Solution Architecture

A solutions architect is responsible for evaluating an organization’s business needs and determining how IT can support those needs leveraging software, hardware, or infrastructure. [Aligning IT strategy with business goals](https://www.cio.com/article/194067/7-ways-to-effectively-ensure-it-business-alignment.html) has become paramount, and a solutions architect can help determine, develop, and improve technical solutions in support of business goals.

A solutions architect also bridges communication between IT and business operations to ensure everyone is aligned in developing and implementing technical solutions for business problems. The process requires regular feedback, adjustments, and problem-solving in order to properly design and implement potential solutions.

Solution architecture itself encompasses business, system, information, security, application and technology architecture. [Some examples of solutions architecture](https://simplicable.com/new/solution-architecture) include developing cloud infrastructure for efficiency, implementing [microservices](https://www.infoworld.com/article/3445043/what-are-microservices-your-next-software-architecture.html) for ecommerce, or adopting security measures for data, systems, and networks. While the scope of the job can vary depending on a business’ specific needs, there are certain responsibilities, skills, and qualifications that solutions architects will need to meet to get the job.

## Solutions architect responsibilities

While job requirements and responsibilities will vary by company or industry, these are the general expectations of a solutions architect:

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* Lead brainstorming sessions to develop potential solutions for business needs or problems.
* Identify opportunities for process improvements.
* Prepare and document testing requirements.
* Identify areas where IT can support business needs and goals.
* Work with business units to develop IT strategies and to improve current IT implementations.
* Build and migrate software and services across the organization.
* Work with product and delivery teams to develop scalable solutions and products.
* Communicate and consult with clients and internal stakeholders to develop appropriate solutions.

Solutions architects must be prepared to work with leaders, managers, and employees across every business unit. And if you’re working on a product team, you might also be expected to work with clients to understand expectations and requirements. A solutions architect in a client-facing role will also need to understand how to manage customer satisfaction and set proper expectations for the end-product.

## Solutions architect skills

To successfully align IT solutions with business objectives, solutions architect must have strong leadership and communication skills, as well as both technical and business knowledge. As a solutions architect, you will need to understand the business side of the organization to understand which IT solutions will fit the company’s goals. Your leadership skills will be important for steering the overall process of identifying key business objectives and determining the requirements for each solution.

You will likely need a bachelor’s degree or higher in information technology, computer science, software engineering, or a related field. For more senior roles, you may need more experience or education, including a master’s degree. Depending on the role, you might also need experience in specific IT areas, such as networking administration, development, customer service, or other relevant areas.

According to data from PayScale, popular reported technical skills for solutions architects include:

* SAP Business Warehouse
* AWS and Azure
* Apache Kafka
* ServiceNow
* Informatica
* Data Management
* Software Development LifeCycle
* Big Data Analytics
* Enterprise Service Bus (ESB)
* Experience with enterprise architecture
* Experience working with IT architecture frameworks
* Understanding of IT security, infrastructure, and governance