

Enterprise Architecture Operating Model Primer for 2024

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Initiatives: [Enterprise Architecture Operating Model](#)

Amid AI adoption, business leaders are navigating economic uncertainty by prioritizing improvements to productivity, efficiency and profitability. To meet these demands, chief enterprise architects must evolve EA's operating model to deliver innovative investments and capability transformation.

Scope

This initiative covers the EA operating model (value proposition, stakeholder engagement, structure, skills, roles, metrics) needed to help leaders make better business and technology decisions.

Topics in this initiative include:

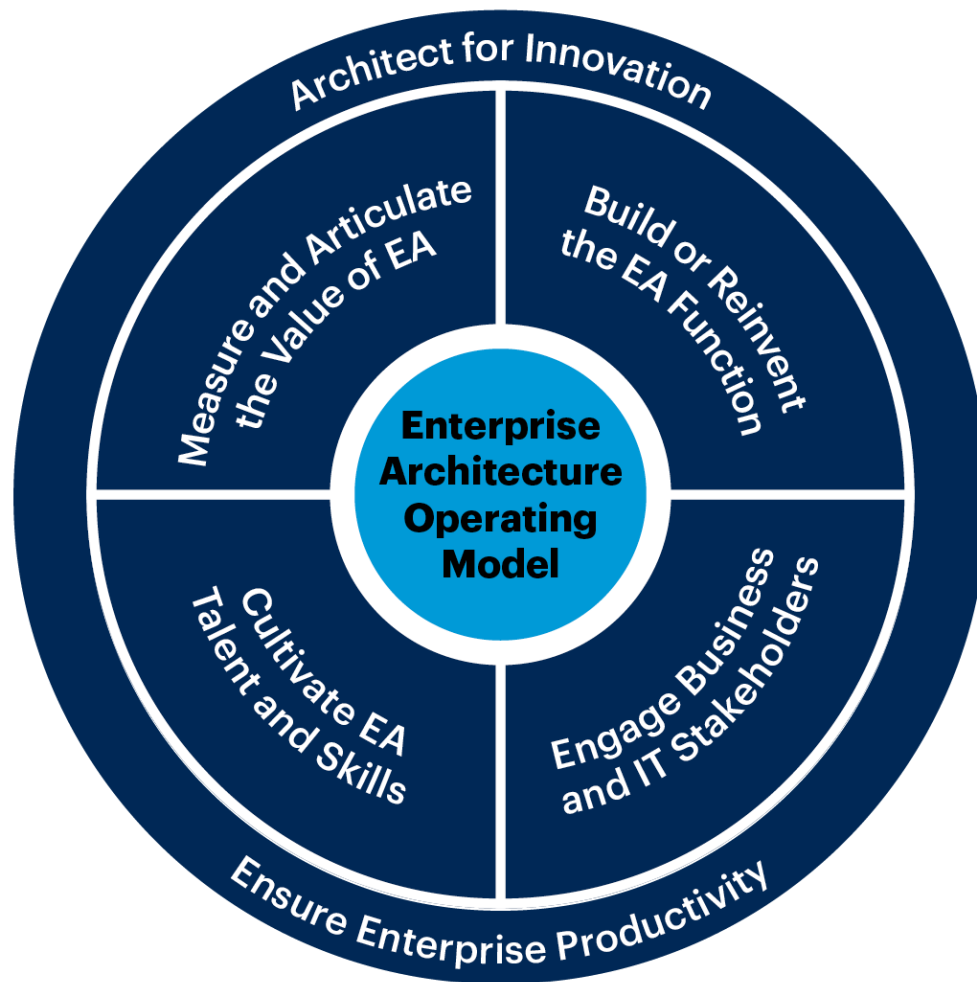
- **Build or Reinvent the EA Function:** Define value propositions, a charter, team structure, service offerings, ways of working and financials for the EA practice.
- **Cultivate EA Talent and Skills:** Build the EA talent strategy and highly skilled talent bench needed to deliver business value.
- **Engage Business and IT Stakeholders:** Develop relationships and engagement models that enable stakeholders to make smart decisions.
- **Measure and Articulate the Value of EA:** Measure and communicate the value of EA to all types of stakeholders.

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Analysis

Figure 1: Enterprise Architecture Operating Model Overview

Enterprise Architecture Operating Model



Source: Gartner
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Within enterprises, the shift to distributed decision making and democratized operating models is driving chief enterprise architects (CEAs) to evolve the EA function's value proposition and operating model. Forty-seven percent of boards of directors (BoDs) surveyed by Gartner have moved digital-business-related investment budgets from central IT to business functions, ¹ upward from two years prior, when this figure was 40%. ²

More broadly, organizations continue to grapple with the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) of the past few years, the turbulence of economic headwinds and tailwinds, constraints on growth, and pressures for increased corporate profitability. Supply chain disruptions, cybersecurity risks, disruptive technologies, talent and skills shortages, environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations, and sticky inflation are among the top external threats affecting organizations.³ Profitability is now investors' top focus through 2024, while interest in revenue growth has declined.⁴ The year ahead will be characterized by a focus on reducing costs and improving productivity and efficiency. Nonetheless, digital investment is unlikely to slow down: 56% of the surveyed BoDs have plans to accelerate their organization's digital investments in 2024 and 2025, while 42% plan to continue at the same pace.¹

Disruptive technologies — in particular, generative AI — contribute to heightened volatility and complexity. Despite remarkable potential for realizing cost and productivity improvements to bolster business performance, AI's precise benefits and risks remain uncertain and have given rise to concerns ranging from civilization-ending AI to job losses and the imperative for retraining and reskilling, misinformation, and the need for data privacy and ethical AI. Nevertheless, business leaders are taking proactive steps to assess and integrate AI capabilities to avert the prospect of falling behind in this swiftly evolving landscape.

In 2024, CEAs will be challenged to make investment decisions that increase profitability through cost optimization, risk mitigation, productivity and efficiency gains. Our insights, tools and guidance will help CEAs upgrade their EA function's value proposition, skill sets and operating model to navigate and deliver value in today's environment. The EA function will be well-positioned to shape and deliver business and technology capabilities by driving digital transformation and optimization.

Note: This initiative is one of three EA-related initiatives. The other two are [Future-State Enterprise Architecture Definition Primer for 2024](#) and [Enterprise Architecture Delivery Primer for 2024](#).

Topics

CEAs must design EA's operating model to architect for innovation and increased productivity in today's business environment. This will require CEAs and their teams to focus on three key themes:

- **Operating model evolution:** VUCA, internal and external disruptions, and shifting business leader priorities demand CEAs to evolve their value proposition, role and business services to address changing business priorities and ensure continued relevance. CEAs must develop adaptive EA operating models, offering EA services and adopting a flexible organizational structure, using mechanisms like resource benches.
- **Upgraded EA skill sets:** The ever-evolving business and technology landscape demands that EA functions embrace a mindset of growth and change. CEAs must develop key skills in AI and financial planning and analysis within their teams through upskilling, cross-skilling and creative talent acquisition strategies.
- **Advanced leadership:** Delivering desired outcomes and value against complex and competing internal agendas and priorities, under rapidly changing technology and market conditions, requires advanced leadership and influencing skills. CEAs must develop, demonstrate and deploy effective leadership to support the required stakeholder engagement, alignment and decision making.

Our research in this area addresses the following topics:

Build or Reinvent the EA Function

Building a world-class EA function requires continually revisiting and revising EA's value proposition, charter, service offerings and operating model to support current and evolving business priorities. Given increasing demand from distributed stakeholders, EA resource constraints and rapid adoption of emerging technologies such as AI, rigorous reprioritization and a flexible EA resourcing model are essential.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- What does a good EA value proposition look like?
- How do I start a high-impact EA practice?
- How do I diagnose my EA practice's effectiveness and reboot it to maximize EA's impact?
- What key trends, events, priorities and actions — such as generative AI and distributed and product-oriented operating models — will influence EA's near-term decisions and longer-term strategy?

Recommended Content

🔑 Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- [Presentation: The New EA Operating Model for Digital](#)
- [Enterprise Architecture Activity Guidebook](#)
- [5 Steps to Professionalize the Delivery of Enterprise Architecture as an Internal Management Consultancy](#)
- [5 Steps to Create a Flexible Team Structure That Enables Enterprise Architecture Value Delivery](#)

Planned Research

- Examples of how CEAs successfully rebooted their EA practice
- Updated guidance on what to do in your first 100 days as an EA leader
- Updated guidance on how EA's operating model must evolve

Cultivate EA Talent and Skills

Across the discipline of enterprise architecture, architecture roles and skills must be acquired and upgraded to continue to deliver value, staying ahead of change and transformation. Needed skills include design thinking, business capability modeling, value stream mapping and management, orchestrating multidisciplinary team-based solution delivery, and assessing and adopting emerging technologies such as AI and ML. In addition, financial analysis skills must be developed in order to create upgraded EA deliverables that foster better and faster investment decisions.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- What are the typical roles, responsibilities and career paths of CEAs, enterprise architects, business architects and IT architects, and how are they evolving?
- How are EA skills, competencies and behaviors evolving to ensure continued EA resilience, responsiveness and value?
- What are innovative strategies to cultivate and retain the enterprise, business and IT architecture talent needed to realize EA's value proposition?

Recommended Content

🔑 Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.

- [Tool: Chief Enterprise Architect Job Description](#)
- [Tool: Enterprise Architect Job Description](#)
- [Tool: Business Architect Job Description](#)
- [Tool: Competency Model for Enterprise Architecture Talent Management](#)
- [Tool: Architecture Team Talent Diagnostic](#)

Planned Research

- Guidance on financial planning and analysis skills for EA roles
- Guidance on defining an IT architect job description
- Guidance on how to deliver EA when architecture talent is scarce
- Updates to the CEA job description tool

Engage Business and IT Stakeholders

To guide better and faster investment decisions, EA practices must develop and manage key stakeholder “customer” relationships, from business and IT leaders to distributed technologists and delivery teams. Tailored communications strategies are vital to developing the necessary EA influence. Enabling effective architectural collaboration and interactions among diverse, distributed stakeholders is also key to overall EA effectiveness.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- What business and IT stakeholder relationships are needed to realize EA’s value proposition, and why?
- How do I proactively manage our stakeholders’ experience and relationships?
- How do I best communicate and engage to enable outcomes and ensure EA value?

Recommended Content

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- [Quick Answer: How Do EA-Stakeholder Relationships Evolve as Maturity Increases?](#)
- [3 Top Practices for Enterprise Architects to Engage Business Executives](#)
- [Ignition Guide to Building Architecture Communities of Practice](#)
- [3 Steps to Creating Enterprise Architecture Services](#)
- [Offering EA as a Service \(Ernst & Young\)](#)

Planned Research

- A note on EA stakeholders
- A note on stakeholder management
- A tool on communications planning and management

Measure and Articulate the Value of EA

EA practices have long struggled to define metrics. How to measure and demonstrate EA's value is also a perennial challenge. Yet sound metrics are vital both to demonstrating EA's business value to others, as well as effectively managing the EA practice. Traditional EA metrics often prioritize technical EA activities that don't align with stakeholders' priorities in today's VUCA business landscape. Better EA metrics require understanding business goals and linking EA activities to tangible business outcomes like improved productivity, profitability and technology investments. Aligning the EA practice's priorities, narratives and metrics with stakeholders' needs while also developing metrics for effective EA practice management and value delivery is essential to EA success.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- What metrics do I need to manage the EA practice?
- What metrics do I need to measure and demonstrate EA's business value to key stakeholders?
- How do I construct metrics to manage the EA practice and to measure EA's business value?

Recommended Content

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- [Toolkit: Measuring Stakeholders' Satisfaction With the EA Practice](#)
- [EA Value Stories: Articulating EA's Performance to Stakeholders](#)
- [How to Communicate EA's Value: Start With a Focus on the Value of 'Good Architecture'](#)
- [Tool: Construct a Winning Value Proposition for EA as an Internal Management Consultancy](#)

Planned Research

- [How to create an elevator pitch for EA's value](#)
- [How to rebrand EA for CIO success](#)
- [Case studies with specific business and IT metrics](#)

Suggested First Steps

- [4 Evidence-Based Practices EA Leaders Must Adopt to Navigate Economic Headwinds](#)
- [The Enterprise Architecture Leader's First 100 Days](#)
- [IT Score for Enterprise Architecture and Technology Innovation](#)

Essential Reading

- [Leadership Vision for 2024: Enterprise Architecture](#)
- [Predicts 2024: Enterprise Architecture and Franchising Delivers New Value](#)
- [Future-State Enterprise Architecture Definition Primer for 2024](#)
- [Enterprise Architecture Delivery Primer for 2024](#)

Evidence

¹ **2024 Gartner Board Of Directors Survey on Driving Business Success in an Uncertain World:** This survey was conducted to understand the new approaches adopted by nonexecutive boards of directors (BoDs) to drive growth in a rapidly changing business environment. The survey also sought to understand the BoDs' focus on investments in digital acceleration; sustainability; and diversity, equity and inclusion. The survey was conducted online from June through August 2023 among 285 respondents from North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia/Pacific. Respondents came from organizations with \$50 million or more in annual revenue in industries except governments, nonprofits, charities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Respondents were required to be nonexecutive members of corporate boards of directors. If respondents served on multiple boards, they answered questions about the largest company, defined by its annual revenue, for which they are a board member. Disclaimer: The results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

² **2022 Gartner View From the Board of Directors Survey:** This survey was conducted to understand how boards of directors (BoDs) will address the risk from economic and political volatility and a multipolar world, and their intent to convert digital acceleration to digital momentum. The survey also helps understand the impact of the key societal issues that took center stage during the COVID-19 pandemic on BoDs' strategy and investment approaches. The survey was conducted online from May through June 2021 among 273 respondents from the U.S., Europe and Asia/Pacific. Companies were screened to be midsize, large or global enterprises. Respondents were required to be a board director or a member of a corporate BoD. If respondents served on multiple boards, they answered for the largest company, defined by its annual revenue, for which they were a board member. Disclaimer: The results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

³ **2023 Gartner ITLTP Cross-Role Navigating Economic Headwinds Survey:** This survey was conducted online from April through July 2023 among 614 IT leaders from enterprises whose growth was moderately to severely impacted by one or more external threats (inflationary pressures, supply chain disruptions, cybersecurity risks, talent and skills shortages, etc.) in 2022 and 2023. IT leaders who participated in this survey represented infrastructure and operations, applications, enterprise architecture and technology innovation, strategic portfolio management, and IT sourcing procurement and vendor management functions from North America, EMEA and Asia/Pacific across industries and companies with \$500 million or more in annual revenue. The primary objective of this research was to determine actions that IT leaders across these roles must take to help enterprises navigate economic headwinds. IT leaders self-reported functional performance relative to CIO expectations and enterprise performance relative to CEO expectations considering the impact of economic headwinds on their enterprise's growth. Gartner used statistical modeling to determine specific actions that significantly increase the likelihood of exceeding functional performance relative to CIO expectations amid economic headwinds. The effect of each action on performance was modeled using various multivariate regressions with controls. Recommended actions have a statistically significant impact on performance. The analysis further reveals how effectively or consistently IT leaders should perform these actions to achieve desirable outcomes. IT leaders can build effective IT functions by adopting these actions. These effective IT functions help enterprises navigate economic headwinds and outperform their enterprise performance relative to CEO expectations. Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

⁴ **2023 Gartner CEO and Senior Business Executive Survey:** This survey was conducted to examine CEO and senior business executive views on current business issues, as well as some areas of technology agenda impact. The survey was fielded from July 2022 through December 2022, with questions about the period from 2022 through 2024. One-quarter of the survey sample was collected in July and August 2022, and three-quarters was collected from October through December 2022. In total, 422 actively employed CEOs and other senior executive business leaders qualified and participated. The research was collected via 382 online surveys and 40 telephone interviews. The sample mix by role was CEOs (n = 277); CFOs (n = 95); COOs or other C-level executives (n = 19); and chairs, presidents or board directors (n = 31). The sample mix by location was North America (n = 169), Europe (n = 105), Asia/Pacific (n = 102), Latin America (n = 29), the Middle East (n = 11) and South Africa (n = 6). The sample mix by size was \$10 million in revenue to less than \$50 million (n = 3), \$50 million to less than \$250 million (n = 51), \$250 million to less than \$1 billion (n = 102), \$1 billion to less than \$10 billion (n = 190) and \$10 billion or more (n = 76). Disclaimer: Results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

Document Revision History

[Enterprise Architecture Function Primer for 2023 - 12 September 2023](#)

Related Priorities

Initiative Name	Description
Enterprise Architecture Delivery	This initiative covers practices and deliverables that guide the implementation of enterprise architecture (EA) through governance, digital solutions, platforms and foundations.
Future-State EA Definition	This initiative covers the enterprise architecture discipline with attention on the business architecture domain and how it can inform business and IT strategy, planning and execution decisions.

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