TEACHING CASE:

Useless Software Tool for Enterprise Architecture

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Situation

FinCorp is a mid-size financial company. A couple of years ago FinCorp decided to establish a full-fledged EA practice to accommodate with the growing problems around non-transparency of its IT investments and poor business and IT alignment in general. In order to boost its EA initiative, the company decided to purchase a specialized software tool for enterprise architecture. For this purpose, its IT leaders studied the available offerings on the EA tool market, contacted most promising vendors, organized meetings with vendor representatives and listened to their presentations. As a result, FinCorp had selected and acquired a rather powerful and expensive tool for enterprise architecture from a well-known vendor. Then, the company had installed and configured the tool, established a central repository for storing architectural information and sent its architecture team to a special training supplied by the tool vendor. After the training, architects had documented most areas of the organizational IT landscape and associated business processes in the EA repository and started to update this information to keep it current. Architects were also impressed with the modeling, visualization and analytical capabilities offered by their new EA tool.

However, FinCorp's CIO is pretty skeptical towards the chosen EA tool. He believes that the company is only wasting money on the tool as it is essentially nothing more than a sophisticated repository of current-state information. Furthermore, the tool is used by only 4-5 people in the entire organization (all architects), does not facilitate informed decision-making among business stakeholders in any sense and does not contribute to achieving the original objectives of the EA initiative to improve business and IT alignment.

Questions

Question 1: What is wrong with the installed EA tool?

Question 2: Is the tool adding value to FinCorp?

Question 3: How can the tool be used to facilitate business and IT alignment?

Question 4: What should be done to maximize the value of the tool for the company?

Answers

[The full teaching pack is available on request to the author]

Section(s)

- Software Tools for Enterprise Architecture in Chapter 18 (Instruments for Enterprise Architecture)

The full teaching pack with 19 lectures,

tests and other materials based on the book

The Practice of Enterprise Architecture:

A Modern Approach to Business and IT Alignment,

which can be freely used for teaching purposes, adapted

or translated with references to the original, is available

on request to the author (visit http://kotusev.com)