

C4-Design and Modeling Reflection Assignment

Introduction

One thing that I emphasize in this class is that there is no such thing as a perfect design, nor is there a perfect way to model a design. Traditional approaches to model/document architectures and designs often result in a collection of views, drawn using inconsistent notations, and often have little impact on guiding the actual implementation.

My personal viewpoint is that when we model some aspect of the architecture, we create views that are “purposely” built to address one or more stakeholder concerns, document important decisions around quality attributes related of the solution, or to show how the design will accommodate known constraints. In other words, these models/views document decisions that will constrain and/or guide the design.

In order to give you a broader perspective than I cover in class I want you to review a short blog-post and watch a YouTube video from Simon Brown. Simon brings some interesting perspectives when it comes to modeling and documenting software architectures.

Activity / Scenario

For this assignment assume that I am the CIO for XYZ company and you are the Chief Architect. I come to you with the following observation – “It seems like we produce a lot of architecture and design documentation, but it's unclear if it's used, how it's used, and I'm uncertain about how useful it is in general. We need to build a plan to do something about this problem!”. Note for those of you not in a Software Engineering role that this is not an uncommon situation.

You recently attended the GOTO conference and remember Simon Brown's talk and have decided to google his C4 method to find some more information. Links to both his YouTube presentation and an additional material are provided.

For this assignment you need to outline approximately 5 things from Simon Brown's material that you think would be worthwhile to consider to address the CIO concerns. These “things” need to be pragmatic and practical to be put into use. Don't simply state to adopt his C4 method, think about the concepts that he introduced that motivated his C4 approach, and some of the important objectives that his method tries to achieve.

Note that by “approximately 5” I mean no fewer than 3 and no more than 8. The fewer you have the more context you need to provide around their importance of being put into practice to address the CIO's concerns. As with our other assignments the shortest submission that covers the objectives is best – pragmatically – as you approach 1.5-2 pages of text you are approaching the limit of what you should be submitting.