

Levels of Dealing with these Issues

The issues outlined above must at least be addressed from four which are

1. Corporate/political strategy,
2. Organizational process and structure,
3. Information technology, and
4. Budgetary considerations

In the following discussion, the IT level will prevail, which shall not convey the wrong impression that the answer is seen to be in more or newer information technology. Quite the opposite may be true. This short paper is intended to open a discussion on technology related matters without disregarding the other perspectives in the ongoing undertaking.

Questions like "Where is the organization headed? Which goals does it want to achieve? What are long-term desired outcomes? What are short-term expectations? What are the drivers for the organization's strategy? What options of alternative strategies have to be maintained?" fall under the strategy perspective. Upon answering these questions, certain implications for the other three perspectives are predetermined, i.e., at some point in the discussion, the strategy implications must be clarified and their impact on the other perspectives. Example: Why bother with NLS if the business decides to change its core purpose such that old structures are no longer needed, and with them old technology becomes abandonable.

Questions regarding organizational process and structure deal with the actual embodiment of the strategy in an organization's daily life. Since organizational processes and structures cannot change rapidly, any implementation and adjustment of structure and process must address the repercussions of such impact throughout the whole system, e.g. as we know today, to a certain extent reengineering of business processes relies heavily on capable IT as enabler. If this enabling does not come to happen, reengineering of business processes is bound to failure.

Budgetary considerations must address the financial viability and cost-effectiveness of any budget-relevant action by itself and as part of the overall picture. What may be quite affordable today can become unbearable tomorrow (e.g. writing one or two little COBOL programs in 1974 was no big deal but how expensive have these programs become in the meantime?). Total cost of ownership is a perspective that looks beyond the initial investment and the running costs of the early years. It at least considers long-term aspects such as ongoing (re-) training costs for maintenance staff, expansion costs, and dismantling costs.
