

How to present architecture issues to higher management

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Abstract

Architects struggle with their visibility at higher management echelons. The introvert nature of architects is a severe handicap. Participation of architects in management teams is important for balanced technical sound decisions and strategy. Improved managerial communication skills of architects are required. This article describes how to give a more effective presentation to higher management teams. Subjects discussed are the preparation, content and form, do and don't advise.

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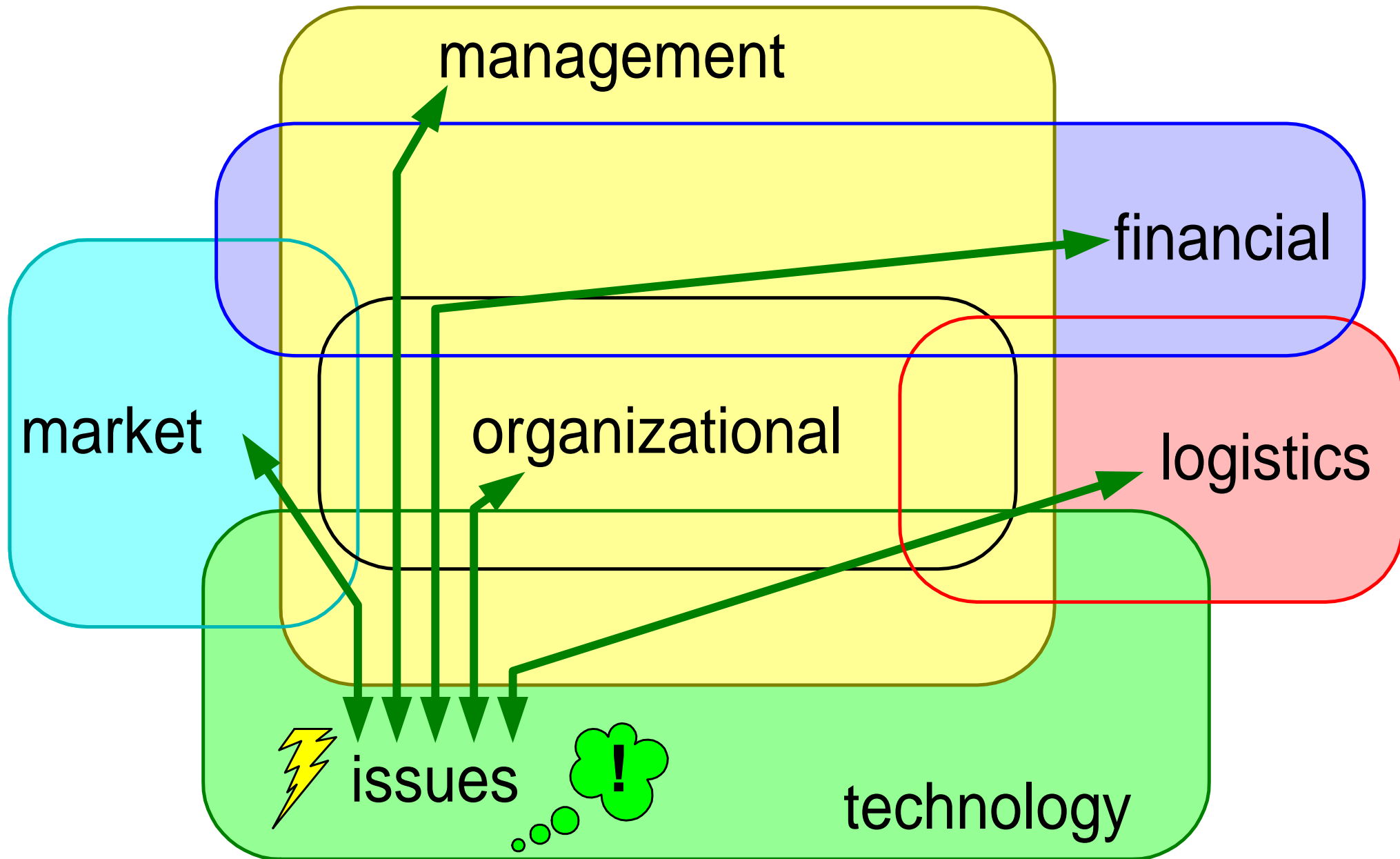
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mention the red information only

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Market drivers | Options | typical performance | Power budget |
| Bill of material | Schedule | It's | profit-investment |
| Recommendation | Operating principle | worst-case performance | Power details |

Architectural issues related to managerial viewpoints



Characteristics of managers in higher management teams

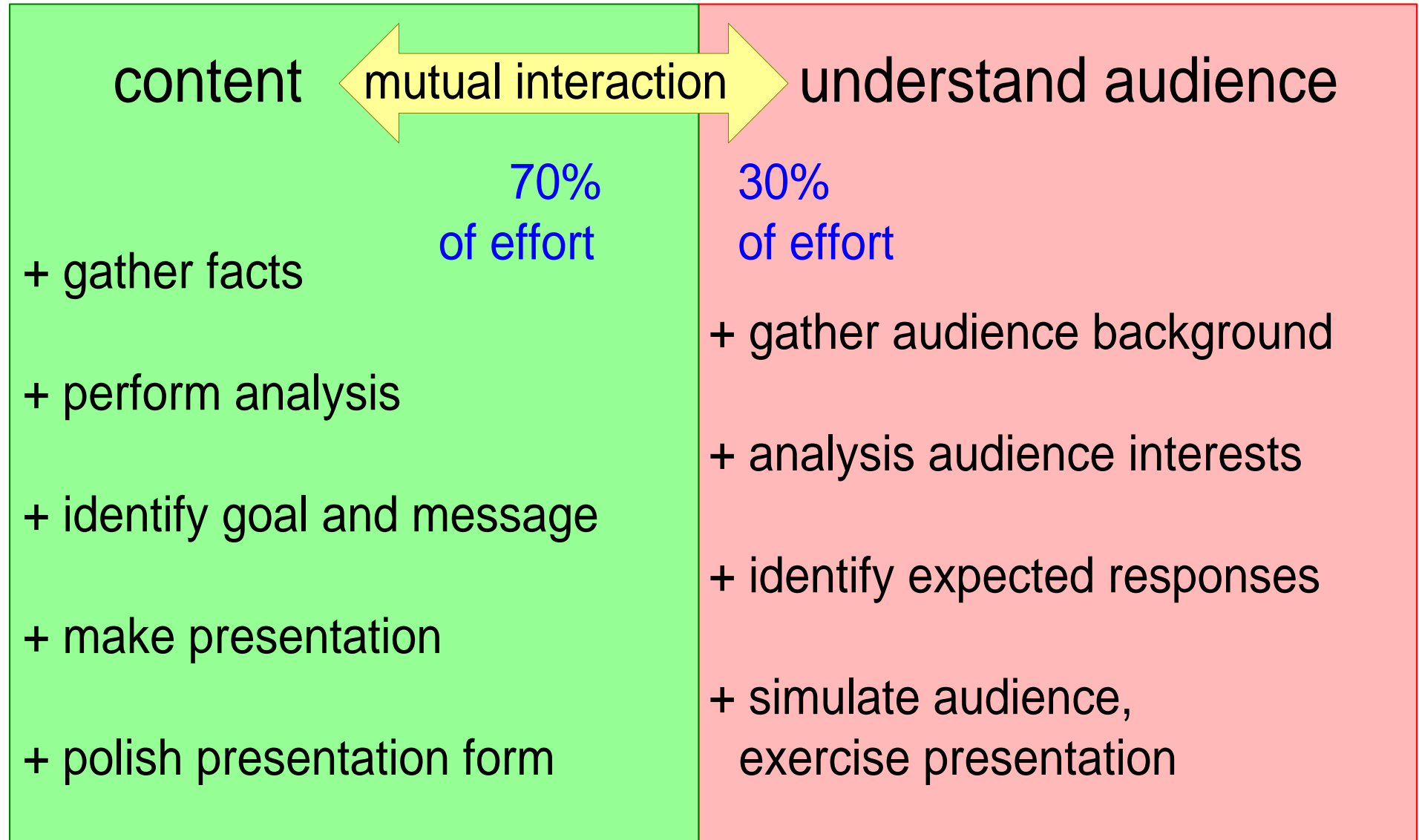
common characteristics

- + action-oriented
- + solution rather than problem
- + impatient, busy
- + want facts not beliefs
- + operate in a political context
- + bottom-line oriented:
profit, return on investment,
market share, etc.

highly variable characteristics

- ? technology knowledge
from extensive to shallow
- ? style from power play to
inspirational leadership

Always prepare with small team!



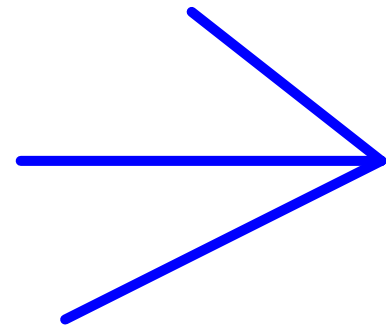
Recommended content

+ clear problem statement (what, why)

+ solution exploration (how)

+ options, recommendations

+ expected actions or decisions

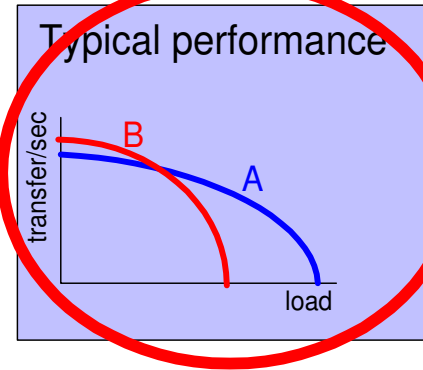
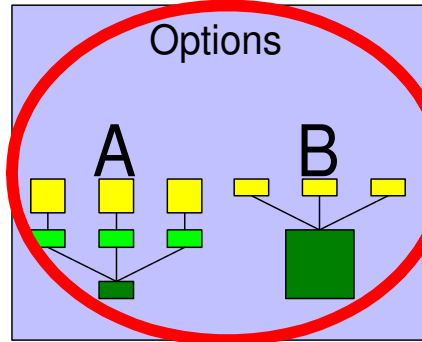


supported by
facts and figures

mention the red information only

Market drivers

| | | |
|------|--------------------|---------------|
| cost | integration | MPEG4 |
| ttm | multiple suppliers | MP3 |
| wow | nifty features | color display |
| DRM | fashionable design | ePen |
| | Hollywood pact | GPS sensor |
| | standards | GSM |
| | | UTMS |
| | | BT |
| | | 802.11b |

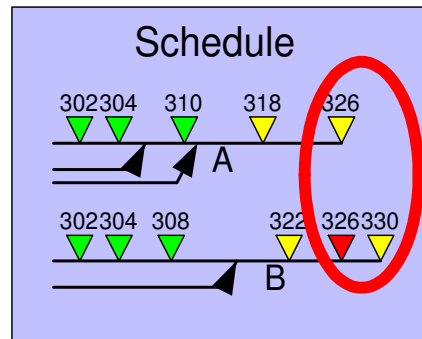


Power budget

| | A | B |
|---------|----|----|
| infra | 7 | 8 |
| sensor | 6 | 8 |
| display | 20 | 17 |
| power | 3 | 4 |
| total | 36 | 37 |

Bill of material

| | A | B |
|---------|----|----|
| infra | 7 | 8 |
| sensor | 6 | 8 |
| display | 20 | 17 |
| power | 3 | 4 |
| total | 36 | 37 |



fte's

| | A | B |
|---------|----|----|
| infra | 2 | 8 |
| control | 6 | 4 |
| display | 6 | 8 |
| anal | 3 | 9 |
| total | 17 | 23 |

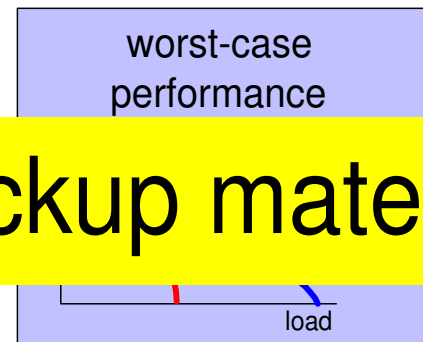
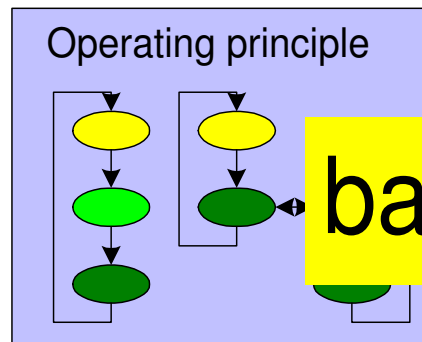
profit-investment

| | A | B |
|------------|-----|-----|
| salesprice | 10 | 10 |
| cost/p | 3 | 4 |
| units | 1M | 1M |
| sales | 10M | 10M |
| costs | 3M | 4M |
| investment | 2M | 3M |
| profit | 5M | 3M |

recommendation

recommendation:
select A

follow up:
allocate Jan, Piet, Klaas
per 1/11
go/nogo 1/1/03



Power details

| | A | B |
|---------|----|----|
| infra | 7 | 8 |
| sensor | 6 | 8 |
| display | 20 | 17 |
| power | 3 | 4 |
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backup material

Form is important

poor form can easily distract from purpose and content

presentation material

- + professional
- + moderate use of color and animations
- + readable
- + use demos and show artifacts

presenter's appearance

- + well dressed
- + self confident but open

but stay yourself,
stay authentic

Don't force your opinion, understand the audience

do not

- preach beliefs
- underestimate technology knowledge of managers
- tell them what they did wrong
- oversell

do

- + quantify, show figures and facts
- + create faith in your knowledge
- + focus on objectives
- + manage expectations

How to cope with managerial dominance

do not

- let one of the managers hijack the meeting
- build up tensions by withholding facts or solutions
- be lost or panic at unexpected inputs or alternatives

do

- + maintain the lead
- + be to the point and direct
- + acknowledge input, indicate consequences (facts based)

Exercise presentation to higher management

- + Bring a clear **architecture message** to
- + a **Management team** at least 2 hierarchical levels higher
- + with **10 minutes** for **presentation including discussion**
(no limitation on number of slides)
- * architecture message =
technology options in relation with **market/product**
- * address the **concerns** of the **management stakeholders** :
translation required from **technology** issues into
business consequences (months, fte's, turnover, profit, investments)

Exercise schedule

