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Upgrading to TOGAF® 9.2 - Tips for Practitioners

by Roger Evernden

In an earlier article I gave some tips for students who were upgrading to TOGAF® 9.2. This blog is going to provide some tips for those of you who are already using an earlier version of TOGAF and want to make the switch to the latest incarnation.

I mentioned in an earlier rticle [TOGAF 9.2] the changes between version 9.1 and 9.2 are not very significant. But these small differences can make it even more difficult to switch to a new version!

It may help if you think of the changes as if they were a transition from one state of the architecture to another.

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Imagine TOGAF 9.1 as the current state that includes many components. These components are identified as Parts, Chapters, and Sections. Some components are text, and some are diagrams or tables.

Now consider TOGAF 9.2 as the target architecture. Some of the components remain the same, but some have been removed, some have been changed, and there are a small number of new components.

Now here's the first BIG complication... Because The Open Group have numbered the parts, chapters and sections sequentially within each version, and because they've taken out some of the sections – guess what! The labels or references for most components are no longer the same. As a simple example, TOGAF 9.1 has a "component" called Chapter 12. Phase D: Technology Architecture, but in TOGAF 9.2 the same component is now called Chapter 11. Phase D: Technology Architecture.

One of the first rules in managing changes in the evolution of an enterprise architecture is to have a clearly defined versioning approach for each component, as well as for the architecture as a whole. Let's say we have a component called "Phase D: Technology Architecture". It is present in the current architecture (Version 9.1 of the architecture), and it is still present in the target architecture (Version 9.2 of the architecture). If there are no changes to this component, then the simple thing would be to

say that version 09.01 of the component "Phase D: Technology Architecture" is in both states of the architecture. But let's say there are now some minor changes to this component, and we can manage this by referring to the current and the target versions as 09.01 and 09.02. But we would not number these versions "12" and then "11", which is effectively what the chapter and section numbering system in TOGAF has done!

Now that I've got that off my chest, here are my tips on how to manage the switch from 9.1 to 9.2:

1. Remember that you need to tailor TOGAF to meet your exact needs. This introduces another potential complication. Not only do you need to consider the changes that The Open Group have introduced, but you also need to think about your own tailored versions. Simply being aware of these as different versions will make it easier to think about the changes.

TOGAF version 9.1	TOGAF version 9.2
TOGAF Version 9.1 Your customized version of TOGAF – C9.1	TOGAF Version 9.1 Your customized version of TOGAF – C9.2

2. It will help enormously if you manage the "components" in your EA practice in a modular way. As you adopt TOGAF 9.2, think about numbering your versions of these components (the earlier example might help you here).

3. The concept of the Enterprise Continuum is highly useful in managing the relationships between generic and specific. TOGAF is a generic body of knowledge describing how to architect an enterprise; your EA practice is a more specific body of knowledge, tailored to the needs of your specific enterprise. Imagine there is another continuum (in addition to the Architecture and Solutions Continua) – which might be labelled the EA Practice Continuum.

4. Now think about the points along this continuum. You need one at the most generic level for TOGAF. You may need a point for other sources that you use to define your specific practice. For example, if you use guidelines from an IT vendor because you use their approach as the basis of an industry architecture. And then you want a point for your enterprise-specific EA practice. After that, follow the concepts of the Enterprise Continuum to help you manage the various sources and assets that you use.

This is not an exhaustive list, but I hope it will make it easier for you to transition to the new release. More importantly, if you follow these guidelines you will find it easier to manage the future evolution of your EA practice.

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