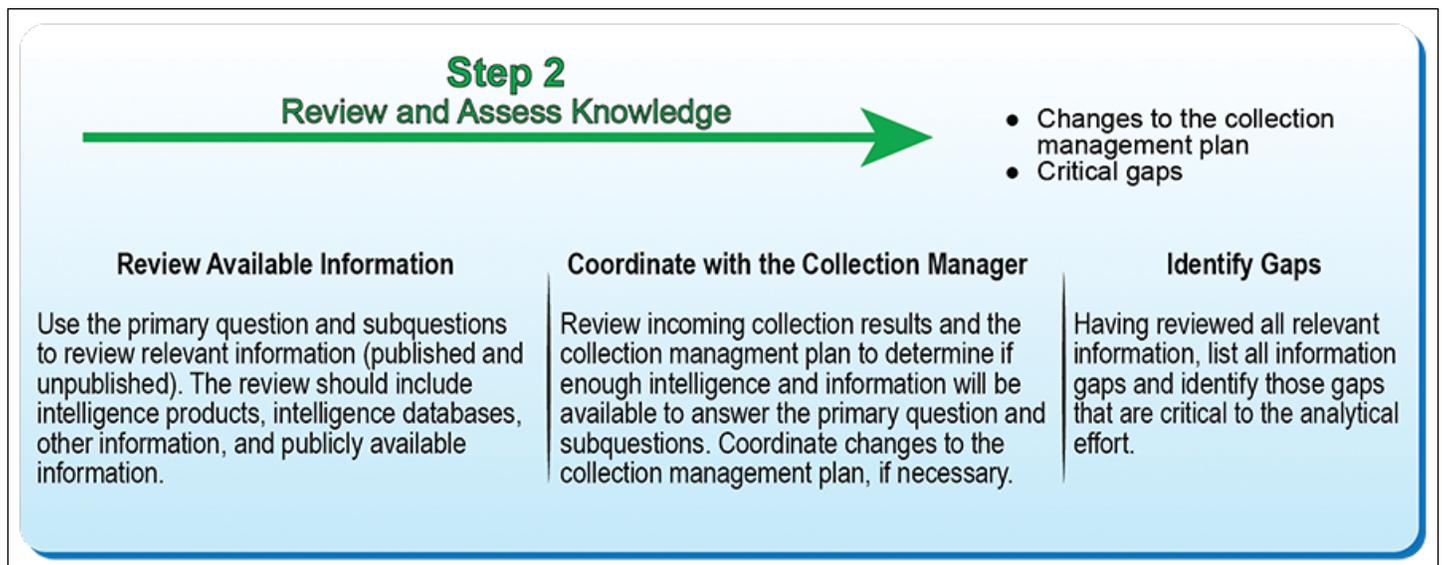


Figure 9-3. Review and Assess Knowledge

## Review Resources

After understanding what knowledge is available and identifying information gaps, the next step is reviewing available resources, such as tools, personnel, and time. (See figure 9-4.)

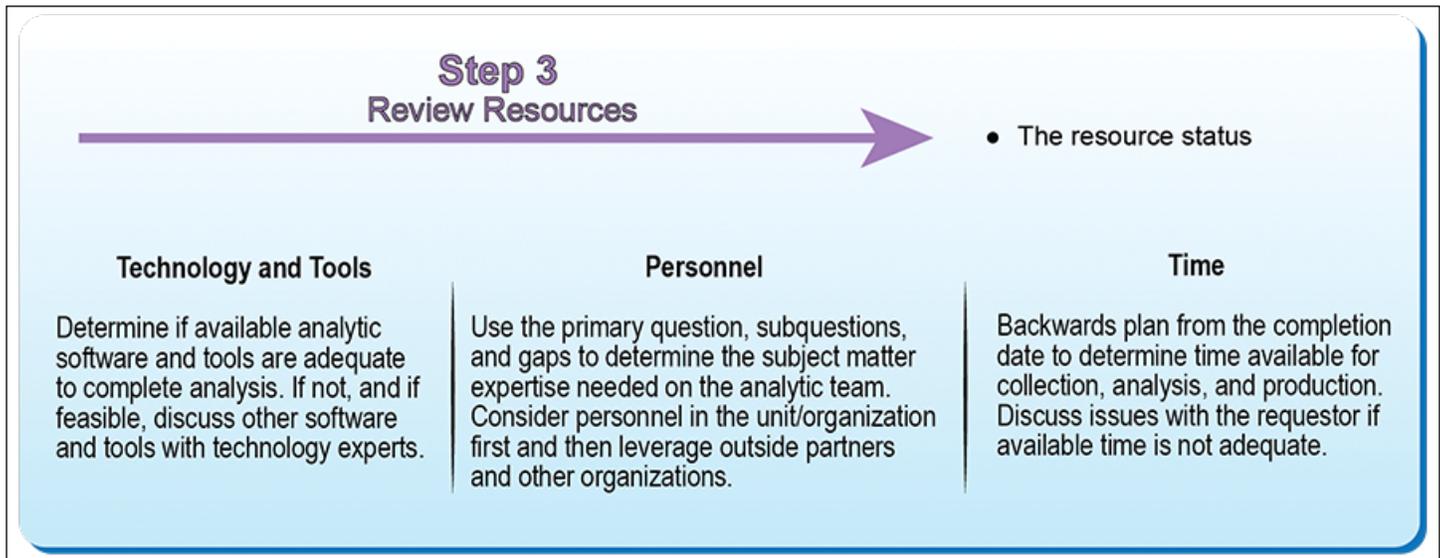


Figure 9-4. Review Resources

## Select the Analytic Approach/Methodology and Plan Project

Using the results of steps 1 through 3, the analytic team finalizes the primary intelligence question and subquestions, selects the analytic approach/methodology, and develops a project plan. The analytic approach/methodology includes the specific analytic techniques, who will perform each technique, and the sequence of those techniques to ensure analytic insight and mitigate bias. (See figure 9-5.)

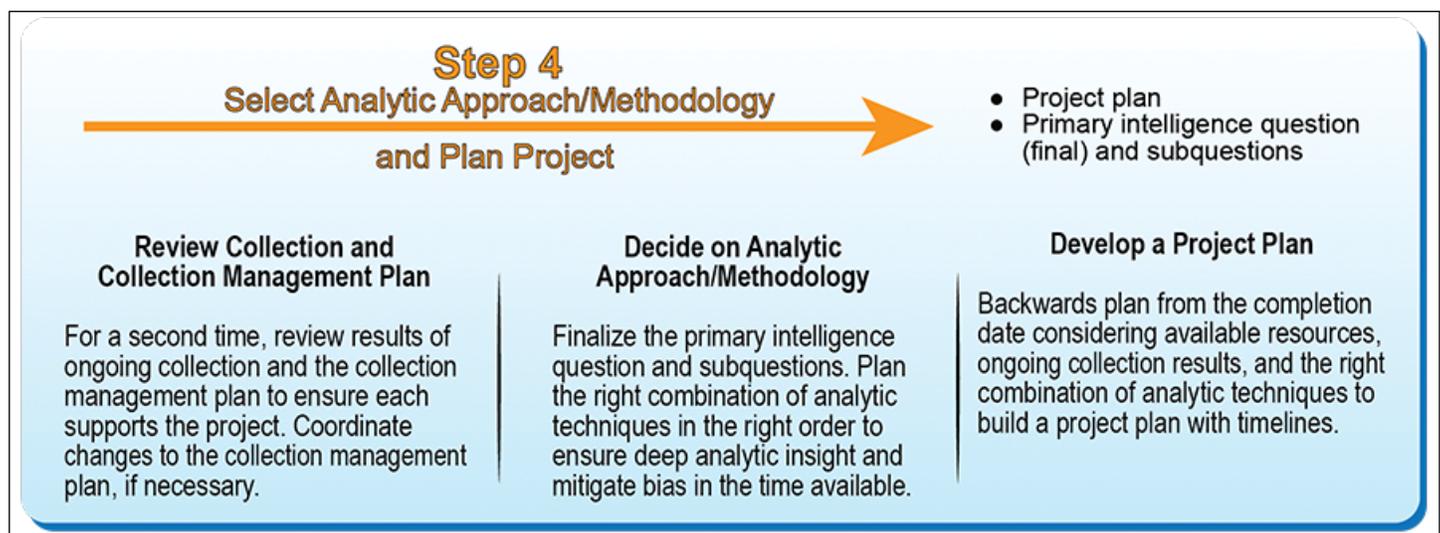


Figure 9-5. Select the Analytic Approach/Methodology and Plan Project

## Develop Knowledge

Developing knowledge is the last step before performing analysis. Although discussed as a separate step in the process, developing knowledge occurs continually throughout the process. The analytic team gathers all relevant intelligence and information through ongoing collection, intelligence reach, and internal research. (See figure 9-6.)

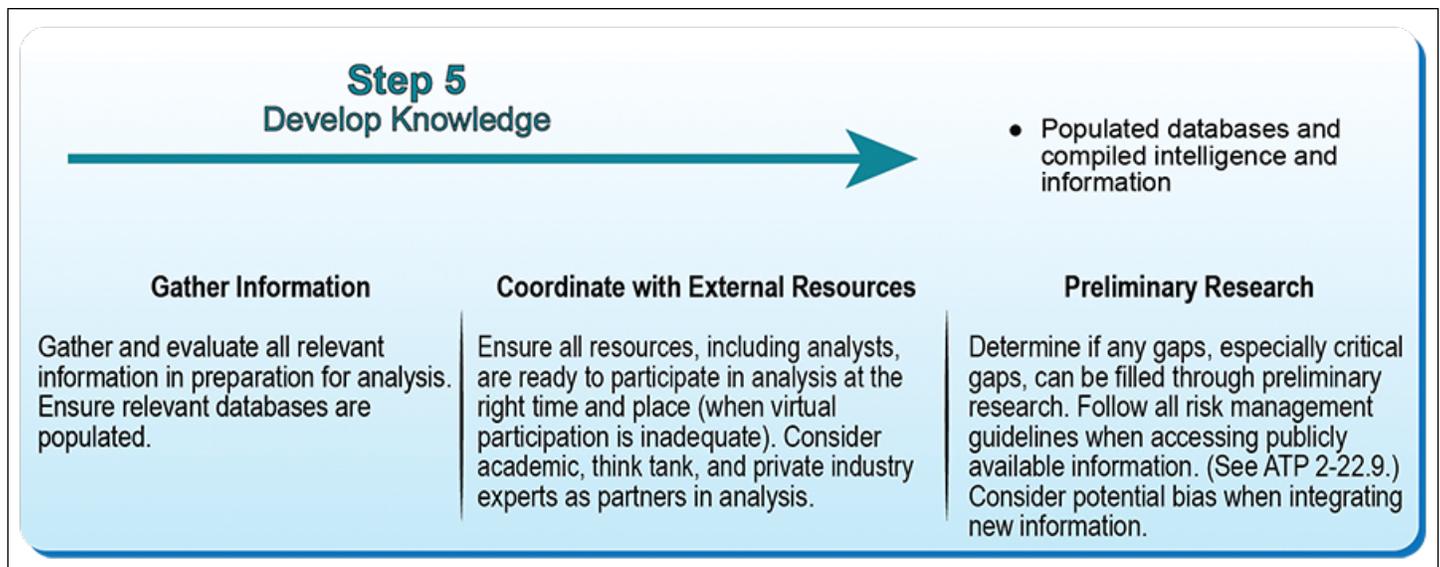


Figure 9-6. Develop Knowledge

## Perform Analysis

Steps 1 through 5 set the stage for the deliberate execution of analytic techniques, to include adjusting the project plan, if necessary, and assessing the analytical results using the context that was developed while framing the question/issue. (See figure 9-7.)

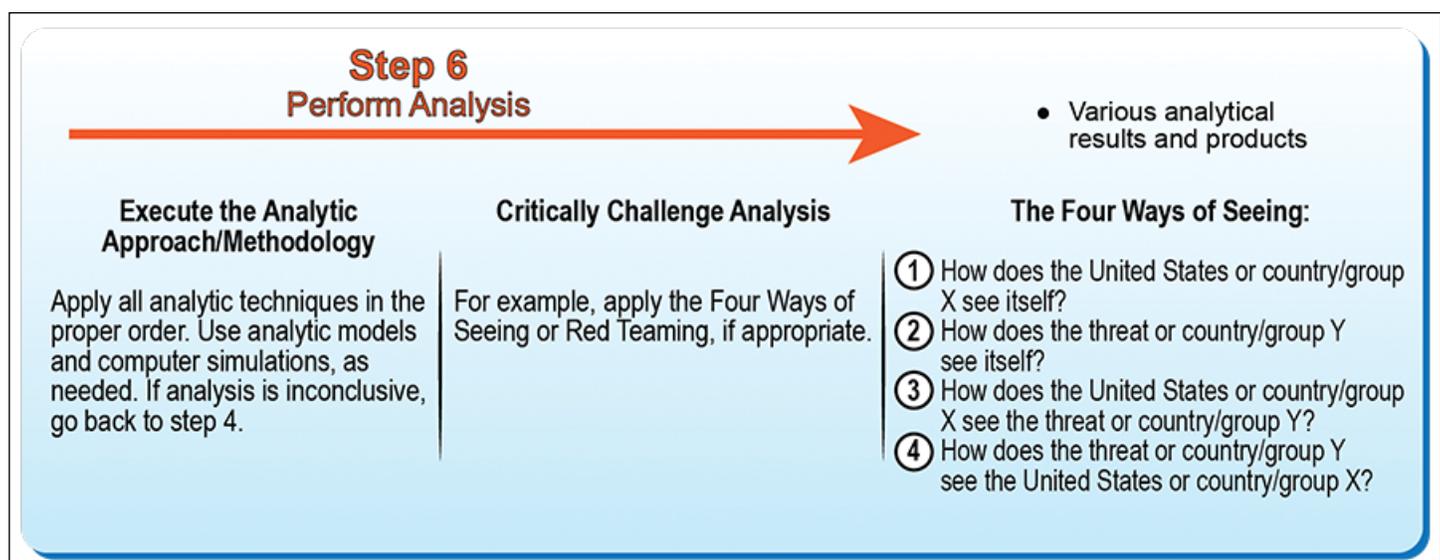


Figure 9-7. Perform Analysis



## Evaluate Analysis

Evaluating analysis, the final step of the process, results in the final analytical results and associated information necessary to make a presentation to the requestor. Evaluating analysis includes assessing the analytical results and the impact of analytic gaps and unconfirmed assumptions, performing analysis of alternatives, and assigning a confidence level to the analytic answer. (See figure 9-8.)

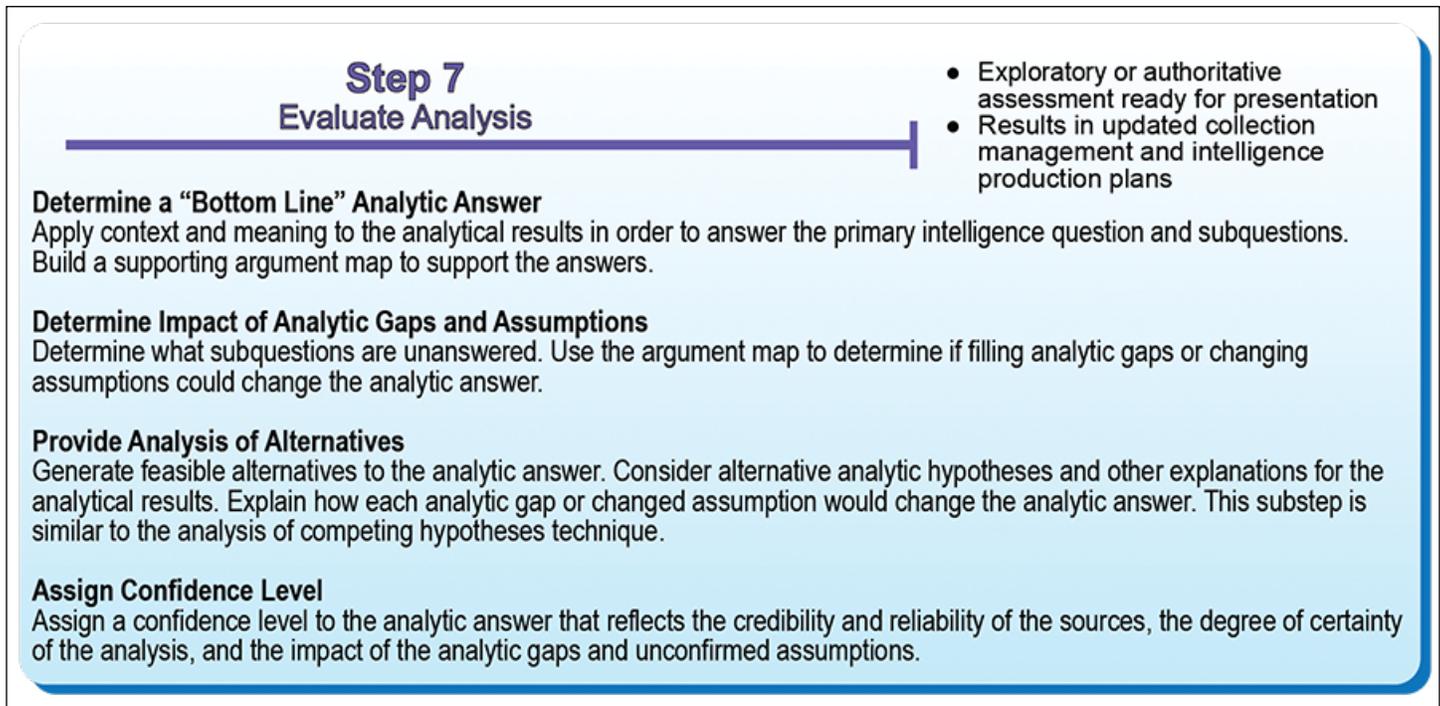


Figure 9-8. Evaluate Analysis

## Collaboration During Analytic Design

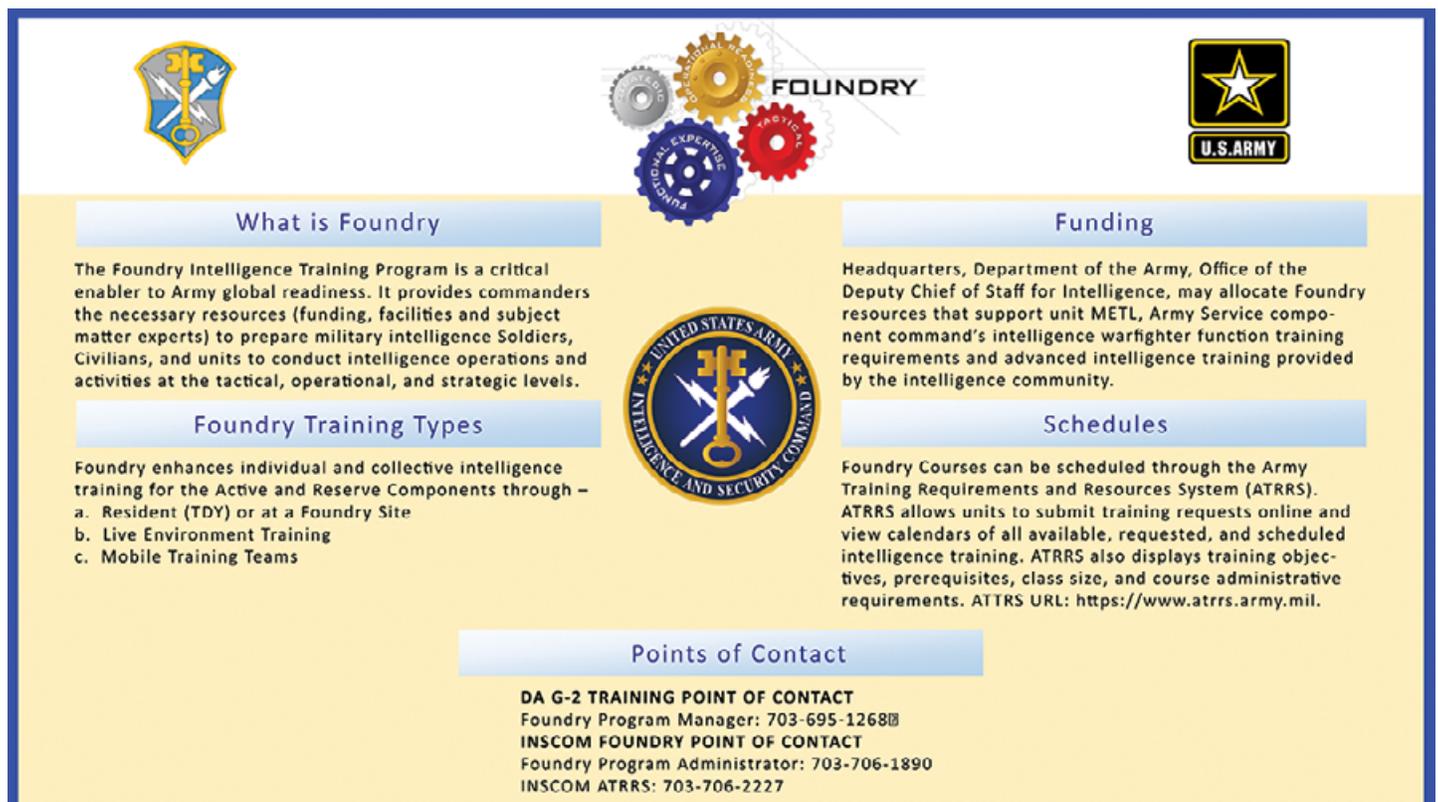
Collaboration is critical to long-term analytical assessments and occurs between different stakeholders across the intelligence community. This collaboration ensures a diversity of perspective and depth in expertise that is impossible through any other means. Four specific areas in which collaboration is invaluable are—

- ◆ **Bias mitigation:** Analytic teams with diverse backgrounds and different perspectives can effectively identify and check assumptions, interpret new information, and determine the quality of various types of information.
- ◆ **Framing/Knowledge review:** Analytic teams can engage early in the process to build context, craft analytic questions, share information sources, and develop analytical issues.
- ◆ **Methodology building:** Analytic teams assess the credibility of the analytic approach and clarity of the argument through various means, including peer reviews.
- ◆ **Perform analysis:** Analytic teams can perform various analytic techniques, identify hypotheses, and analyze alternatives as a group to improve the quality of the analytical effort.

## Transitioning from the Analytic Design Process to Presenting the Results

Managing long-term analytical assessments includes not only presenting an analytic answer but also a confidence level to the answer and alternative hypotheses or explanations for gaps and uncertainty. During evaluate analysis, the last step of the process, the analytic team decides whether the question requires more analysis, and therefore, whether the assessment is exploratory or authoritative and ready to present to the requestor. If the results are ready for presentation, the analytic team deliberately prepares to present those results. Transitioning from long-term analysis to presenting the analytic answer includes stepping back from that analysis, reviewing the assessment, and clarifying the relevance of the analytical results. Then the analytic team determines—

- ◆ **What is the message:** The message characterizes whether the assessment is authoritative or exploratory and includes the “bottom line” of the assessment. Additionally, the assessment includes any shifts in analysis that occurred over time, any impacts on the requestor (decisions and future focus areas), the confidence level, alternative hypotheses, and indicators.
- ◆ **What is the analytical argument:** The analytic team develops an outline for logically progressing through the analytical assessment. An argument map is a useful tool to ensure a logical analytical flow during the presentation and to ensure the message is easily understood. The team may use basic interrogatives (*who, what, when, where, why, and how*) or a similar tool to capture the critical elements of the message to present to the requestor.
- ◆ **What are critical gaps and assumptions:** Gaps and assumptions identified during the evaluate analysis step become limitations to the certainty of the analytical assessment, and, in some cases, drive future analytical efforts. The analytic team may insert gaps and assumptions within the message and clearly discuss the level of impact on the assessment (for example, in the source summary statement or in the “bottom line” statement).
- ◆ **What reasonable analytical alternatives remain:** For authoritative assessments, answering the questions “*what if I am wrong*” and “*what could change my assessment*” provides analysis of alternatives that should be included in the assessment to explain what remains uncertain.
- ◆ **What product or products should be presented:** Determine the best format for the presentation that facilitates the discussion of the argument. If it is exploratory analysis, the format should allow the analytic team to effectively describe the new understanding of the topic and its relevance to the requestor. The team should consider the following when choosing the format: requestor preference, specific tasking/requirement, complexity of the argument, urgency/time constraints, and potential interest of others. 



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