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There is great value that Enterprise Architecture (EA) can bring to organizations - to aid the business in seeking to Accelerate, Innovate, and Elevate.

But, sadly, many EA organizations still labor under the deadly (to credibility, value, engagement) and banal delusion that their primary mission is to perform centralized governance - and to be a gate keeper against change. In their mind, they see themselves as some sort of priests who hold arcane knowledge, and that their role is as "*Keepers of the One True Way*".

In my experience - far too many EA initiatives turn out to be wasteful exercises - that produce marginal value, or none whatsoever.

They have lost touch with the way that software development has evolved, and the speed with which business needs to move - and have neglected to incorporate the principles of Agile into Enterprise Architecture as the foundation of their guiding principles.

To restore any sense of value-add, I would submit that Enterprise Architecture must be completely re-imagined.

The fundamental shift that needs to occur is to flip the orientation from **reactive** engagement (EA waiting to be engaged by the line-of-business on a per project basis) - to one of **proactive** engagement (EA being the initiator and leader of examination, investigation, research, and recommendations). And, importantly, EA must be empowered with the financial resources to initiate necessary projects.

If your EA initiatives are only funded on a line-of-business project basis - then, you are in a self-defeating cycle of EA failure mode.

If an EA organization were to pivot their mission focus - to providing the business with just three core outcomes/benefits - there is much good that would come from that.

In order of priority:

1) **Speed.** Focus the EA team's efforts on the analysis and re-architecture aspects needed to continually seek ways to accelerate the ability of the business to deliver new and better products/services/features - faster, with greater quality.

2) **Efficiency.** Focus the EA team's efforts on the analysis and re-architecture aspects needed to eliminate costs and waste - by focusing on the EA level of analysis to help the business streamline systems, interfaces, and processes (with judicious application of automation, and where appropriate - simplifying even the manual processes). This includes involving EA in examining and reviewing the actual DevOps performance of systems - to identify where-and-how waste and inefficiency is occurring - that may be a consequence of enterprise-spanning decisions/considerations.

3) **Security.** Focus the EA team's efforts on the analysis and re-architecture aspects to ensure that the security of the business is sound - and continually being improved (that includes facilities, network, infrastructure, systems, applications, components, third-party services, tools, data, interfaces, people, processes, and processing).

When the results of this shift in mission focus are reflected in tangible results for the bottom line of the business, and customer acquisition/retention/satisfaction - then, EA will have a welcome seat at the table (instead of the often seen late-stage invitation to engage EA - as a mere formality, and after-thought).

Indeed, EA will be seen by the business as a true peer and ally - seen as a partner always demonstrating their awareness of the needs and priorities of the business - and deemed a valuable partner in the collaboration.

Over time, an organization's EA team will naturally elaborate beyond just these three - but having this intense focus during the "replanting" of the core EA mission - is necessary to achieve results.

Note:

The thoughts in this posting have long simmered in my mind, but were brought the fore of my thinking today, by [this question](#) posed on LinkedIn.