How to appraise or assess an architect?

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Abstract

The appraisal of system architect is handicapped by the vague and abstract responsibilities of the system architect. The success criterions for architecting are discussed. An approach to ”measure” or assess the architect is described.
How to assess an architect?

- difficult to define yardstick
- difficult to measure
- difficult to compare
- difficult to certify
- difficult to translate in (financial) consequences

Problem statement

abstract (vague) responsibilities
lot of overlap of responsibilities
Tangible deliverables based upon many invisible activities

Deliverables
paperwork only

Responsibilities
abstract and qualitative

Activities
necessary but invisible

many very detailed

thinking, talking, discussing, scheduling, presenting, measuring, writing, reviewing, visiting customers
analyzing, listening, brainstorming, supporting, teaching, testing, reading, visiting trade-shows
simulating, communicating, troubleshooting, selling, integrating, browsing, consolidating, visiting suppliers

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Criterions for successful architecting

Architecting

Stakeholders
expectations, needs, concerns, constraints

result satisfies

team is enabled

preceeding architecture

problem know how

solution know how

PCP team
architect, project leader, engineers, product manager

legenda

human context

business context

technology context

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HTAsuccessfulArchitecting
Yardsticks for architect assessment

formalized expectations

function appraisal system,
f.i. from Hay Management Consultants

impact
scope of control
freedom of thinking

job description

deliverables
timing

career development plan

skills
know how

actual architect performance

architecture fitness

sales turnover
business success
market continuity

internal stakeholder satisfaction

contribution
deliverables
timing
skills
know how

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HTAyardsticks

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360 degree assessment

How to appraise or assess an architect?

product manager
project leader

group leader
colleague architect

architect

operational manager
manufacturing, logistics, service

engineer
How to appraise or assess an architect?

1. Ask for ranking
2. Ask for justification (why ...?)
3. Clarify criterions
4. Iterate ranking and justification

Very high

Jim Green (family architect)
John Brown (product architect)
Yo Nerd (SW engineer)
Ju Nior (product architect)
D. Blackhat (product architect)
Se Nior (chief designer)
Joe Go (project leader)
The Boss (business manager)