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The Higher Education Technology Agenda

Strategic Torque: Enterprise Architecture & Portfolio Management

Rollings (2011) states that 'organizations should evaluate how they have been improving IT competencies and stop emphasizing silo-focused improvements'.

There commonly exists a practical disconnect between strategic direction, enterprise architecture and portfolio management. David McClure, Gartner Vice President (VP), as summarised by Else (2007) states that, 'better success depends on integrating mission planning and strategy, the enterprise IT portfolio management process and enterprise architecture (EA)'.

This presentation will focus on the TOGAF Enterprise Architecture model, the OGC MoP Portfolio Management model and COBIT 5 and how they may integrate to leverage each other's capabilities.

Practical application of integration based on theoretical foundations shows that the implementation of portfolio management is facilitated by enterprise architecture practices and in doing so contributes to the realisation of strategic planning and the overall improvement of cross-competency IT effectiveness.

This discussion will show that there is a history of risk aversion, opportunity cost and siloed 'think' in the IT departments of tertiary educational institutions. There is a need to optimise actionable vision, the organisational strategy. This optimisation of organisation and organisational change combines service based value add client interaction, through streamlining process (through silo integration), and the reduction of opportunity cost and waste.

This is in part an impact of risk appetite / tolerance. The ability to influence outside ones silo is perceived as riskier as control seems to be lacking. This is one part truth, one part perception; as one climbs the value/organisational chain, silos are viewed together as part of a larger value/organisational unit (e.g. Networking Support teams and Server Support teams aggregate with others to form part of an IT Infrastructure Support Team).

The improvement of risk management in an organisation improves its capacity for embracing uncertainty and the ability to exhibit behaviours, that were once thought of, more broadly across the risk continuum (adverse through to tolerant). The more risk tolerant organisation is (or the more capable an organisation is of managing risk suitably), the more willing it is to integrate silos and focus on streamlining services. IT and business teams must ‘look beyond their own competency silos to address the lack of cross-competency changes’ (Rollings 2011). Improvements to risk management, organisational knowledge and a focus on integration of atomised silos, increases an organisational capacity to act as a holistic, provider of streamlined services to ensure delivery of targeted business opportunities for investment aligned to desired future capabilities.

The integration of COBIT, Enterprise Architecture and Portfolio Management increases the organisational capacity to form and implement strategy based on sound comprehension, communication and selection of business change options that optimise transition from as-is to desired future state.

The integration of these three frameworks must focus on ‘enabling a business-integrated planning model and fostering an objective optimization-oriented discussion about business outcomes, business capabilities and services’ (Rollings 2012). This will increase strategic alignment, reduction of low value investments, provide greater management controls and accountability, and increase the perceived value of IT Strategy by the organisation. Finally, the concept must be applied practically with a focus on people over departments and the delivery of service through integration of process before tools.

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2 THOUGHTS ON “STRATEGIC TORQUE: ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE & PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT”

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