



Enterprise Architecture – You Are What You Eat

By Jacobus Kotze (08 March 2018)

Contrary to popular belief, every good cook has a cookbook and every good cookbook has a **strategy**.

The cookbook for Enterprise Architecture comes in the form of TOGAF, a framework that looks into: Architecture Vision (Vision, Goal and Scope), Business Architecture (People and Process), Information System Architecture (Systems and Data) and Technology Architecture (Hardware).

First and foremost, there are some **rules** that should be followed if you want to dish up a successful enterprise project:

- Decide beforehand what you want to eat.
 - o Even with Enterprise Architecture, a scope that is not clearly defined will yield an end result you did not really want.
- Some recipes are just better if left untouched.
 - o Don't try to find a solution for something that is not broken.
- Not all recipes have the same ingredients.
 - o The framework suggests increasing or reducing artefacts and context, based on size, complexity and risk.
- There is value in the right measurements.
 - o There is more value in the data than there is in controlling everything. After all, you cannot improve what you cannot measure.

There are also some everyday **myths** you need to consider:

- By mixing and matching flavours, you will unleash a complexity that is strangely necessary. You need to know that the future of **Enterprise Architecture is going to get more complex**, rather like a multitude of ingredients (people, business, applications, information, processes, services, governance) – all taken from different baskets.
- **You will never control** everything and everyone, **and you will never eradicate the risk entirely**. After all, every new combination brings its own opportunities and risks.
- Fast foods are not always bad, but they are also not necessarily good for you. What we do know is that this option is considerably more **expensive**. If you thought you could get away with a quick fix (bad specification and planning), consider this: It is 80% more expensive to fix a defect in the production phase than during the planning and requirements phase.
- It is hard work to keep up the standard. We all know the pizza dealer who very enthusiastically set up shop, only to lose his passion and his goal two years down the line. You can argue more or less the same with enterprise architecture; we are spoilt for choice, and have a cookbook full of solutions. Often it is just looks **more attractive to replace than to fix**.

Lastly – if we say 'you are what you eat', what we really mean is that you should consider what is in it before you eat it. Know that you have the responsibility to serve what is right – not only to those around you, but also to your company.