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.

Distribution

This article or presentation is written as part of the Gaudi project. The Gaudi project philosophy is to improve by obtaining frequent feedback. Frequent feedback is pursued by an open creation process. This document is published as intermediate or nearly mature version to get feedback. Further distribution is allowed as long as the document remains complete and unchanged.
Architectural issues related to managerial viewpoints

How to present architecture issues to higher management

version: 0.1
September 9, 2018
AMIintroduction
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

How to present architecture issues to higher management

version: 0.1  
September 9, 2018  
AMI:management:Characteristics
How to prepare

How to present architecture issues to higher management

Gerrit Muller

version: 0.1
September 9, 2018
AMIpreparation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>content</th>
<th>understand audience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ gather facts</td>
<td>+ gather audience background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ perform analysis</td>
<td>+ analysis audience interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ identify goal and message</td>
<td>+ identify expected responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ make presentation</td>
<td>+ simulate audience, exercise presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>+ polish presentation form</td>
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Always prepare with small team!

70% of effort

30% of effort
+ 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
- ttm
- wow
- DRM
- integration
- multiple suppliers
- nifty features
- fashionable design
- Hollywood pact
- standards
- MPEG4
- MP3
- color display
- ePen
- GPS sensor
- GSM
- UTMS
- BT
- 802.11b

**Options**
- A
- B

**Bill of material**

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<td>total</td>
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**Schedule**

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**Power budget**

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**Licenses**

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**recommendation**
- recommendation: select A
- follow up: allocate Jan, Piet, Klaas per 1/11
- go/nogo 1/1/03

**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

- Prepare in team of 4
- Present and discuss feedback

Time Table:

13:30 - 14:00: Prepare in team of 4
14:00 - 15:00: Present and discuss
15:00 - 16:00: Feedback

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AMIexerciseSchedule