TOGAF® Poster Series #84
Using TOGAF: Creating a Tailored Framework from TOGAF
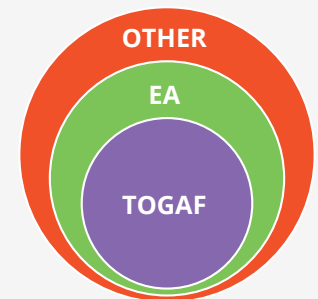
Good e-Learning

In previous posters we've talked about Adopting and Adapting TOGAF (#66) and Adapting the ADM (#46); but there are a lot of EA topics that aren't covered in TOGAF.

Our poster looks at some of the things you might want to consider as you customize TOGAF.

Looking outside TOGAF

The first point is that there are a lot of ideas and material out there!
TOGAF is not the only architecture framework, and there are plenty of books, websites, and practitioners covering Enterprise Architecture.

And beyond EA there is even more material – from general, management, business or IT methods and techniques - that can be adapted and used in EA practice.
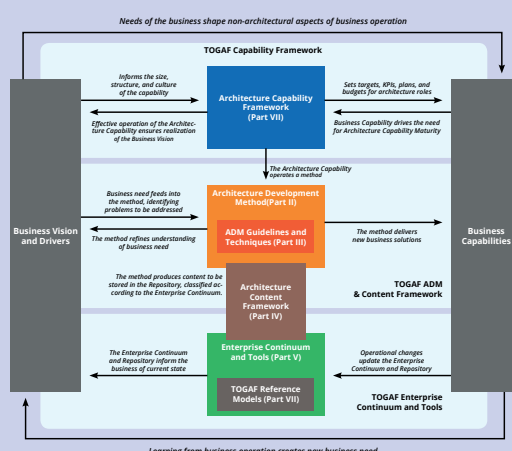
Think outside of the TOGAF box.

OTHER
EA
TOGAF

Every project and EA initiative is different

One of the exciting things about being an enterprise architect is that every initiative is unique. Which means that the material you need and use from TOGAF is likely to be different each time. There will be some parts of TOGAF that are used in a similar way, but it is important to take the time and consider the specific needs of each Request for Architecture Work. This is partly covered in the Preliminary Phase of the ADM.

Customizing TOGAF (and your EA practice and personal capabilities) is an ongoing task – before and throughout each initiative.

Multiple Frameworks

TOGAF is not really a single architecture framework – it is more a body of knowledge that includes multiple frameworks – the obvious ones are the Architecture Capability Framework, the Architecture Content Framework, the Skills Framework, and a process framework (the ADM).

Managing EA is complex – you will always need a set of different frameworks that need to be customised for the task in hand. A metaframework helps to keep everything consistent.

Aim for Reuse!

You need to customise TOGAF to your needs, but you don't want to start from scratch every time! Many of the fundamental factors in EA are reused across all, or most, projects. The fundamental factors can easily become a resource that is reused from one project to another. The TOGAF documentation is written as a book, but with practice it becomes second nature to harvest these reusable elements.

Gradually create your personal checklist of key EA elements by deconstructing the TOGAF documentation and supplementing it with elements from other sources.

Top Tips:

- Select carefully what you really need from TOGAF – you won't need everything

- When you start out focus on the most relevant and important things; as you gain maturity add more subtlety and detail

- Remember that TOGAF is only part of the wider world of Enterprise Architecture; it may not have what you need

- Remember that Enterprise Architecture is constantly evolving and changing; as an architect you need to keep learning and keep current

Recommended sources on the Internet

EA Voices was created by John Gøtze. It aggregates blog posts from more than 250 EA bloggers in a "river of news and opinions about EA".

YouTube has quite a lot of material – start by searching on Enterprise Architecture, then add the specific topics you want to understand and customize.

Many vendors and consulting companies have their own architecture frameworks, or provide advice. Try searching on VENDOR NAME + Enterprise Architecture. For example, I found A Practical Guide to Developing EA, or this Gartner blog.

The Zachman Framework is actually more a schema, but it is probably the 2nd most popular architecture framework after TOGAF.

There are plenty of other frameworks to give you some ideas – especially covering the Government and military sectors. For example, the NATO Architecture Framework (or NAF – seriously!), the Australian Government Enterprise Architecture, or the India Enterprise Architecture (IndEA) – which is based on TOGAF.

Here is a detailed description of the fundamental factors in Enterprise Architecture.

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