Architecture Challenge Statement Development

Created by The Archypelago Community

Overview

Before we start on any architecture work we need to know what business problem aim to solve and that we can add value as enterprise architects

At the end of this workshop, we should have

- ▶ Identified the problem
- ▶ Gained an understanding what successful resolution looks like
- ▶ Established there is a potential route to success
- ▶ Identified the key stakeholders who must commit to delivering success
- ▶ Determined if there is potential enterprise architecture work to carry out

When do Enterprise Architects add value?

Enterprise architects (EAs) add value by

- ▶ making sense of complexity
- ▶ showing how to navigate complexity
- ▶ guide the reduction in unnecessary complexity
- ▶ helping to manage uncertainty

EAs help organisations address messy and wicked problems that have strategic impacts

Messy Problems

- ▶ have high process, data or technology complexity
- ▶ problem space is reasonably stable or changes in a predictable way
- ▶ target state scenarios can be defined with reasonably sound assumptions
- ▶ Enterprise Architects can help
  - ▶ make sense of the complexity
  - ▶ define target state scenarios
  - ▶ define roadmaps to guide the delivery of a target
  - ▶ define an incremental approach to benefits delivery

EA engagement is likely to be front loaded focused on defining current state, target state and the roadmap followed by a supporting role to help maintain the overall integrity of the approach as the business and technology changes progress

Wicked Problems

- ▶ are poorly understood, are ambiguous
- ▶ have a constantly changing problem space with complex interdependencies
- ▶ often have significant social / people / political complexity
- ▶ large parts of the currrent and / or target state cannot be defined with confidence
- ▶ Enterprise Architects can help
  - ▶ make sense of the complexity
  - ▶ identify areas of uncertainty
  - ▶ define experiments and nudges to enable learning
  - ▶ define an incremental approach to benefits delivery

EA engagement is likely to be continual during the programme which will be based on an agiler learning approach

Workshop Set Up

1. Pre-condition
2. Attendees
3. Invitation
4. Workshop roles
5. Ground rules

Precondition

A concern of potentially enterprise wide significance has been identified by an EA

e.g.

- ▶ A formal request for architecure work is made
- ▶ A senior stakeholder says "take a look at this..."
- ▶ An EA gets an idea at a conference
- ▶ An EA hears a worrying statement about...
  - ▶ a project
  - ▶ technical debt
  - ▶ lack of collaboration
  - ▶ siloes
- ▶ An experienced EA just gets a sense that something is wrong!

Workshop formats

There are three formats that we use

- ▶ Informal with EAs only (these can be quite quick)

- ▶ More formal with key stakeholders and EAs

- ▶ Multiple stakeholder meetings followed by a joint playback

- ▶ the workshop may be held as one intensive session or a series of shorter sessions over several days

- ▶ the facilitator should consider giving the participants breaks after each section

Attendees

You can combine formats if it helps

- ▶ You want a rehearsal with EAs only
- ▶ You want to make sense of what the stakeholders said (e.g. create the stakeholder playback)

5 to 8 people is an ideal size for the meeting

Give attendees plenty of notice of the meeting

Meetings can be fully remote

The Invitation

Hi AP
As I am sure you are aware we have major challenges with
[brief description of the challenge].
We are running a workshop to develop a strong problem
statement and work out how to kick off an initiative to
improve the situation. You will see an invitation to a video
call in your inbox soon.
I am looking forward to your valuable contribution.
Best wishes
JJ - Head of Enterprise Architecture

Roles

The workshop will require these roles to be successful -

- ▶ Facilitator - takes the attendees through the workshop structure, adapting it as necessary, owns the schedule
- ▶ Challenge owner - presents the challenge, makes decisions when asked to do so by the Facilitator, maybe a proxy for a key stakeholder
- ▶ Scribe - makes notes when asked to do so by the facilitator
- ▶ Timekeeper - keeps time when asked to do so by the facilitator
- ▶ Experts - the Facilitator should think about what knowledge is necessary to conclude the workshop successfully. Do "experts" need to be presnt for some or all sessions? Can they be engaged in advance and provide workshop materials for use ion the sessions or as pre-read materials?

Ground rules

1. The Facilitator is in charge
2. Challenge owner makes decisions
3. No distractions from phones or emails or chat
   - switch off notifications
   - we will have breaks
   - try to schedule a work crisis for another time!
4. However, don't worry about children, pets, partners, deliveries, builders, etc
   - they will interrupt and distract, it is OK!
   - this is normal!
   - sometimes they help with the creativity...
5. If you need a break, just say so

Workshop Agenda

1. The challenge (10 - 20 minutes)
2. Problem identification and analysis (30 - 90 minutes)
3. Success description and analysis (30 - 60 minutes)
4. Route to value identification and analysis (30 - 60 minutes)
5. Key stakeholders (20 - 60 minutes)
6. Decisions (10 - 20 minutes)

If the challenge is complex or the attendees are not familiar with it then the duraction will be longer.

Total duration - 2 to 6 hours (including breaks)

Introduction

Purpose - explain the purpose of the workshop

1. Introduction
   - ► We are here to discuss [the challenge], we aim to
     - ► Clearly define the problem
     - ► Understand what successful resolution looks like
     - ► Identify the key stakeholders who must commit to delivering success
     - ► Determine the role of enterprise architecture
2. Quick personal introductions if necessary
   - ► name and 2 words describing what you do
3. The challenge
   - ► [challenge owner] will now set the scene for the workshop by briefly describing the challenge

Problem Identification

1. Ask the participants to write down 2-3 bullet points that describe their perspective on the challenge

   ▶ Write the notes individually without discussion and without showing them
   ▶ What is the root cause?
   ▶ Why is it important to address the challenge?
   ▶ Do not think about solutions

2. All participants show their notes at the same time

3. The facilitator talks through each note in turn

4. The facilitator creates a summary note that captures the agreement and divergence of the team's contributions

5. The facilitator asks for any further thoughts from the team and adds to the summary if necessary

Problem Analysis

1. The facilitator then leads an analysis of the summary to firm up the problem description and resolve any disagreements. The following questions can be used as a start point -

   - How does this damage the business?
   - Will key business stakeholders recognise the problem?
   - What makes it **significant** to the business stakeholders?
   - What makes it important to do something now?
   - What value will enterprise architects bring to the challenge?

Success Description

1. Ask the participants to write down 2-3 bullet points that describe what is will be like when the problem has been **fully** solved

   - ▶ Write the notes individually without discussion and without showing them
   - ▶ This should be idealistic, not realistic or pragmatic (we will add that later)
   - ▶ Do not think about solutions

2. All participants show their notes at the same time

3. The facilitator talks through each note in turn

4. The facilitator creates a summary note that captures the agreement and divergence of the team's contributions

5. The facilitator asks for any further thoughts from the team and adds to the summary if necessary

Success Analysis

1. The facilitator then leads an analysis of the summary to firm up what an **ambitious** view of success looks like and resolve any disagreements.

2. The next step is to make sure that we know when we have achieved success, is it **measureable**? The following questions can be used as a start point -

   - What objective measures can we use to confirm that we have achieved success?
   - What measures can we use to help us understand that we are on track to deliver success
   - How does this change our definition of success?
   - Is it **significant** and **ambitious**?

3. We now have a view of success, a target state that is

   Significant **M**easureable **A**mbitious

Route to Value Identification

1. Ask the participants to write down about 10 bullet points that describe how success can be delivered

   - ▶ Write the notes individually without discussion and without showing them
   - ▶ If you have any solution options, list them now, we are capturing them to sho wthat there are possible ways forward (we will not discuss them in detail in this workshop)
   - ▶ This should be idealistic, not realistic or pragmatic (we will add that later)

2. All participants show their notes at the same time

3. The facilitator talks through each note in turn

4. The facilitator creates a summary note that captures the agreement and divergence of the team's contributions

5. The facilitator asks for any further thoughts from the team and adds to the summary if necessary

6. The facilitator then leads an analysis of the summary to firm

Route to Value Analysis

1. The next step is to adjust our route to make sure that we are being **realistic**. The following questions can be used as a start point

   ▶ What is the maximum cost and time to solve this problem?
   ▶ What are the major steps required to deliver the ideal?
   ▶ Can these be delivered?
   ▶ Can the benefits be delivered in phases?
   ▶ Is there a point before we get to the ideal that is "good enough"?
   ▶ What are the risks, issues, blockers, concerns, constraints or critical details that may stop us achieving the ideal?
   ▶ How does this change our definition of success?
   ▶ Is it **significant**, **measureable** and **ambitious**?

2. We now have a view of success, a target state that is

   Significant **M**easureable **A**mbitious **R**ealistic **T**imebound

Stakeholder identification

1. identify key stakeholders
   - who pays?
   - who cares?
   - whose job or personal life will be impacted?
   - are there any regulatory considerations?
   - who can cause problems?
   - who needs to support?
   - who do we need to persuade to back us?
2. which of these are most important now?
3. whose support do we need now?

Stakeholder motivations

1. what will motivate them to resist this proposal?
2. what will motivate them to support it?
3. what evidence do we have for these motivations?
4. what message do we need to get to these stakeholders to achieve support?
5. how do we make it easy for them to support us?
6. how should the messages be delivered?
7. when should the messages be delivered?
8. how will we know if we have been successful in getting the support we need?

Decisions

1. go / no go - is this worth pursuing?
2. do we need any approvals or support to proceed?
3. should we look for solutions?
4. who will plan next steps and when?
5. is there a role for enterprise architects?