

The Key Stakeholders

- CIO and Chief Architect
- Middle Management in both IT and LOB
- Chief Architect, IT Governance

The Key Question

- Does your IT Organization have the capabilities to meet the next Business Challenge?

Opportunity Statement

Does IT Matter?

Nicholas Carr's article - 'IT Doesn't Matter' published in Harvard Business Review in 2003 generated considerable amount of debate among rank and file both in IT and Lines of Business. It raised several questions including - if IT is able to generate lasting competitive advantage then exactly how does IT accomplish this task?

To fairly answer this question, consider the following hypothetical scenario and IT's response to it.

Scenario - A financial services organization decided to re-engineer its core business processes in order to capitalize

on changing consumer behaviour. The planned scope will affect all core business processes, impact of changes on people will be severe and supporting IT systems will change drastically. At this point, the business drivers for the initiative are clear, however there is no consensus among senior management on how to approach it.

To ensure the solution will address the concerns of all affected stakeholders; it is understood that the solution definition must be comprehensive. In today's Business and IT Organization structure exactly who is RESPONSIBLE (as defined in RACI governance model) for the problem definition, build and exploit the necessary capabilities?

This is the challenge that IT Organizations must address.

QRS Approach

Over the last ten years, QRS architects and project managers have encountered this challenge repeatedly. In this situation, the IT Organization leadership frequently falls into three broad categories as outlined below:

1. It is not IT Organization's RESPONSIBILITY to define and exploit the necessary capabilities; IT builds information management systems according to the Business specifications. This leads to an endless Business and Tech Speak chasm.
2. IT Organization assumes RESPONSIBILITY because nobody else in the enterprise is able or willing to. IT assumes the RESPONSIBILITY by default.
3. It is IT Organization's RESPONSIBILITY. IT leadership has clearly communicated the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders. IT assumes overall leadership to create boundaryless information flow capabilities and competencies across the enterprise and prepares the LOBs on how to further exploit these new capabilities.

To ensure successful execution of the second and third category, QRS has developed a framework, methodology and plan. The plan defines and builds the capabilities to support the immediate business strategy; deploys and augments these capabilities if necessary for the entire organization to support long term business strategies.

The key aspects of the plan are:

- By using QRS EALC Toolkit, quickly assess the current capabilities of the Organization to execute the planned strategy and develop a roadmap to address the gaps.
- The roadmap includes education, training and mentoring of internal staff while developing the necessary artifacts that define, build and exploit the necessary capabilities for business transformation.
- To ensure consistent execution of the defined processes and skills by deploying QRS EALC Software - ITO.

Results

By adopting the above approach, we have helped our clients achieve two major milestones:

- Demonstrated that, by being inclusive, IT Organization can define and build the necessary information management capabilities and prepare the LOBs to exploit these new capabilities.
- Build competencies of client's internal IT staff by knowledge transfer of QRS' approach which can be applied to any new opportunity.

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