

The Role and Task of the System Architect

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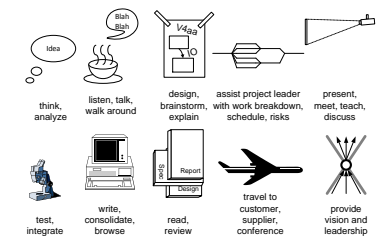
Abstract

The role of the system architect is described from three viewpoints: deliverables, responsibilities and activities. This description shows the inherent tension in this role: a small set of hard deliverables, covering a fuzzy set of responsibilities, hiding an enormous amount of barely visible day-to-day work.

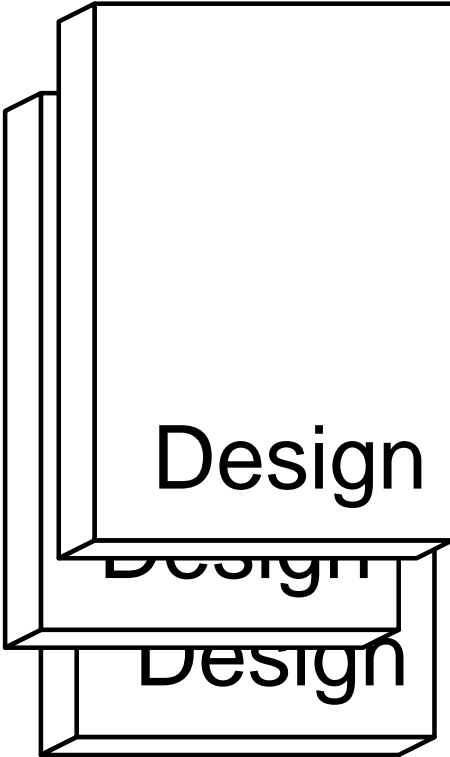
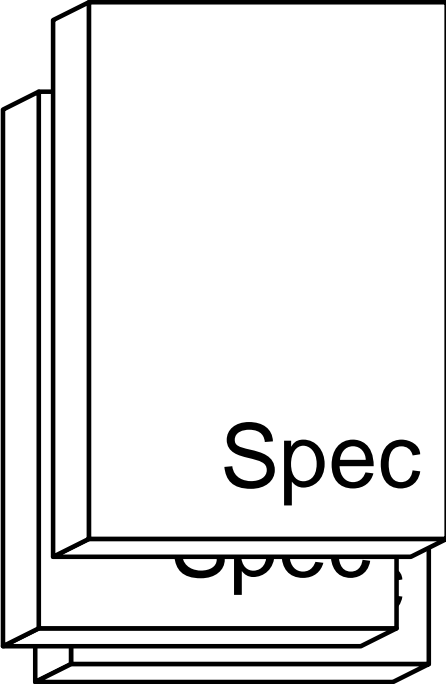
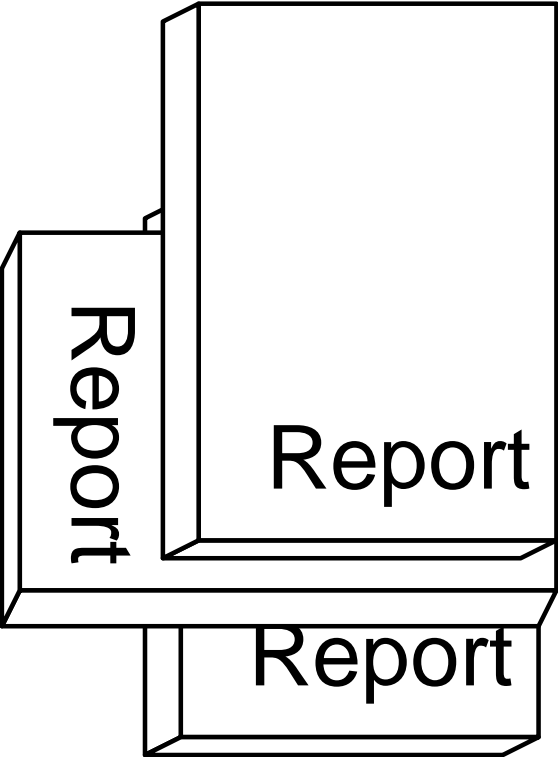
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Deliverables of the System Architect



List of Deliverables

Customer and Life-Cycle Needs (*what is needed*)

System Specification (*what will be realized*)

Design Specification (*how the system will be realized*)

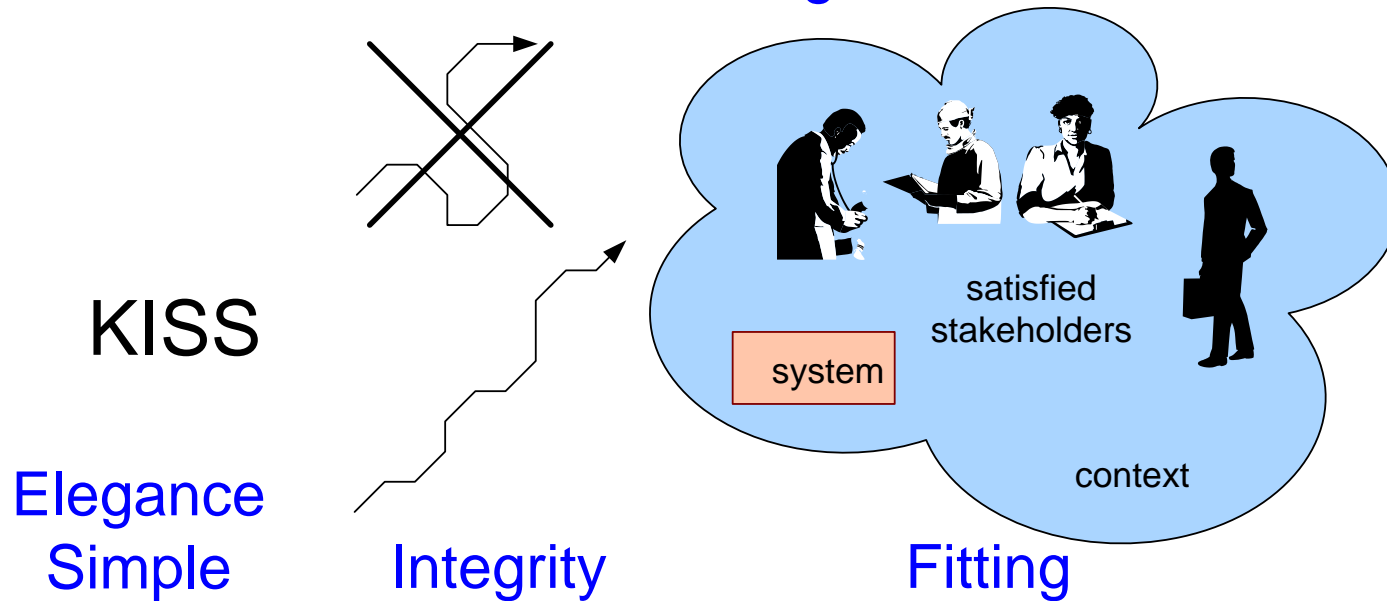
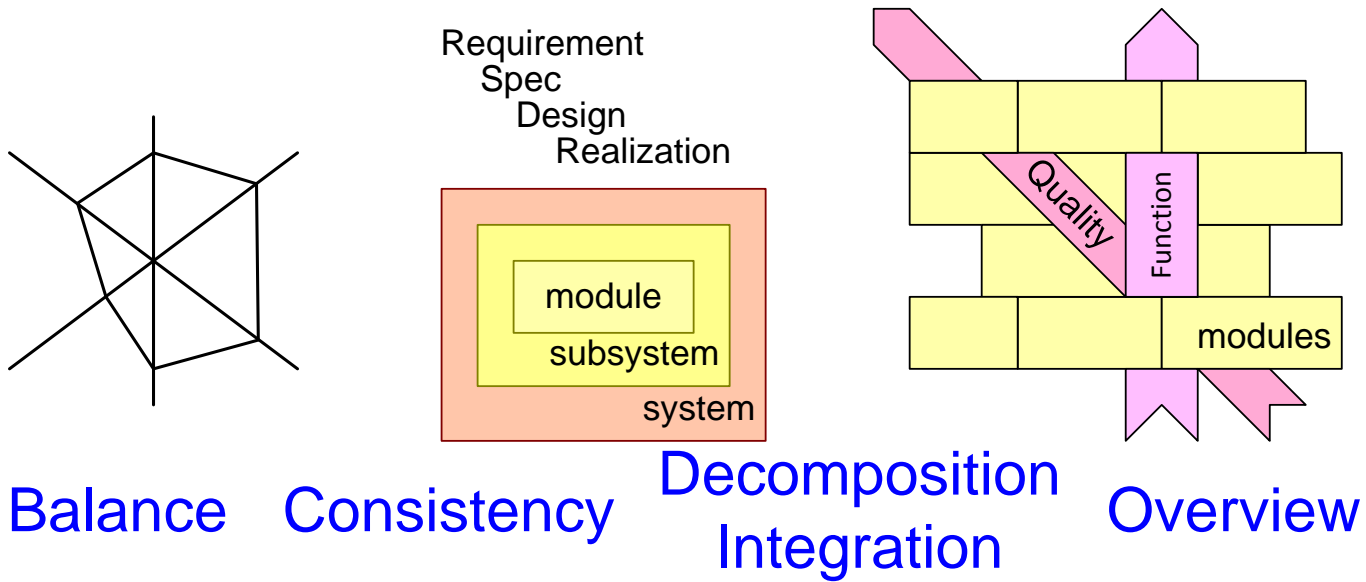
Verification Specification (*how the system will be verified*)

Verification Report (*the result of the verification*)

Feasibility Report (*the results of a feasibility study*)

Roadmap

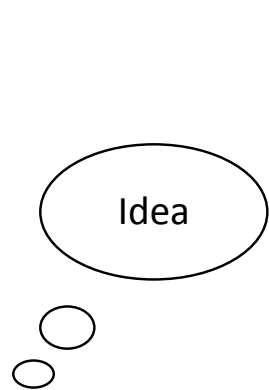
Responsibilities of the System Architect



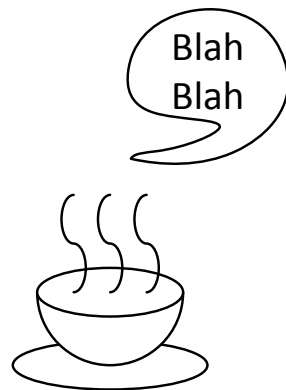
Examples of Secondary Responsibilities

responsibility	primary owner
business plan, profit	business manager
schedule, resources	project leader
market, saleability	marketing manager
technology	technology manager
process, people	line manager
detailed designs	engineers

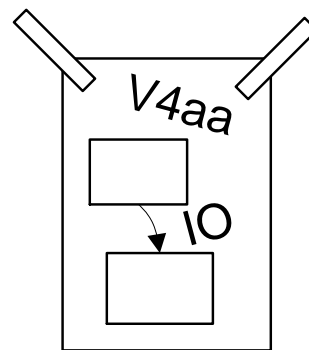
What does the System Architect do?



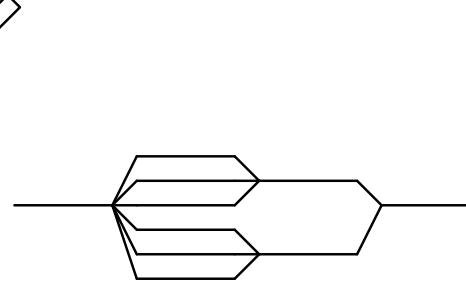
think,
analyze



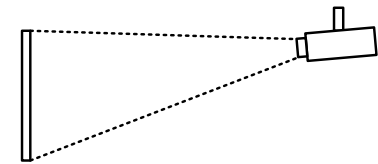
listen, talk,
walk around



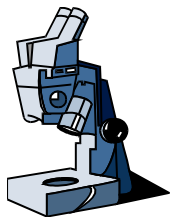
design,
brainstorm,
explain



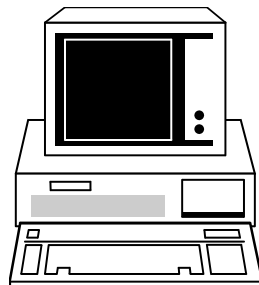
assist project leader
with work breakdown,
schedule, risks



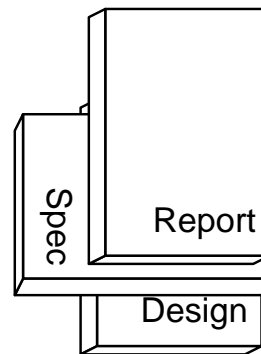
present,
meet, teach,
discuss



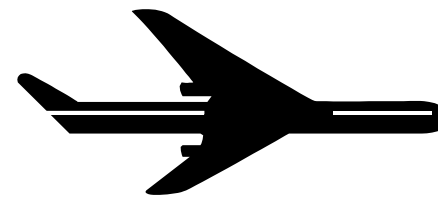
test,
integrate



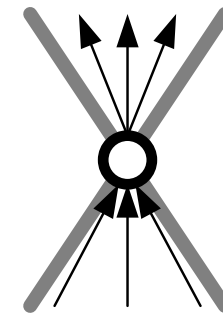
write,
consolidate,
browse



read,
review



travel to
customer,
supplier,
conference



provide
vision and
leadership

From Detail to Overview

	Quantity per year (order-of- magnitude)	architect time per item	
consolidation in deliverables	driving views	10	100 h
meetings	shared issues	10^2	1 h
informal contacts	touched details	10^4	0.5 – 10 min
sampling scanning	seen details	$10^5 - 10^6$	0.1 – 1 sec
	product details	$10^7 - 10^{10}$	
	real-world facts	infinite	

Abstractions only exist for concrete facts.

Visible Output versus Invisible Work

