



BIZ ARCH MASTERY



BUSINESS ARCHITECTURE STRAIGHT TALK

100 INSIGHTS TO GUIDE THE JOURNEY

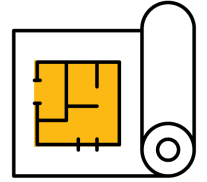
A compilation of 100 short insights to guide our business architecture journey



100 INSIGHTS TO GUIDE THE JOURNEY

01

A business architecture is to an organization as a blueprint is to a building. A blueprint becomes especially important when you are building or transforming.



02

A defined business architecture benefits any organization, from startups to large global organizations, including for-profits, non-profits, and governments. We all care about viable business models, intentionally designed organizations, and executing business direction well.

03

It's not about the business architecture. We are focused on the bigger vision and a mindset shift for better strategy execution and new ways of working in our organizations and ecosystems. Business architecture is just an enabler and partners with many teams and disciplines.

04

Business architecture is the often-missing bridge between strategy and execution. Organizations often jump from ideation to implementation, skipping the important activation stage in the middle.

05

Business architecture is an expert silo-buster. Silos may be inherently human but can be detrimental to an organization. Business architecture creates a view of the whole, helps people understand direction, pinpoints where to remove or bridge silos, and shifts the mindset.

Business architecture provides:

1. A common language and blueprint
2. A bird's eye view of an entire organization and its ecosystem
3. A unique value stream and capability lens to see with fresh eyes
4. The scaffolding that connects the dots from strategy to execution

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"The business architecture superpower: a common language that allows us to connect the dots and see the entirety." – Theresa Fannin

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Business architecture enables:

1. Relentless customer value delivery
2. Cross-organization collaboration
3. End-to-end strategy execution alignment
4. Intentional design today and tomorrow
5. Big picture decisions
6. Business first versus technology
7. The right investments



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09

Business architecture is not an IT discipline.

How leading organizations use business architecture:

1. Align strategy and execution
2. Connect the dots
3. Help make the right decisions
4. Manage complexity
5. Prioritize investments
6. Reinforce accountability
7. Solve strategic problems

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Business architecture is not a silver bullet. Business architecture works with an ecosystem of other teams within an organization. Build partnerships and bridges. The only way to succeed is together.

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“Remember it’s all about value. We have to be relevant, we have to resonate, and we have to deliver value to the organization we serve. It’s not about the models, the discipline, or the rigor as much as it is the why of it and how we can change our thinking.” – Linda Finley

13

Remember that the role is a business architect, not a business modeler. The true value lies not in building content, but in the unique strategic and big picture insights we can offer by using the models.

14

Focus most on the “business” in business architecture. The business architecture is a means to an end, not the end itself.

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“Business architects play a vital role as the guide within an organization’s story. They make order out of chaos and create a path to transformation.” – Tamara Park

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A business architect is an architect, a leader, a catalyst, and a change agent.

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Business architecture is the ultimate Venn diagram. Business architects have one foot in the business and one foot in enterprise architecture. We need to continually balance and bring together the goals and perspectives on both sides.



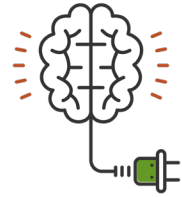
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18

A successful business architect “majors” in business architecture, but “minors” in other disciplines and frameworks. This can include organization design, human-centered design, strategy, organizational change management, and many others.

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A good check: Are you a hammer looking for a nail? Business architecture is powerful to address many challenges and opportunities but is often used alongside other disciplines and techniques. Business architecture is always the foundation, but blend in other approaches.



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The business architect role is a strategic one. You will produce outputs to support different business usage scenarios but focus on delivering value versus creating deliverables. This mindset is what sets successful business architects apart.

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Business architects must understand technology and help guide their organizations on critical decisions and strategically leveraging technology.

22

The key to unlocking business architect strengths: recognize the value of the business architecture discipline and role, invest in them, allow them to do their jobs, and help own and steward the bigger picture vision of business architecture and strategy execution.

23

There will always be a role for business architects, but the ultimate goal is for other people in an organization to embrace the business architecture and use it as part of their roles.

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“I see business architecture as something that every organization should be living and breathing... There may be people who have a specific title or role as a business architect, but actually everybody in the organization, wherever they are, has a role to play.” – Julie Choo

25

Every organization has a business architecture, it just may not be written down. It may not necessarily have been built with intention either.

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For best results, create your business architecture together with a group of cross-functional business experts. The business architecture should be owned by the business but is often stewarded by the architecture team.



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27

Remember that the capability map is fit for purpose. It gives us a lens to see what we do that is the same across an organization versus focusing on our differences. Its form follows its function.

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Leverage business architecture reference models so that you can spend less time building your business architecture and more time using it. The most powerful connectors within and across organizations are value streams and business objects (information concepts).

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Business architecture reference models not only accelerate creation of an organization's business architecture, but they give us a way to architect across organizational boundaries. This will only become more important in our connected and digital world.

30

Business architecture creates common business components that can be reused in many ways for innovation, integrated experiences, reusable solutions, and rapid business change. Business architecture is the foundation of a composable business.

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"When architecture is done right, projects that use it are more successful, closer to on time and on budget, and have fewer issues – and the enterprise builds reusable assets instead of redundant liabilities." –Mike Rosen

32

Business architecture is not rocket science. However, it's also not just a bunch of templates. We need to hold fast to the most important principles and rigor we hold precious, but flex on the rest to help the discipline gain traction and be usable by others.

What should we hold precious in business architecture?

1. Capabilities are a necessary construct to help organizations organize and optimize the resources needed to deliver stakeholder value and execute change initiatives. They should provide a non-redundant view.



33

What should we hold precious in business architecture?

2. Capabilities alone are not enough and need a flow- or value-based construct to provide context for their usage. The Guild calls these value streams. Capabilities and value streams are particularly powerful when related to and used in conjunction with each other.

34



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35

What should we hold precious in business architecture?

3. The scope of an organization's business architecture should represent the entire organization and the ecosystem in which it operates. We have plenty of fragmented views of our organizations. Business architecture helps us see the whole.

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What should we hold precious in business architecture?

4. The scope of business architecture = the 10 domains defined by the Guild. This also provides sharp clarity on how business architecture relates to other disciplines.

37

What should we hold precious in business architecture?

5. The focus and positioning of business architecture is between strategy and execution. Business architecture informs and translates strategy into a coordinated set of actions across an organization.

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If business architecture is hard for others to understand, continue reflecting on why. Is it because it's a change? Are we explaining it in the best way? Have we overcomplicated it?

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler." – Einstein

39

The very first step to get started with business architecture? It's not building models. Build a solid understanding of what business architecture is and then articulate a clear value proposition of business architecture for your organization. Always start with why.

40

Once you have established your business architecture baseline (value streams, capabilities, and cross-mapping), build out the rest of the knowledgebase just enough just in time, driven by how you plan to use it for business value.

41

There are 3 key aspects of business architecture: (1) applying business architecture for value, (2) building and maintaining the knowledgebase, (3) establishing, maturing, and socializing the practice. #1 is the reason we exist, but #2 and #3 ensure success.

42

Be deliberate about maturing your business architecture practice over time. Formalization will help you succeed and scale business architecture across the organization. Build just enough practice infrastructure just in time to support the value you intend to deliver.



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43

Business architecture maturity =

1. It's fully embedded into the fabric, just how the organization works
2. It's fully integrated into strategy execution and with other teams
3. Business architects are highly skilled and trusted advisors
4. It brings agility and advantage

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"To start a new discipline such as business architecture, you have to be convinced and convincing." – Amélie Régimbal

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"Building business architecture buy-in: Start where your friends are...gain buy-in using a top-down and bottom-up approach...create strong partnerships from strategy to execution...focus on the WIIFM for different stakeholders...follow it with value delivery." – Theresa Fannin

46

Storytelling is THE key skill in a business architecture practice...We typically can't mandate something or give people direction, so selling the story is the way we can influence the aligned outcomes we want...from the CEO staff to the folks doing execution." – Steven Scott

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"The business does not always understand or appreciate our architecture models and there's no way to make them – we have to meet them where they are at and that is what graphics do." – Michael Pemberton

48

"Business architecture is like a Swiss army knife. There are different tools you can use to give insights, to connect the dots, to unravel complexity. However, you need to listen to what a stakeholder needs and pull out the right part of the knife." – Coen de Bruijn

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Business architecture is rarely decreed. It is demonstrated and then understood, evolved, and adopted.

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Business architects are rarely given a role or seat at the table. They must be created and earned.

51

Business architecture opportunities will come, so make sure you are ready when they do. This requires knowledge and experience, an informed perspective, and enthusiasm.



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52

How to succeed with business architecture: Find a sponsor. Help them articulate a clear why. Build a repeatable service. Find the bright spots and help those people by applying business architecture in their area. Tell the story and make your service better. – Jake Walker

53



How to fail with business architecture: Create individual business architecture blueprints, teams, and practices within each business unit. This drives the silos deeper and creates fragmented views. It also creates competing structures that are difficult to put back together.

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How to fail with business architecture: Spend years creating perfect models without involving the business. Assume they will readily adopt and use them.

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Everyone asks for numbers from other organizations proving business architecture. Bad news: minimal data exists publicly. Good news: You're not missing anything. Create your own proof and share it with the community to help build the case. More will come back to you.

56

Consider tracking your Return on Business Architecture Investment. It provides visibility to and accountability for value delivered to the organization + helps build buy-in.

$$\text{ROBAI} = \frac{\text{Business Architecture Benefits} - \text{Business Architecture Costs}}{\text{Business Architecture Costs}}$$

57

True for business architecture adoption:

"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident." – Arthur Schopenhauer

58

Also true for business architecture adoption:

"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete." – Buckminster Fuller



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59

We leverage business architecture in two ways:

1. As a framework – for organizing, analyzing and communicating insights
2. Within the flow from strategy to execution – to inform and translate business direction into a set of actionable initiatives

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A few good business architecture quick wins:

1. Perform a business impact analysis
2. Frame a challenge or opportunity
3. Support analysis and decision-making
4. Visualize focal points of strategic direction
5. Show a capability-on-a-page
6. Translate one strategy

61

Delivering value with business architecture does not need to be epic. Even small wins matter.

62

Trust the golden thread. It's magical. It helps to align strategy, architecture, and initiatives at all levels – from either direction. It doesn't matter where your organization is today, use it to start creating alignment.

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Business architects do not formulate strategy. However, they partner closely with leaders and strategists to inform and translate strategy.

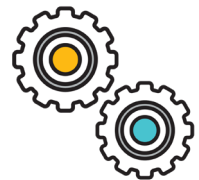
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Business architecture ensures strategy is:

1. Clearly articulated and communicated
2. Consistently decomposed and deconstructed into the requisite components
3. Collectively viewed through a customer and business lens
4. Executed through a set of coordinated initiatives

65

How business architecture can help with initiative planning and investments: Business architecture objectively informs initiative investments within and across portfolios, with the enterprise in mind.





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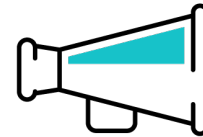
How business architecture can help with initiative planning and investments: Business architecture shifts strategizing and planning from an initiative mindset to a capability and end-to-end value delivery mindset.

67

How business architecture can help with initiative planning and investments: Business architecture helps teams to be more autonomous by providing clear direction, ensuring overall alignment, and facilitating collaboration in the right places.

68

Business architects are advocates for the enterprise. While others focus on their specific areas, business architects (and all enterprise architects) help us to see, speak, and act enterprise. Business architects are biased for the enterprise. They fight for the enterprise.



69

Customers and products in an organization's business model and business architecture always reflect the external perspective – not "internal" customers or products. It helps everyone share the same big picture and reminds us of who we are ultimately serving.

70

The key to stay sane: Embrace and traverse nuance and different levels of abstraction. Yes, there are different frameworks and disciplines and sometimes we use the same words for different things. Most things are just at different elevations with different purposes and forms.

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Business architecture and human-centered design are a power combo for outside-in + inside-out perspective. HCD focuses on customer empathy and experience and provides context for business architecture. Business architecture informs and translates customer needs into action.

72

Business architecture is a very important middleman. It's not just a bridge between strategy and execution, but also a bridge between an organization's business model and its operating model as well.

73

End-to-end organizational agility AND delivery agility are critical. Agile and business architecture teams play different, complementary roles. Business architecture focuses on the business and translates direction. Agile teams are the mechanism that deliver the results.



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74

Putting business architecture and SAFe together isn't just a theory – it is a practical way to enhance SAFe.” – Jo Gilmore

75

Business architecture is a keystone and starting point for digital readiness. It is a business framework and discipline that not only contributes its own unique value but provides the foundation that accelerates and locks together all of the other teams.

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Business architecture provides a critical foundation for business and digital transformation. Leveraging business architecture and business architects not only leads to more successful transformations but also builds an organization's capacity for continuous change.

77

Business architecture and organizational change management are partners in change. “They are both about transformation, senior leader engagement, consistent communications, and helping execute strategy from the business perspective to meet our objectives.” – Ken Williams

78

There needs to be tight partnership and integration between business architecture and organization design. We share many of the same goals for our organizations: intentional design, organizational alignment, and agility and adaptability.

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Business architecture and business analysis are two separate but mutually beneficial disciplines. Business architects and business analysts work at different elevations, at different points in strategy execution, with different goals and outputs. Partnership is critical.

80

Does IT have a business architecture? Yes, the same one as the rest of the organization. Within this context, the IT department is a business unit just like any other. There's no us and them – there's only us and us. We are one company united by one business architecture.

81

“Business architecture removes the guesswork between business and IT. It lets the business refocus on setting and achieving business objectives, and it lets IT refocus on identifying scope and investing in IT architectures.” – William Ulrich

82

Where should a business architecture team report? Based on global successes and trends: the business. However, a team can be successful no matter where they report as long as they think, speak, and act business and build the business architecture in alignment with principles.



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83

Business architecture governance should exist to provide business value and ensure outcomes – not bureaucracy. There can be multiple aspects of business architecture governance. Focus on comparing action to intent.

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Beyond the job description: “other duties as assigned” for business architects:

1. Visioning (how the organization will work better)
2. Marketecture
3. Demand generation (finding opportunities to help)
4. Supply generation (finding/creating new talent)
5. Politecture

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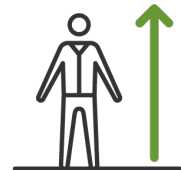
5 key organizing questions to ask when starting a business architecture team:

1. Where will the team report?
2. How will we partner with others?
3. Will architects report centralized, decentralized, or hybrid?
4. How will we ensure common practices and collaboration?

86

5 key role questions to ask when starting a business architecture team:

1. How will we define the business architect role?
2. What will business architects be responsible for?
3. Which competencies are required?
4. What career path options will be available?



87

5 key people questions to ask when starting a business architecture team:

1. How will we create diversity (knowledge, experience, personalities, passions, etc.)?
2. How many architects will be needed?
3. How will we find business architects internally and externally?

88

The business architect role gives you an amazing jumping off point to transition into other roles, in any type or size of organization. You can also keep advancing as an architect and have a challenging and meaningful career. Take ownership of your career and be intentional.

89

“Remember you are not alone. Get help from the business architecture community. You’ll be amazed at how open and welcoming they are.” – Grant Ecker



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90

The success of a business architect is not just in what they know and do, but in how they show up. Be:

1. Business-minded
2. Enterprise advocates
3. Bridge builders
4. Visualizers and storytellers
5. Interactive co-creators
6. Iterative and adaptive
7. Value-driven

91

Create a playbook when your business architecture team and demand start to grow. It will help you scale fast and deliver better and consistently. Focus your playbook on the big outcomes – don't create a detailed cookbook.



92

Crystal ball predictions for business architecture – very likely:

1. Business architecture adoption and advancement continue at an increased pace globally
2. Business architecture is leveraged strategically and positioned upfront in strategy execution

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Crystal ball predictions for business architecture – reasonably likely:

1. The focus of the business architect role continues to shift from developing the business architecture knowledgebase to “architecting the business”
2. The business architect role continues to elevate

94

Crystal ball predictions for business architecture – a bit futuristic:

1. Business architecture is deployed in new ways across organizations (beyond usage by business architects)
2. Business architects architect across organizational boundaries (M&As, JVs, ecosystems)

95

Crystal ball predictions for business architecture – a bit aspirational:

1. Architecture (business and technology) becomes a true profession
2. Architects use their talents for “good”

96

Business architecture helps organizations assess, improve, and infuse sustainability into the right conversations and the very fabric of an organization.



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97

Business architecture makes achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1) actionable, 2) measurable, 3) visible, and 4) possible – within and across organizations.

98

“Business architects catalyze and influence change. Adopting a servant-leader mindset and characteristics leader can help business architects be more effective and impactful, from establishing a practice within their organizations to helping drive transformation.” – Jeff Dols

99

Consider volunteering some time to help a non-profit or small business using your business architecture skills. It’s the ultimate intersection: where your talent meets an important need. The best part? You’ll become a better business architect because of it.

100

The role of business architecture and the talents of business architects have never been more relevant or necessary to help our organizations and societies transform and create a world that we all want to live in.

