Charter

WG Member Responsible: Russell Connacher, UC Berkeley, russellc@berkeley.edu

The Importance of an EA Charter

A charter is a vital deliverable for any EA start-up process. It sets out explicitly what EA is and what it can do for the organization, specifying these clearly within the organization's current culture and level of EA maturity. The charter can help reduce political friction, allowing management, stakeholders and peer groups to understand the role of EA and how it will be delivered in the organization. Having a charter that clearly defines the value proposition of EA and describes how it operates can be very useful in educating IT and business leaders about what EA is and how the team works.

Developing an EA Charter

The charter should be created at the beginning of your practice and revised at the beginning of each architecture iteration or project engagement. Revisions at regular intervals will ensure that the definition, function, and scope described in the charter are still accurate as your practice matures and your organization's needs change.

Referring to one of the templates or samples below will give you a good start on a first draft. Make sure that the scope of the practice described in your charter is challenging and of true value to your organization, but not overly ambitious at first; failure to reach clearly stated and formally approved goals would be too great a set-back. Make sure also that your charter is written in the language of your stakeholders, not in *architect-speak*. It must reflect the local culture and politics of your organization and communicate clearly both within your team and throughout the organization. Circulate the draft among your key stakeholders for comments and corrections to make sure it represents a shared understanding of your practice's mission, goals, structure, and scope. The final, revised version should then be formally approved by the governing body or executive sponsoring your practice.

EA Charter Templates

The following two examples are taken from the readings referred to below. The first, from the Gartner Group, results in a substantial document of 10-20 pages and is meant for annual review. The second, from a book published by Springer, results in a "vision statement" of 3-5 pages and is intended to be written as a first step in every architectural engagement.

Gartner example (1):

Preface:

- Intent — A brief description of the purpose of the charter document.
- History — Summary of the charter's development and updates.
- Endorsement — Who ratified the document and when?
- Adoption and maintenance — How the charter is implemented and an outline for update cycles.

Objectives and Metrics:

- Objectives — What target business outcomes is the EA program expected to address? What value will the EA practice will bring to the organization, and, if applicable, what is the expected cost of the EA practice?
- Metrics — The metrics to be used in measuring the EA program's success in addressing the target business outcomes. Focusing on this iteration allows much more specific metrics to be defined and agreed on than if EA is seen as planning for a three-to-five-year horizon.

Scope:

- Span of the EA practice — Which business units and external partners are affected by the EA practice and which are not?
- Breadth of EA — The dimensions of EA coverage (business, information, solution, technology and so on).
- Depth of coverage — The level of detail that is within scope. Planning horizon — The horizon for future-state planning.
- Out of scope — A clear definition of what is not included in the EA practice (for example, running projects).

Governance and Assurance:

- Applicability — What is affected by EA governance and what is not?
- Structure and authority — What individuals or committees are in place, and what authority do they have in making decisions?
- Architecture development — Decision authority and processes for making changes to the EA artifacts and processes.
- Assurance process — How is project compliance determined, and what is the process for dealing with project noncompliance?

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role definitions and responsibilities may be expressly stated for various groups:

- Executive committee
- Architectural review board
- EA core team
- EA virtual team
- Project teams

Related Process Integration:

How the EA program may connect to and interact with various processes is described, including these processes:

- Business strategic planning
- IT portfolio management
- Program management
- Solution development
- Technology procurement
- IT change management
- IT and business strategy planning

Deliverables:

The deliverables of the EA team and other groups related to EA, and their specific alignment with the identified target business outcomes to be addressed.

Communications:

The communications activities of the EA team.

- How will the EA practice engage in the organization?
- Can social networking opportunities be used to leverage skills in the organization?

Springer example (2):

Reason:

The business-driven motivation for developing an architecture.

- Why are we implementing architecture?
- What business problem do we seek to help solve?

Purpose:

How the architecture will be used to address the business-driven motivation.

- What will this particular architecture do?
- What are the objectives of architecture?

Definition:

An explicit definition of what the organization considers enterprise architecture to be.

- What is "architecture" to us?

Services:

A catalog of the specific services offered by the architecture group.

- What do we, as architects, actually do?
- What are the deliverables for this engagement?
- What is out-of-scope?

Organization:

The structuring of the architect's role in the organization or engagement.

- How are architecture roles organized?
- How do they collaborate with others?
- Who formally approves architectural work?

Additional Reading:

(1) *An Enterprise Architecture Charter is a Basic Requirement for All Maturity Levels*, Chris Wilson, Gartner Research, 15 October 2012

(2) *Building an Enterprise Architecture Practice, Tools, Tips, Best Practices, Ready-to-Use Insights*, Martin Van Den Berg and Marlies Van Steenbergen, Springer, 2006

(3) *Why Write an Enterprise Architecture Charter?*, Bard Papegaanij et al, Gartner Research, 18 February 2011

Sample EA Charters from Peer Institutions:

(If you are able to log in, please upload your own using the widget below.)

File	Modified
PDF File U-M_Enterprise_Architecture_Charter.pdf	May 30, 2013 by russellc@berkeley.edu
PDF File EnterpriseArchitectureFormalCoPCharter (U of Minn).pdf From Patton Fast, University of Minnesota	Jul 22, 2013 by russellc@berkeley.edu

Download All