Business Design and Excellence: Bringing together Business Architecture, Analysis and Process

Business Architecture

1. From a Business Architecture perspective, what's the best method to define the key value streams for an organisation?
   A. Difficult task indeed. The best approach is to be truly customer-centric, starting from the end value that the company wants to deliver to its customers, and then moving upwards to understand the different stages. There is often some correlation between products and value streams, e.g. lending has been considered a value stream but is also a banking product, the same way phone or tv may be considered a value stream for a telecom. That doesn't mean each product is definitely a standalone value stream, products will often be grouped into categories and together form a value stream (e.g. "saving", "investing", "lending" in a banking scenario). Finally, another important nuance that helps defining value streams is to distinguish operational vs development value streams.

2. Some of the architecture elements described seem to align with Service Design principles. Do you see a connection between the two disciplines? And, in your view, could Service Design serve as an alternative to Business Architecture?
   A. Absolutely. Service Design forms an integral part of Business Architecture and it'll be interesting to understand how far you would push that service design and what the end deliverable would entail – something that often vary from organisation to organisation – to answer this question properly. I'll admit not being familiar with Service Design as a standalone discipline, therefore my answer would be at risk of being inaccurate. I would certainly expect some cross-overs with Business Architecture

3. Does the Business Architect role sits within portfolio team? And what activities do they perform when not engaged in portfolio planning or strategic cycles?
   A. Business Architecture wouldn't necessarily sit within the portfolio team but can certainly help with the planning. BusArch would need to be ahead of portfolio planning to provide inputs about the work packages or projects, almost creating a backlog of work items. But prioritisation could be decided independently (providing the team prioritising has a clear understanding of interdependencies). Usually Business Architecture would play a more

important role in governance through running the Design Authority and ensuring the projects teams remain aligned with the strategic vision. As its core job, Business Architecture would look into defining the strategic end state of the firm in alignment with the strategy, progressively mature this design by adding more and more detail, and collaborating with the project teams to help them interpret the designs and ensure detailed solutions are developed in the most effective way (e.g. provide steers to product owners)

4. What strategies do you use to establish governance and ownership of the business architecture baseline when the organization's technology team tends to prioritize technical concerns over business objectives?
   A. This happens more often than not. Emphasizing on the need for better collaboration and alignment between business and IT is often what can unlock the situation, as well as aligning IT delivery to OKRs/KPIs. A shift can often happen once a tech development has failed to deliver its full value, whether it's not delivering a feature despite a long investment time, or delivering a feature that is not fit for purpose. The need for a Business Design Authority then becomes more apparent, and the first few sessions should include the right stakeholders (develop a clear ToR and list of attendees) and submit designs that are controversial. Usually, if some IT designs cannot be traced back to a business objective, this should be escalated and brought to DA for approval.

Business Analysis

1. In your experience, what is the typical ratio of business architects to BAs that is needed?
   A. There are typically far fewer Business Architects required than Business Analysts. This is on the basis that the Business Architect is helping to set the vision, services and direction, whilst the BA will then be engaged to explore the detail needed to deliver on that vision. Business Analysts will need to explore the depth of processes with stakeholders across the organisation, exploring needs, data, functionality, strategy and more, to deliver the direction set by the architects.

2. In our organization, a small in-house transformation team exists, and responsibilities for business architecture, business analysis, and process excellence are currently handled by the Business Analyst team. Do you see advantages in combining these disciplines into a single role?
   A. When you have fewer individuals in a process, there is a reduction in the risk associated transferring knowledge, ensuring understanding and connecting

analysis to architecture. An individual could apply their knowledge gained from exploring the business architecture, to the analysis activities and vice versa. However, there is typically quite enough for the Business Analysis to focus on to complete a comprehensive, thorough and sufficiently accurate analysis outcome. An individual that is spread too thin, may fail to dedicate the appropriate level of time to explore the detail needed to implement the architectural vision, or be too superficial when considering the needs of the organisation as a whole.

3. Is there a risk that our clients and stakeholders perceive these various disciplines as overlapping efforts toward the same goal, leading them to oversimplify the value and question whether they are paying more than necessary?
   A. There is a high likelihood that key stakeholders who will not be Business Architects, Business Analysts or even being responsible for transformation to misunderstand the breadth or alignment of responsibilities.
   Our role as Business Analysts is to help and guide all stakeholders, including chang sponsors or clients, so that the outcomes are appropriate for the organisation. If you see instances of overlap, start with the picture of the responsibilities, overlap and what is not being covered (perhaps yet). Use this picture to align understanding and agree responsibilities.
   A person may do more that one role. Be that a combination of PM/BA, Business Architect/Analyst. We have to avoid therefore assuming Project Management or Business Architecture are therefore part of Business Analysis.

4. What are the essential artifacts and deliverables that clients expect to see from the collaborative work across these disciplines?
   A. That depends on the initiative. However, as a general perspective, a client will expect to see a coherent and aligned, with connectivity (traceability) between the likes of Value Stream, Business Capabilities, Business Process & Taxonomy, Operating Model Blueprint, Process Performance Metrics & Dashboards, Issues/pain-points/Improvements, Opportunity Backlogs & Prioritisation, Requirements, information/data models solution design and more.