A Quick Assessment to Find the Right Framework for IT-Business Alignment

Business leaders have traditionally viewed IT shops within their organizations as a necessary—but costly—requirement of doing business. However, leaders today are beginning to realize that IT can be a proactive strategic enabler, not just a cost center, with the right approach.

The challenge is finding the right approach for your organization. Not every organization needs a full enterprise architecture overhaul to improve IT alignment. Some companies can benefit more quickly from a streamlined 8-to-10-week IT strategy development framework:

WEEKS 1-2: INITIATION AND KICKOFF

Establish a shared vision across business and IT stakeholders

WEEKS 3-4: AS-IS ANALYSIS

Review your IT organization, architecture, infrastructure, and more

WEEKS 5-7: TO-BE ANALYSIS

Develop your vision and future state environment to help guide decisions and priorities

WEEKS 8-10: BUILD IT ROADMAP AND EXECUTION PLAN

Determine roadmap scenarios, build your roadmap, and prepare for execution

However, this framework may be too simple for your needs. Use this quick assessment to determine if you need a more comprehensive framework and learn where to focus your efforts first.

Where to Begin

To start, answer these questions with a "yes" or "no". Based on your responses, we'll guide you to the right approach to begin your journey to an effective IT framework.

- ✓ **Do conflicts over organizational priorities routinely prevent your business leaders and IT team from working together?**

- ✓ **Does your business struggle with making technology decisions reactively rather than as part of a coherent strategy?**

- ✓ **Does a lack of visibility into how IT investments impact business outcomes build distrust in your organization?**

- ✓ **If you're a business leader, do you struggle to understand the value that IT brings to the business? If you're an IT leader, do you feel you are always justifying your budgets and projects?**

- ✓ **Do you see signs of resistance to new technology across your organization, such as "shadow IT" or multiple apps, with multiple owners, that do the same thing?**

Your Guide to the Approaches

"Yes" to Questions #1 and/or #2	"Yes" to Questions #3 and/or #4	"Yes" to Question #5	"Yes" to Any of the Questions	"Yes" to 3 or More Questions
Start with Approach 1: Business-IT Alignment	Prioritize Approach 2: Measurement and Value	Focus on Approach 3: Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement	Your next step is Approach 4: Risk Management and Governance	Follow the approaches sequentially for a comprehensive approach

Business and IT Alignment

Objective:

Transform IT from a support function to a strategic partner by directly connecting technology initiatives to business goals.

Actions:

1. **Conduct structured alignment sessions** between IT leadership and business executives to identify strategic priorities.
2. **Perform a gap analysis** to identify discrepancies between current IT capabilities and business requirements.
3. **Develop a multiyear technology roadmap** that clearly maps each initiative to specific business outcomes.
4. **Establish a cross-functional governance committee** with representation from both IT and business units.

Success Indicators:

- Business leaders can articulate how specific IT initiatives support strategic goals.
- The technology roadmap directly references business objectives.
- IT priorities shift in response to changing business conditions.

Measurement and Value Demonstration

Objective:

Create systems to quantify, track and communicate the business value generated by IT investments.

Actions:

1. Develop a balanced scorecard that measures IT performance across multiple dimensions, such as business value creation, operational excellence, user satisfaction, and innovation and growth initiatives.

2. Implement value tracking mechanisms for baseline measurements, value realization assessments, and feedback loops.

3. Create business-friendly reporting that translates technical metrics into business outcomes, such as how IT links to generation capability, employee productivity, and customer satisfaction.

4. Establish continuous improvement processes that incorporate feedback and learning.

Success Indicators:

- ✓ Executive understanding of IT's contribution to business outcomes
- ✓ Data-driven decisions about technology investments
- ✓ Increasing business stakeholder satisfaction with IT value

Change Management and Stakeholder Engagement

Objective:

Build trust and momentum for IT transformation by engaging stakeholders and addressing resistance to change.

Actions:

1. Map the stakeholder landscape to identify key influencers, potential champions, and likely resisters.

2. Create compelling change narratives that emphasize business benefits rather than technical features.

3. Implement a phased approach to demonstrate incremental value before moving to more disruptive changes.

4. Establish trust through transparency about challenges, constraints and trade-offs.

Success Indicators:

- ✓ Decreased resistance to new technology implementations
- ✓ Active engagement from business stakeholders in IT initiatives
- ✓ Feedback mechanisms show increasing trust in IT leadership

Risk Management and Governance

Objective:

Establish structures to ensure disciplined decision-making, risk mitigation, and sustainable implementation.

Actions:

1. Implement a tiered governance model appropriate to your organization's size and complexity.

2. Create a risk identification and mitigation framework focusing on challenges such as vendor dependencies, integrations, security, resource constraints, and older technology.

3. Develop policy frameworks for key decision areas, including technology selection criteria, build vs. buy decision-making, and cloud adoption guidelines.

4. Establish budget control mechanisms that balance strategic investments with operational needs.

Success Indicators:

- Consistent application of governance processes
- Proactive identification and management of risks
- Improved budget predictability and control
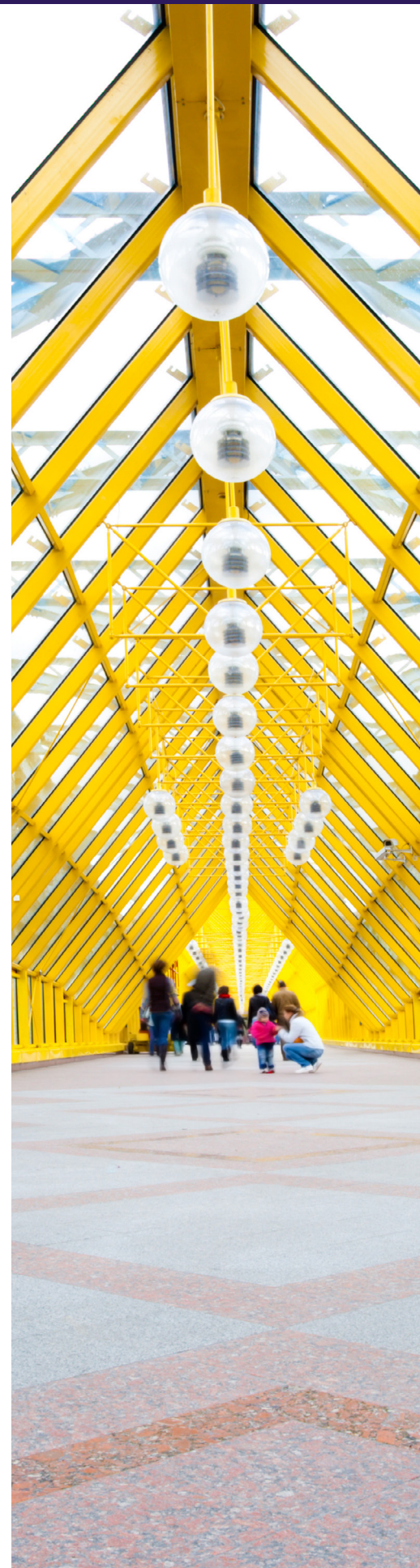
The most successful organizations view their IT strategy as an ongoing alignment, implementation and refinement process. By establishing the right frameworks and building a cohesive EA that informs your IT strategy, you can ensure your technology investments consistently deliver business value while positioning your organization for future success.

Ready to take your IT strategy to the next level?

Our team of experts can help you assess your current state, identify improvement opportunities, and implement the plays in this framework. Contact us to discuss how we can support your IT transformation journey.

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