Introduction to Governance Whitepaper

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Summary

This whitepaper gives an overview of the Salesforce Governance framework and the benefits it will achieve. Many people think putting Governance around Salesforce will slow down agility, but the opposite is actually true. A lightweight Governance framework will improve agility by focusing on the Business goals and at the same time adhering to IT's best practices and processes. This paper also outlines the basic 4 processes to help customers get started.

Introduction

One of the biggest challenges our customers have with managing their Salesforce environments is the lack of governance. There are a number of common reasons why this is the case:

- The Business purchased Salesforce with little (if any) input or involvement from IT.
- The Business requires a highly agile platform for delivery of Business requirements and they believe governance processes will add unacceptable delays.
- Due to the nature of aPaas (Application Platform as a Service), many believe changes should be simply made directly in production and that Governance is not required.
- Cloud is new to many of our customers and they do not have a track record to follow.

However, having Governance around your Salesforce deployment can help the program team focus on the Business backlog and at the same time adhering to your company's IT policies and best practices without loss of agility. Salesforce's most successful customers have comprehensive governance frameworks in place with the Business & IT working in tandem to build and manage mission critical applications.

This whitepaper will outline an overview of a framework of showing how the Business and IT can work together to deliver successful business solutions at the speed demanded by the Business.

Overview of Salesforce Governance Framework

When reviewing a large number of global Salesforce customers and looking at how they use and manage Salesforce technology effectively, it was found they all had a number of common processes and use a number of common best practices. Based on these common processes and best practices and the Salesforce Customers for Life (CFL) 7 Domains adoption framework, Salesforce has developed a comprehensive Governance framework. This framework has 4 key tenets (see Figure 1). The tenets are:

Figure 1: Salesforce Governance Framework

- CoE[1] (Center of Excellence) - the process of managing governance.
- Change Management - processes to manage the overall program/project lifecycle from collecting business requirements to moving code from development through production.
- Org Strategy - designing and structuring the foundational "orgs" or areas where the customer's Salesforce applications will reside and run.
- Design Standards - due to Salesforce's multitenant platform, customers need to use caution when standardizing critical approaches including patterns, testing, integration, large data volumes, etc.

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[1]One thing to consider is the use of the term CoE - , many customers believe that the CoE term implies legacy thinking and a slow pace for business and technical change. Many Salesforce customers instead rebrand their CoE using terms including "Network of Excellence", "Center of Innovation, etc.

Our Governance framework embraces the core principles of key industry frameworks such as COBIT5[2] and ITIL[3].

Benefits

The Salesforce Governance framework delivers significant value to our customers by driving cost savings through using standard processes and reusing best practices (see figure 2). The Governance Framework enables customers to:

Figure 2: Benefits of Salesforce Governance Framework

- Innovate - by looking at the big picture and focusing on the key project goals and strategies, a CoE can allow the business to innovate at their own pace, not the pace of traditional IT. It also allows the Business to experiment with new ideas quickly.
- Manage compliance - in many industries, data, security, visibility, and access are critical to meet all the regulatory requirements; a CoE can make sure these are achieved by sharing and reusing best practices.
- Drive Velocity - to realise rapid time-to-value, customers need to prioritize the business requirements and develop and communicate the application roadmap; a CoE enables this to take place.
- Deliver success - to achieve their adoption goals, customers need an effective development process, sharing best practices and putting the appropriate skills in place. The CoE also makes this possible.

In turn, the Governance Framework also reduces risk. This means customers can address complexity through the reuse of best practices that deliver solutions when the business requires them.

Finally, the real benefit of the Governance framework is that it drives a genuine working partnership between the Business and IT with clearly defined roles and responsibilities including Change Management, which has 2 major components (the prioritisation of the Backlog and the implementation of the enhancements into production). In this case, the Business should own and manage the Backlog process and IT should manage the development and promotion of enhancements into production.

CoE

When developing the CoE there are two key areas to consider:
- Scope (and associated Processes)
- Structure (including clear Roles and Responsibilities)

Figure 3: Evolution of your Governance

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[2] http://www.isaca.org/COBIT/Pages/default.aspx
[3] http://www.itil-officialsite.com/

Scope

When customers start thinking about Salesforce Governance, they should initially think small (e.g., an "Acorn"). Salesforce's most successful customers allow their CoEs to grow and mature with time (e.g., an Oak Tree) and flourish as their adoption of Salesforce expands as seen in figure 3. That means customers need not start by developing a large and complex framework from the beginning. The best approach is to focus on a small number (approximately 10) of key processes which address the highest priority challenges customers face when managing Salesforce. Best practices indicate that Salesforce deployments with mature Governance programs have implemented upwards of 50-90 processes (see Figure 4).

However, if customers are new to Salesforce or do not have an effective Governance program in place, starting small is the recommended approach. Specifically, the following processes are indicated:

Figure 4: List of Salesforce Processes

- North Star (Charter) - If customers document the key business goals, the strategies to achieve these goals and why Salesforce is being used, the Charter will clearly state the overall goals of the Salesforce Program. Furthermore, it is very common for the scope of projects to expand causing delivery delays. The Charter will allow the team to prioritise the requirement to focus on the area that will most quickly lead to business value. This Charter should be developed and owned by the project stakeholders and include key Business KPIs.
- Business Backlog - as discussed above, the Business typically requests more applications, features, and function than IT can practically deliver. Within Salesforce's most successful customers, the Business (and *not* Business IT) owns and prioritizes the capabilities for each release.
- Technology Release Management - One common high-priority issue is the lack of repeatable, automated code and configuration deployment processes. A customer may have a large number of administrators who all make changes to the production Org. If all of these changes are made independently, the org can become complex and brittle very quickly. Best practices indicate that our most successful customers adopt Application Lifecycle Management tooling and processes (including Source Control Systems, Continuous Integration, and Automated Testing). This approach also adheres to one of the core principles of ITIL where customers enforce a separation of duties between development and the operations teams.
- Communications - based on experience, the root cause of many IT projects comes down to the lack of communications within the project team and all their stakeholders.

Structure

When customers have multiple Business Units and/or Salesforce Orgs, how do they typically structure their Governance model? Typically, this depends on both the internal organizational structure and the overall Salesforce program plan.

Figure 5: CoE Models

In principle, there are three common core CoE models (see figure 5) and a number of possible hybrid options. The common models are:

- Consolidated - this model is a formal command and control approach. However, the players within the model do not need to be based in the same location if effective communications are in place. The model is useful for developing global processes and also for customers new to Salesforce who wish to develop critical business unit applications. This is the most common model used by Salesforce customers.
- Confederated - this model is useful when each Business Unit/region works independently and only shares best practices and learnings. The key benefit here is that the model allows each Business Unit their own agility and processes, but ensures that key learnings and best practices are shared amongst all the different project teams.
- Federated - this model is somewhere in between the first two options and offers moderate command and control, and works well when using Salesforce both for some global processes *and* for regional-based systems. The key benefit here is customers have great command and control of the key global business processes while also allowing for a more flexible approach for less business-critical systems.
- Hybrid - this model is a specialized form of Confederated and is useful when customers have multiple business units which operate independently. However, there is a central IT group who is responsible for delivering all their projects. In this case, each Business Unit would have their own Governance and charter so they can own and prioritise their business backlog. Also, IT would have their own Governance bodies, focusing very much on technical change management and technology best practices so they can share learnings across all Salesforce orgs.

Roles & Responsibilities

A common Governance structure is outlined in Figure 6.

The day to day management of the CoE will be by the program team, which requires three key roles discussed below. Depending on the size, scope, customer culture, and state of the project, there will be a number of functional teams reporting into the program team. These teams are:

- Release - this stream is responsible for creating and owning the overall project roadmap and release plan.
- Business - this team is responsible for converting the high-level goals and strategies into the business backlog, which is passed over to the development team for delivery.
- Scrum Teams - this stream is responsible for the delivery of the functionality as defined by the business stream team[4][5].

Figure 6: CoE Roles & Responsibilities

- Architectural - this stream is responsible for defining the overall system architecture and making sure they adhere to the corporate standards, including data architecture.
- Adoption/Training - key for the long-term success of the project is to make sure that the end users understand how to use the system and have access to the appropriate level of training.
- Support - with all systems, when users have issues, they need to have an effective support structure and this stream owns this responsibility. Furthermore, if there is a system defect, they can add the issue to the business backlog or raise a system bug report.
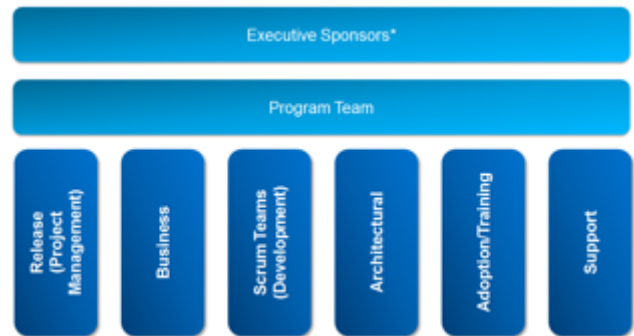
Key Roles

One question commonly posed to Salesforce is this: what is the minimal key roles and associated skill sets required to operate an effective governance program? Typically, these roles include:

- Business Analyst - this role defines the entire project's business requirement roadmaps, looking for commonality across projects, and reviews the Salesforce roadmap to see if there is any overlap. This role also needs to understand the overall Business architecture and how to engage with the appropriate Business owners.
- Enterprise Architect - this role defines the company's best practices and standards around integration, security, SDLC, coding standards, etc., and makes sure that these best practices adhere to any relevant corporate standards. They are also the main link between Salesforce teams and the rest of IT, and need to have a strong

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[4]If the development is being done by the waterfall methodology, then the team will still have the same responsibilities.

[5] It is best practice to keep the scrum teams constant and keep the churn to a minimum.

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background in system design (including Object-oriented Design) and data management and architecture. Remember that it is important to have consistent data architecture across all the Salesforce Orgs.

- Project Management Office - this role defines the overall delivery schedule, roadmap, and end user training approach. Also, this role owns the communications strategy, including keeping the project teams and user community in sync. The PMO also acts as the catalyst for adoption of new delivery models (i.e., Scrum) and to enforce the business and IT feedback loop.

How can Salesforce help?

Based on the Governance framework and large number of customer deployments, Salesforce has developed a successful set of Governance assets as well as the Customer & Sales Growth (CSG) Governance Success Accelerator program. For more information, contact your Customer Success Management team.

About the Author

James Burns is the Director of Cloud Solutions at Salesforce. As the Global SME (Subject Matter Expert) on Salesforce Governance, James works with customers to help build their global governance frameworks.