

TEACHING CASE:

What Went Wrong with the Enterprise Architecture Consulting Engagement?

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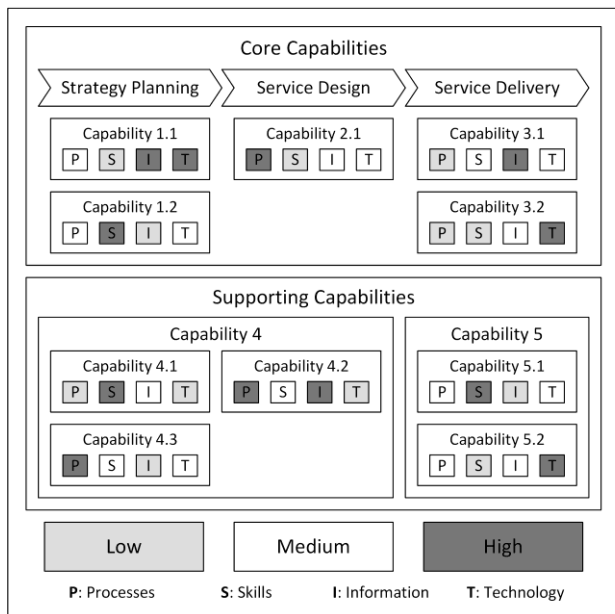
Situation

GovDept is a mid-size governmental department providing important services of a social nature to the population of a large territory. From the technology perspective, the organization can be considered as a late adopter of innovations and characterized by relative underinvestment in IT, which has certain implications for both its IT landscape and respective management practices. On the one hand, GovDept's IT landscape is very heterogeneous and includes many legacy information systems and technologies some of which have been in use for decades. On the other hand, its IT-related management practices are also rather archaic. For instance, the relationships between business and IT leaders in the organization exhibit evident signs of "us and them" mentality, while new investments in IT are viewed by business mostly as a means to reduce costs of the existing operations.

GovDept has a centralized IT department headed by the CIO and responsible for developing and supporting information systems for all its business units. The IT department employs around 250 specialists and consists of three main functions: architecture, development and service. The architecture function includes a few architects focused predominantly on specific IT solutions. GovDept previously tried to uplift the maturity of its EA practice and extend the scope of architectural planning beyond separate initiatives, but these attempts did not succeed and respective architects had been made redundant.

Then, the CIO decided to undertake another deliberate effort to evolve GovDept's EA practice with the involvement of external consultants. For this purpose, the organization engaged a rather well-known boutique EA consultancy to help initiate a full-fledged EA practice. The consultancy formed a project team consisting of four architects specialized in different subject areas. This consulting team acted according to a detailed engagement plan agreed with GovDept's senior IT leadership. The plan stipulated in which sequence and when exactly various EA artifacts will be produced. In total, consultants worked for 2-3 months, analyzed the organization, interviewed numerous stakeholders and developed all the EA artifacts specified in the plan. Specifically, they started from analyzing GovDept in terms of current and desired maturity of its business capabilities and mapped existing applications to respective capabilities. Then, they captured all relevant data entities, documented all technologies used in the organization, depicted current and defined target application portfolios and created more detailed CRUD (create, read, update and delete) relationship matrices. Finally, they developed a comprehensive roadmap specifying what projects should be executed in the next 2-3 years and presented all these EA artifacts to GovDept's executives. Key deliverables created by the project team as part of the consulting engagement are shown schematically in Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3 and Figure 4.

Business Capability Models (Current and Target)



Capability Model with Applications Overlay

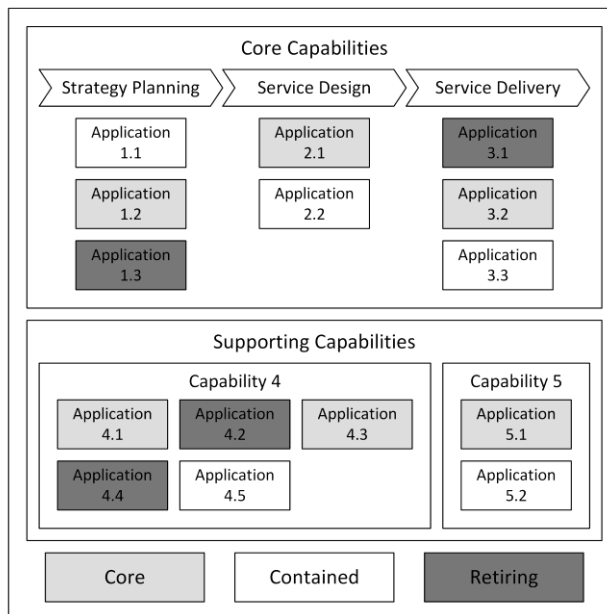
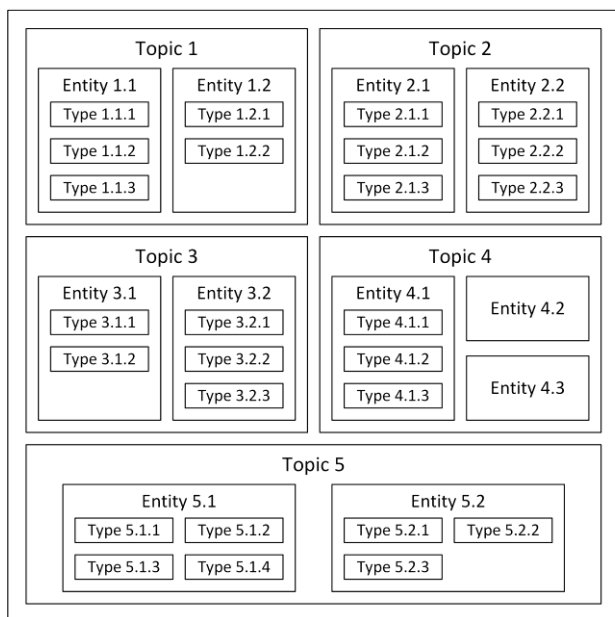


Figure 1. Business capability models and capability model with applications overlay

Enterprise Conceptual Data Model



Technology Portfolio Model

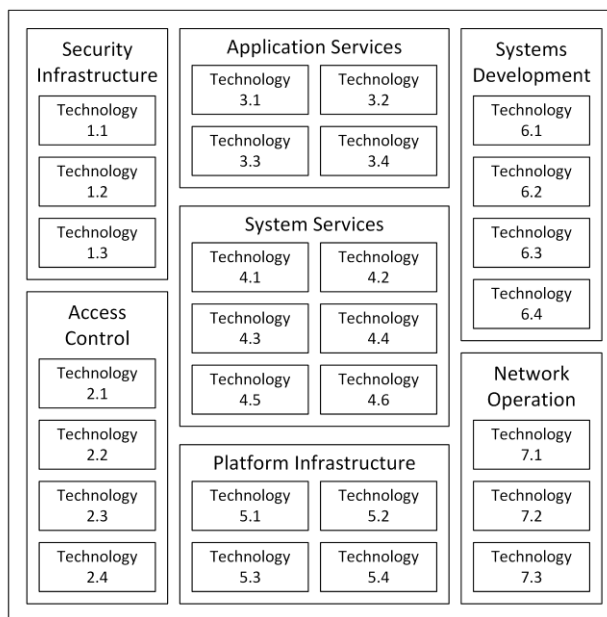
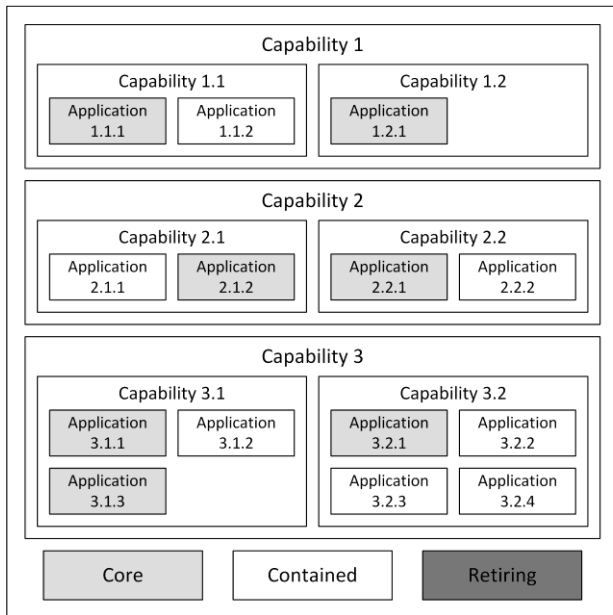


Figure 2. Enterprise conceptual data model and technology portfolio model

Application Portfolio Models (Current and Target)



CRUD Matrices (Current and Target)

	App 1.1	App 1.2	App 2.1	App 2.2	App 2.3	App 3.1	App 3.2
Entity 1.1	RU	CRUD		CR			
Type 1.1.1	R	CRUD					
Type 1.1.2	RU	R		CR			
Entity 1.2			CRUD		R	D	U
Type 1.2.1			CRUD		R		U
Type 1.2.2			RU		R	D	
Entity 2.1	CRUD	R		R		R	
Entity 2.2		UD	C		R		R
Entity 3.1		R		CRUD		RU	
Type 3.1.1		R		R		RU	
Type 3.1.2				CRUD			

C: Create **R:** Read **U:** Update **D:** Delete

Figure 3. Application portfolio models and CRUD matrices

Application Roadmap

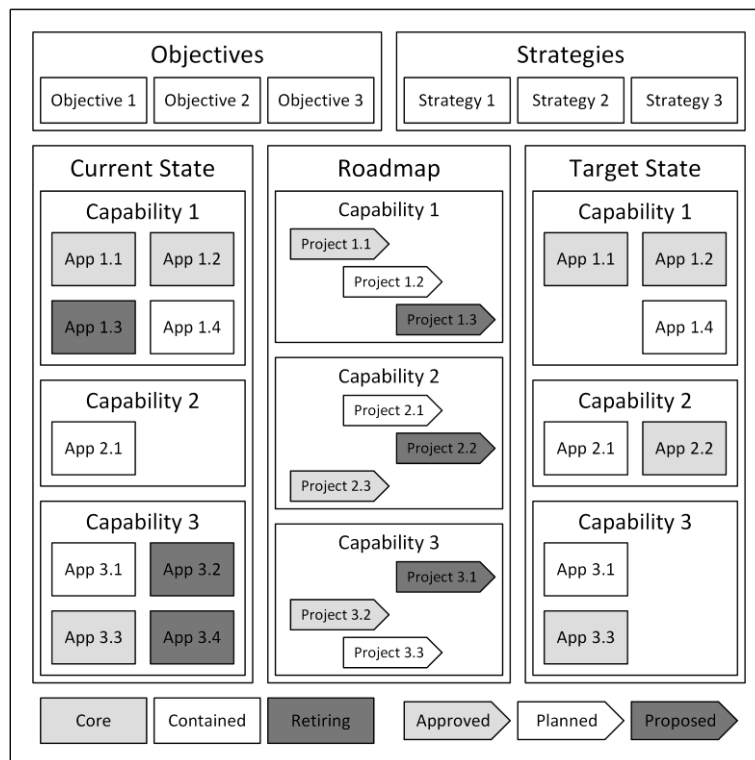


Figure 4. Application roadmap

The resulting EA artifacts met, or even exceeded, the original expectations and were considered as very high-quality deliverables by GovDept’s IT leadership. Senior IT managers looked optimistically at their potential to inform future investment decisions. However, after the consultants left the organization, internal architects were largely unable to leverage these EA artifacts, embed them into regular decision-making processes and institutionalize their usage.

“We spent a quarter million dollars getting consultants in to do enterprise architecture models across our organization. That was an extremely well-executed, disciplined,

insightful, robust piece of work, which produced a huge body of documentation, which I think has not been used at all, tragically”, commented the CIO

Neither business nor IT managers had a genuine sense of ownership over the created deliverables and essentially nobody in the organization had any clear idea of how to use them or what to do next, no follow-up activities had been undertaken. Over time, as these EA artifacts became increasingly outdated, their relevance had diminished and general interest towards them had decayed.

“The business layer that the consultants did was theoretically correct, but nobody regarded it as endorsed or owned or anything other than a theoretical model of how our organization might conceive of its business architecture. Because actually you would struggle to find anyone in the organization who has any idea of what business architecture is”, explained the CIO

As a result, in 6-8 months after the consulting engagement was finished most of the produced EA artifacts had been abandoned and shelved. Overall, the work of external EA consultants, though initially viewed as excellent, actually brought little or no lasting value, a full-fledged EA practice in GovDept had not been established. With the exception of short-term inspirational and educational effects, no systematic improvements in how the organization operated or how investment decisions were made had been realized.

Questions

Question 1: What went wrong with the EA consulting engagement in GovDept?

Question 2: What should the organization have done differently in this engagement or even instead of it?

Answers

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

Section(s)

- Two Meanings of Enterprise Architecture Artifacts: Decisions and Facts in Chapter 2 (The Concept of Enterprise Architecture)
- Architects as Developers of Enterprise Architecture Artifacts in Chapter 2 (The Concept of Enterprise Architecture)
- Roadmaps (Essential) in Chapter 11 (Visions)
- Establishing Enterprise Architecture Practices in Organizations in Chapter 19 (The Lifecycle of Enterprise Architecture Practice)
- Enterprise Architecture Practice and Enterprise Architecture Consulting in Chapter 19 (The Lifecycle of Enterprise Architecture Practice)
- Appendix (The Origin of EA and Modern EA Best Practices)

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>)

