Top 3 Strategic Priorities for Enterprise Architecture Leaders

Leadership Vision for 2022

Gartner
From Chris Howard, Chief of Research, Gartner

As we head into 2022, we continue to feel the human toll of the global pandemic, but we already know it has been a watershed period in which attitudes and norms have permanently shifted — in our everyday lives and at work.

Living through COVID-19 has increased social awareness — as have growing demands for equity for those who are underrepresented.

Businesses have also changed. For many organizations, the pandemic has catalyzed digital business initiatives as we adapt to the demands of employees, customers and other stakeholders, who were forced into new digital options that they have now come to favor.

B2B purchasers are happy to buy digitally, without a sales representative; B2C consumers are buying off social media platforms; employees are physically distributed and communicating asynchronously — and IT infrastructures must secure the organization despite this “anytime, anyway, anywhere” way in which we’re operating.

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In your role as a leader, you’ve now spent months adapting to change and delivering new solutions at speed. You and your team may be burning out, and it’s never been more important to prioritize your time and energy. To help with that, Gartner Leadership Vision provides top-level guidance to leaders and their teams on where to focus — based on our data-driven research.

We’re providing detailed insights to our clients across dozens of roles, and we’re now excited to share excerpts with the business community beyond our clients. We hope this will help you to focus discussions with your teams, peers and other leaders, so you can more quickly and effectively diagnose priorities and actions, especially as you solidify your strategic plans for 2022.

Chris Howard
Chief of Research, Gartner
Lead Enterprise Architecture in Four Key Areas

- Create a vision for the enterprise architecture (EA) practice.
- Redefine EA and how it adds business value.
- Engage and educate executives and stakeholders.

- Focus on delivering business value and driving business outcomes.
- Deliver value early, often and in an agile way.
- Support innovation, transformation and the use of new technologies.

- Shift your leadership style to coaching and mentoring.
- Provide clarity and direction to the team.
- Encourage learning, flexibility, and personal and team growth.

- Create a flexible, adaptive team.
- Broaden the skills and competencies of the team.
- Develop individuals as well as the whole team.

Source: Gartner
Leadership Vision for 2022: Top 3 Strategic Priorities for Enterprise Architecture Leaders

Trends and Actions for EA Leaders

Adopting a new style of leadership as the delivery of digital/IT services democratizes

There has been a steady and growing shift in the delivery of digital capabilities — moving out of the IT organization and into the business. As these capabilities move into the business, they are also moving to outside service providers.

Delivering EA as an internal management consultancy

EA can bring a set of internal management consulting services that provide insight and clarity to executives and stakeholders. Given future uncertainty, the ability to support executives in shaping strategy, in a quick, iterative way, will make EA invaluable.

Architecting the organization for composability

For many organizations, the global pandemic highlighted the importance of adaptability and resilience. At a high level, adaptability is being able to respond quickly and efficiently to change, and resilience is being able to do that repeatedly.

Actions for the EA leader

Adopt a new style of leadership by focusing on developing organizational influence rather than spans of control.

Shift EA toward an internal management consultancy by clearly defining what EA is, how it works and how it adds value to the organization.

Build a business with high composability. Create an adaptive tech base, use iterative work practices, and develop a design approach that allows the business to change quickly, in a way that is easy to execute.

Source: Gartner

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As organizations democratize digital delivery, the EA leader will need to lead through influence—and by inspiring those on the EA team, along with its stakeholders.

Action to adopt a new style of leadership

63% of high-performing EA practices indicate a need for better proficiency in storytelling.

Source: Gartner
Reframe and Rebrand the EA Practice

Aim to provide a clear definition of what EA is, how it works and how it adds value as a consultancy. For example, will you be a strategic consultancy or focus on a technical specialty?

Make “intelligence” central to the EA practice
Determine what the EA practice will offer
Construct a portfolio of services
Build EA team competencies and skill sets
Develop the innovation management process
Create a service delivery model around “iterative” and “agile”
Embrace the Benefits of Composability

Many trends shaping today’s organizations set the stage for the adaptable, or “composable,” enterprise. EA leaders play a key role in building an architecture that supports this change, while communicating the benefits to the organization.

Assessments of Enterprise Effectiveness
Percentage of Respondents Indicating High Effectiveness (6 or 7 on a 7-Point Scale)

- **High Business Composability (n = 31)**
  - Improving Operational Excellence: 53%
  - Improving Customer/Citizen Engagement: 41%
  - Increasing Market Share in Existing Markets: 39%
  - Entering New Markets: 22%
  - Rapid New Product/Service Introduction Tracking or Leading the Market: 19%
  - Expanding Into Adjacent Businesses: 19%
  - Quickly Establishing, Joining or Leaving Business Ecosystems: 18%

- **Less Business Composability (n = 46)**
  - Improving Operational Excellence: 22%
  - Improving Customer/Citizen Engagement: 16%
  - Increasing Market Share in Existing Markets: 11%
  - Entering New Markets: 11%
  - Rapid New Product/Service Introduction Tracking or Leading the Market: 6%
  - Expanding Into Adjacent Businesses: 19%
  - Quickly Establishing, Joining or Leaving Business Ecosystems: 8%

High business composability is associated with better operational performance and improved customer/citizen engagement.

Source: Gartner
Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for enterprise architecture leaders:

**Research**
Avoid the 13 Worst EA Practices to Ensure Success in the Digital Business Era
Learn to avoid common traps and succeed in the digital business era.

**Tool**
Gartner IT Score for Enterprise Architecture & Technology Innovation
Evaluate the maturity of your EA and technology innovation function.

**Resource Hub**
Enterprise Architecture for Digital Transformation
Evolve your EA organization with powerful business management insights.

**Tool**
Gartner BuySmart™
Reduce costs, avoid pitfalls and buy technology with confidence.

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