Leadership Lessons from Capability Mapping

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The Capability Mapping exercise provided me with several insights into ITANA and the strategy for taking ITANA forward. I walked through each section of the ITANA Capability Map in the four previous posts (the information from these posts is gathered in the ITANA Capability Map page). In this post, I'll cover the leadership insights that came from both the mapping process and the map itself. The Capability Mapping exercise helped me logically lay out the organization and helped me better understand the areas where we should focus our efforts.

Strategic Goals

Outreach to Business Leadership

The first thing that struck me as we worked through the capability mapping process was the distinction between Outreach and Community Building. Outreach is outwardly focused towards new audiences and those who would benefit from building or leveraging an architecture group. The focus of outreach should be the business leaders in our higher education institutions and architects who are not yet members. The key lesson here was the need for strong outreach to the business leadership. This made me consider what channels would be best for this activity. This greatly impacted the Community-Facing Capabilities. It also made me formalize the need for a stronger outreach function for ITANA, especially one that is focused to our business partners like the Registrar and Finance. This also made me realize we need a much stronger Social Media capability with more seamless information flows.

Education through Instruction and Courses

The second thing that struck me was the need for a stronger educational component to ITANA. ITANA had always had an ad hoc knowledge transfer process. Join the calls, listen in, read the email and learn on your own. When I saw Knowledge Transfer as a Strategic Capability I had to think about whether or not our current activities were sufficiently supporting that strategy. I decided that more direct support of Knowledge Transfer is needed. Instruction and Courses appeared as capabilities and that made me realize that ITANA needs more formalized educational opportunities. I believe these opportunities must take a variety of formats to fit the various topics and the broad membership's needs. I envision this might include everything from multi-day formal short courses taught by faculty from our various Business Schools to short 15 minute video tutorials. I have decided that creating an Instruction Working Group is a top priority of mine for the next year.

Community Building – Peer Groups and Mentors

When I saw Community Building in the Strategic Capabilities and Networking in the Service Capabilities, I began to think about the role of ITANA in connecting architects to each other and their business leadership. At the Face2Face meeting, we had many people who were new architects and many who were new to Higher Education. I realized ITANA can play an important role in helping new architects find peers and mentors. I also realized that there are other select peer-groups that we should facilitate like a "New To HE" group. ITANA should focus on spinning up these sub-groups using social media and other collaboration spaces.

Content Management and Capture

Finally, when I saw Content Management and Capture in the Supporting Capabilities I thought about the ad hoc nature of these activities now. I realized that these two supporting capabilities need to be formalized in support of the Instruction/Courses/Education strategy and the Outreach and Publication capabilities. Look for sub-teams that focus on Content Management across all the various sites and media and a stronger capture capability and focus.

Overall Lessons

Capability Mapping helped me distinguish the organization's operations and structures from the current situation. It helped me see what needs to occur and the linkages between various levels of capabilities (e.g. Content Management and Capture are linked to Instruction and Publication and to to the Community Facing Capabilities). It brought gaps into sharp focus for me – for instance, the lack of formal instructional opportunities. It also helped me see the overarching goals and drivers for ITANA. I found this to be a great process for seeing the vision for ITANA and finding the strategic goals for the next year or two. The Capability Map is also a great communication tool. It makes a good picture for explaining what ITANA does and what we are all about. You can see its influence on the new Charter for ITANA.

Acknowledgements

This was all made possible by my great Rebranding 2012 team:

Ceri Davies, Cardiff University,
Chris Eagle, Michigan State University,
Scott Fullerton, University of Wisconsin-Madison,
Paul Hobson, University of British Columbia and
Piet Niederhausen, Georgetown University