



Navigating the Future: Modern EA Governance Framework

Introduction: Need for a modern approach >>

Enterprise architecture involves understanding and analysing the current state, setting up the right governance and charting out the path to reach the desired goals. The traditional EA governance approach, characterised by silos and phase-based architecture reviews, is contrasted with a more modern perspective.

The focus shifts from optimising for aspects like avoiding duplication of efforts and reducing costs to achieving better outcomes such as delivering value sooner and promoting satisfaction among customers and colleagues through efficiency.

The Modern approach emphasises adapting to changes in technology and business needs efficiently by focusing on:

- Addressing organisations with teams of teams, operating at scale, interacting with customers digitally, and dealing with constant change in a heterogeneous environment.
- Empowering autonomous teams that can release independently, fostering a continuous loop of development and operations.
- Highlighting evolutionary architecture and recognising the asymmetry in creating and reducing complexity, which requires a gradual and thoughtful approach.
- The need for continuous conversations, shifting away from phase-gated architecture reviews.

The aim is to govern aspects like adding new services, managing connections between services, and avoiding tight coupling, all through ongoing discussions and coaching within an architectural community of practice.

Market Adoption Trends >>

EA governance adoption trends showcase an increasing need for alignment of strategic objectives of an enterprise with optimisation of resources along with IT processes. The need of the hour is to undergo digital transformations prioritising adoption of an efficient enterprise architecture governance.

About 44% organisations have a vision of enterprise architecture centred on IT compared to 26% centred on business, while 97% of the organisations are planning significant investments in EA governance over the next two years [\[Architecture & Governance magazine\]](#).

If we look at a modern enterprise architecture, we find that only 10% of companies are satisfied with their company's enterprise architecture capabilities [\[BAIN & Co.\]](#).



Introducing Agile Governance >>

There is an increasing need to adopt an agile approach in EA governance to bring in flexibility, responsiveness, and collaboration. Providing mere financial support won't suffice while managing a multitude of applications. Handling three applications may seem manageable, but scaling it up to 20, 30, or even 100 services, each with its deployment, testing, and monitoring framework, becomes a challenge. As the complexity increases, it becomes evident that a well-thought-out approach is crucial.

The introduction of governance becomes paramount to ensure alignment with the business goals. Governance, often perceived as an additional hurdle, is essential for preventing deviations from the strategic plan.

While it may not be a popular aspect, instances like architecture review boards can bring value by identifying potential optimisations, as seen in a case involving network architecture.

One of the core challenges lies in feedback cycles, with enterprise architecture often having slower feedback loops. Addressing this requires an adaptive approach, maintaining a close connection with the technical layers. The human element is equally critical, as fostering skills, mentoring, and sharing knowledge are vital for a successful enterprise architecture team.

To articulate the key principles of an efficient governance of enterprise architecture, the team needs to introduce and adhere to outcome-based metrics and dashboards. The following metrics and dashboards can be used as a practice:



Metrics

- Faster Time to Market
- Customer Satisfaction
- Adaptability to Change
- Quality of Deliverables
- Employee Engagement
- Risk Reduction
- Efficiency and Productivity
- Innovation and Creativity
- Budget and Resource Management
- Collaboration across Teams

- Learning and Improvement
- Alignment with Strategic Objectives
- Flexibility and Scalability



Dashboards

- Outcome and Value Stream Dashboard
- Architectural Decisions Dashboard

Focusing on these metrics helps track the deliverables and establishes accountability of individual processes within the governance structure. It creates a culture of visibility, enables decision making and lays down the foundations for continual improvement.

Adopting EA Governance: Challenges and Advantages

Adopting a modern approach to enterprise architecture governance shifts the focus from an immutable structure to a more agile and adaptable structure. This transformation comes with its own share of challenges and enterprises face resistance due to a variety of factors such as rigid established processes, non-alignment with agile ways of working and business vision and principles. However, these challenges are overcome by the advantages of adopting an agile EA governance framework. Business landscape and its ever-changing nature can be unpredictable, and enterprises have an increasing need to quickly adapt to constant change and uncertainties

Here, we explore key challenges and the corresponding advantages of adopting a modern agile enterprise architecture governance framework:



Executive buy-in

Enterprise architects in various enterprises cite missing stakeholder commitment and buy-in as a major hurdle in adopting EA governance frameworks. Stakeholders need to support and understand the long-term value of EA governance. Without their support, implementing EA governance becomes challenging. Modern EA governance focuses on introducing agile based methodology of following an iterative approach and focus on continuous collaboration with stakeholders. This helps in showcasing tangible results early in the process thereby getting buy-in from executives and garnering stakeholder support.



Cultural Change

Many organisations mention one of the key challenges as resistance to cultural change for trying to adopt enterprise architecture governance frameworks[source]. An agile EA governance framework promotes defining outcome-based metrics and KPIs with emphasis on building trust, promoting transparency and visibility into measurable outcomes thereby helping organisations to overcome resistance to cultural change.



Resourcing

Resource constraints specifically lack skilled resources and budget issues hinder adoption of EA governance frameworks especially for SMEs where in general the rate of adoption seems to be lower. Focus is on efficiently allocating resources, upskilling, and improving utilisation of resources as per demand and working across cross-functional teams helps overcome resource constraints. Cultivating the culture of mentorship, and sharing knowledge are essential to EA governance success.



Collaboration across teams

Enterprises struggle with working in silos, which prevents the smooth integration and alignment of EA governance processes across different departments and business unit. Promote shared ownership and accountability for pre-defined governance metrics and involve stakeholders from multiple teams in the organisation to overcome siloed thinking.

Adopting EA Governance: Challenges and Advantages (cont.)



Implementing Agile

Organisations struggle to incorporate EA governance processes into agile methodologies primarily due to alignment of agile development cycles and structure of governance in a typical enterprise. Emphasis lies on defining an approach which is adaptive to governance and augments the alignment with iterative nature of agile development cycles. Continuous feedback loops and regular communication ensure ease of integration of EA governance with agile methodologies.



Approach to Agile EA Governance Framework

Traditional, rigid governance approaches may struggle to keep pace with evolving technologies, shifting market demands and increasing complexity of business ecosystems. Embracing an agile approach to enterprise architecture governance requires conceptualising a governance model which can illustrate the relationships between the major elements as well as identify potential gaps in an organisation's enterprise architecture governance program.

KPMG EA Governance Framework

introduces the idea of a modern agile approach to establishing a governance structure for an organisation's business agility requirements, pace of innovation, customer-centric focus and flexible decision making. It represents the idea of enabling flexibility, adaptability, and ease of collaboration for any organisation by establishing the below strategies:



Enterprise strategy

vision and principles, key stakeholders' engagement and demand management.



Governance strategy

pillars, feedback, and delivery cycles



Architecture Strategy

conceptualising models, standards, domains, Security and technical principles.



Processes and outcomes

Map processes with measurable outcomes

Orchestrating Governance as per level of adoption >>

While we have discussed what should be an agile approach to governance and how a framework focused on adopting agile ways of working can help enterprises to collaborate and enable flexibility and adaptability, we need to factor in the level of adoption and the scale at which the enterprise operates before embarking on establishing the EA governance journey.

If you are an enterprise that is looking to establish an EA governance framework, an effective practice is to do a thorough assessment to evaluate current state, align business goals, identify effectiveness of your current governance framework and improvement areas.

A sequential progression should articulate the objectives of EA governance in alignment with an organisation's goals, address the identified gaps and redefine new roles to streamline accountability in the enterprise.

A successful governance implementation will involve managing the stakeholder and leadership engagement by communicating the importance of EA governance, seeking their input, and gathering insights on their expectations and finally obtaining their endorsement for allocating resources and involving stakeholders from business, IT and other functional areas.



Conclusion >>

EA Governance and its implementation across enterprises helps in aligning business goals with objectives of an IT transformation. It has become essential to customise the adoption across enterprises at all scale. It involves defining the implementation phases and the flexibility in number of key stakeholders which will be involved as per the scale of the enterprise.

Our EA Governance framework approach can be used by enterprise stakeholders to develop a collaborative enterprise architecture governance program for their organisation which is agile and is applicable for enterprises at every scale.

Our approach and strategy align with the pulse of the industry and also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation while driving meaningful change and deliver value with speed.



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