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Business Architect: A Difficult Definition

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A business architect (BA) is a hard person to define. They are someone who has experience in both the business and technology side, as well as, interpersonal relations at the customer level. Their primary concern is in creating viable value chains whereby the business can create a competitive advantage in their specified market. The business architect works with multiple levels and departments in a business, specifically, management, information technology, and the business unit that they are currently evaluating. Finally, they must concern themselves with the overall business view, not the individual departmental, technological, or process concerns.

Personally I have never had direct interaction with a true business architect. That being said, I work in business intelligence and deal with the overall view of the business in terms of bringing value in terms of data awareness. In this sense I am a partial architect myself. The business I work for also has project managers, technology leaders, and a strategy team who all focus on ensuring that the business moves toward a profitable margin. As such, while we have no individual person who embodies the BA, the overall combination of teams and individual experience creates a virtual BA based on group knowledge.

Currently, our organization is working on a core system’s upgrade. This upgrade is causing far reaching affects in all of our departments, and in how we interact with our customers. The decision to move down this path is directed by our strategic development team consisting of our executives and senior managers. However, the development and process monitoring is managed by our project team who report directly to the strategic development team. In such a way, their interaction creates a BA type collaboration which effectively moves our company down the chosen business plan.

I have personally learned a great deal about how our organization interacts both internally and externally. The project itself has brought to light many inefficiencies which we are able to address through positive change. Also, due to recent mergers, I have seen how we are able to integrate known efficient processes from each of our divisions, leading to a more cohesive working environment. I have even worked to create models and analysis which have led to direct change in both customer interaction and product availability.

Things I would like to change, is how our organization is virtually segregating each department. This is not as bad as it used to be. However, there still seems to be a mentality of “us versus them” when it comes to interdepartmental/intergroup relations. I am hoping that with the move to a single core system (we have several at the moment) this mentality will cease as everyone will be eating from the same plate, so to speak. A true BA would likely be a boon in this regard, being able to point out the faults and weaknesses of how our interactions have a direct effect on business output.

Reference

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