Infrastructure as code: Terraforming your environment

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Contents

Document purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a structured and detailed overview of creating a presentation, covering a variety of topics such as;

- Identifying and catering to the audience

- Defining the presentation purpose

- Presentation Scope

- Crafting the presentation content

- Presentation styles

Creative approach

Presentation purpose

The presentation is to be delivered to a group of senior management stakeholders who have a wide range of knowledge of the subject-matter. It must be both verbally and visually engaging with the goal of obtaining approval for support and funding for the proposal. In order to achieve this goal, the problem and solution need to be clearly explained in a non-technical manner. Using presentation techniques to encourage audience engagement and reaction are key to keep the audience interested will give the presentation a much higher chance of success.

Presentation scope and limitations

The presentation scope is to cover the current state of the business and what problems arise, proposing and explaining Infrastructure as Code, focusing on Terraform as the software solution, presenting case studies to back up the proposal and to finish with a call to action.

The key limitation in this presentation will be the lack of technical knowledge of some audience members. The presentation will need to be engaging to a range of personalities along with varying backgrounds while also providing an impactful message.

Audience

Identify stakeholders

The presentation will be delivered to a group of senior management stakeholders, both technical and non-technical. This includes the CEO, CIO, COO as business leaders and the CTO, VP of IT Operations and VP of IT Architecture as the IT leaders.

Stakeholder analysis

Using a stakeholder analysis matrix provides a better understanding of the audience and their levels of interest and influence. When used in combination with stakeholder profiles, a presentation can be designed to focus more on the needs and priorities of the most influential and interested members of the audience.

- CEO - Business impact, interest is primarily on how solution will reduce costs, increase revenue and improve competitive position

- CIO - will be interested in resource efficiency, how it empowers teams to do more with existing resources

- COO - risk management, will be keen to know how this reduces risk by ensuring that infrastructure is consistently configured, tested and reliable

- CTO - Focus will be in reducing development times while providing a consistent and reliable platform

- VP of IT Ops - CI/CD Terraform can integrate with CI/CD pipelines which allows for on demand deployments and changes

- VP of It Arch - Architecture standardisation, provides a platform to establish architectural guidelines across teams, reduces divergence of services and application backends

Table 1: Stakeholder influence and interest

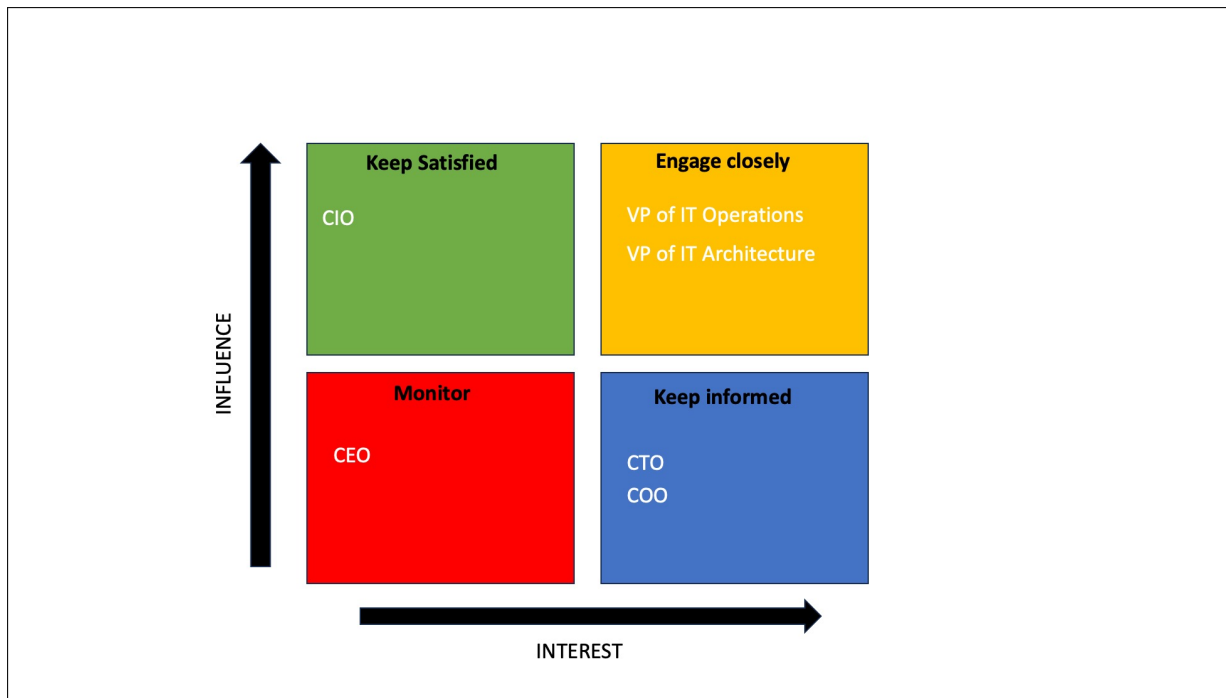| Stakeholder	Interest	Influence
CEO	Low	High
CIO	Moderate	High
COO	High	Moderate
CTO	High	High
VP of IT Ops	Very High	Very High
VP of IT Arch	Very High	Very High

Figure 1: An analysis matrix of the expected audience (Source: Author, 2023)

Stakeholder profiles

Performing a stakeholder profile allow the presenter to cater their messages to the audience, focusing on needs and priorities. This then provides a direction for further developing the presentation.

Table 2: Stakeholder profiles

Who	Personality	Needs	Priorities
CEO	Director	Profitability	Strategy
CIO	Thinker	Efficiency	ROI
COO	Energiser	Reduce Impact	Efficiency
CTO	Energiser	Innovation	Tech Strategy
VP of IT Ops	Affable	Supportability	Resource Management
VP of IT Arch	Thinker	Consistency	Standardisation

Presentation content

Monroe's Motivated Sequence

Monroe's motivated sequence is a technique to inspire, engage and illicit different responses from your audience.

Attention

Title: *Infrastructure as code: Terraforming your environment*
Step one is attention, the goal is to grab your audience's attention but more importantly to create the audience response of *"I want to hear more"*.

Need

Title: *Infrastructure is currently deployed manually*
Title:*What is infrastructure as code?*
Step two is need, explain the problem that exists and how it affects the audience. Include a description of infrastructure as code to further highlight the current state of business and the effect it is having.

Satisfaction

Title: *The power of infrastructure as code*
Explain what infrastructure as code provides the business, cover the key priorities set out in the stakeholder profiles.

Visualisation

Discuss how Terraform is the solution, brings infrastructure as code to life, use case studies to visualise successful implementations and show the business goals this proposal brings to the company.
Title: *Blueprints for a new environment*
Cover the *MoneyForward* Hashicorp (n.d.*b*) case study to show how a company successfully implemented Terraform and what the results were.
Title: *How Terraform reshaped corporate landscapes*
Include quotes from the *Deutsche Bank* Hashicorp (n.d.*a*) and *Trimble* Hashicorp (n.d.*c*) case studies to visualise the impact further.

Action

Title: *Embracing the future*
What needs to happen to progress? Propose next steps on this slide.

Presentation style

Communicators roadmap

The communicators roadmap helps design and guide a presentation. While the presenter may naturally fall into one of the four categories, using the roadmap can help guide towards the other categories when required to create a presentation that keeps the audience engaged and interested.
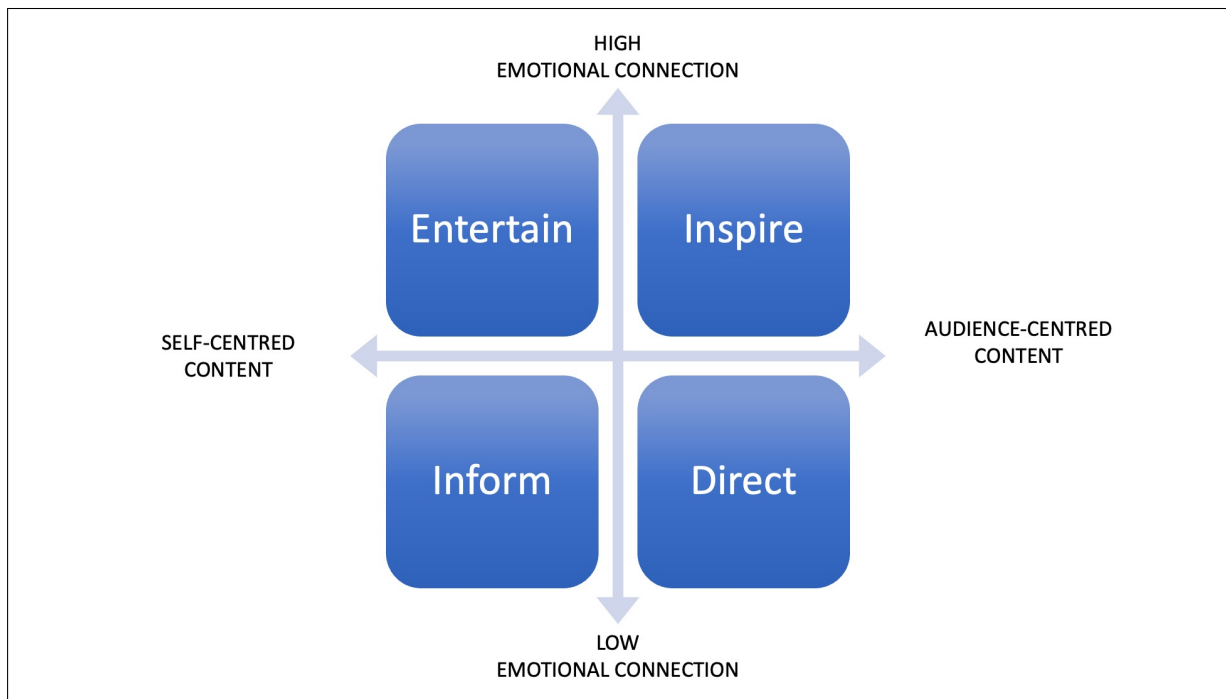

Figure 2: The Communicators Roadmap (Source: Decker & Decker (2015))

Presentation flowchart

Combining the information gathered from the stakeholder analysis, Monroe's motivated sequence and the communicators roadmap, a presentation flowchart can be created to give an overview of the type of communication to focus on for each slide following Monroe's motivated sequence.
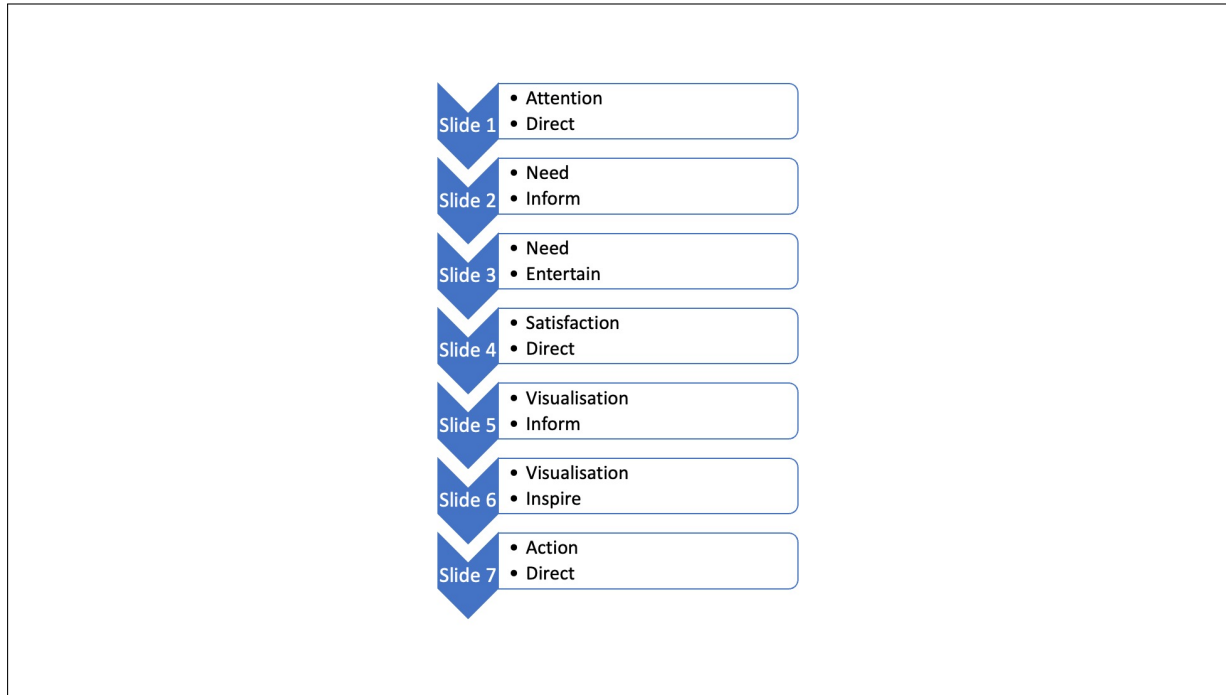
Figure 3: Final presentation flowchart (Source: Author, 2023)

References

Decker, B. & Decker, K. (2015), *Communicate to Influence: How to Inspire Your Audience to Action*, McGraw Hill LLC.

Hashicorp (n.d.*a*), 'Deutsche bank | customer case study | a bank, the cloud, and a paradigm shift', `https://www.datocms-assets.com/2885/1689178113-hc_deutsche-bank_casestudy-2.pdf`. Hashicorp, Accessed: 21-09-2023.

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Appendix A: Tables & figures

List of Figures

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