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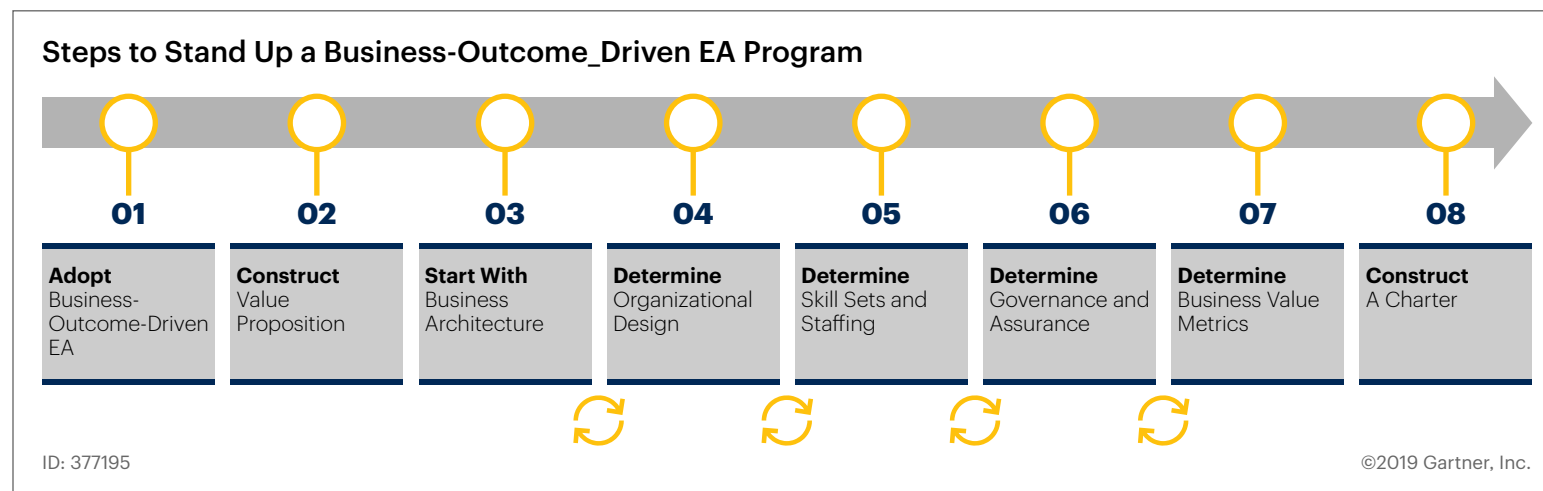# 8 Steps to Start or Restart a High-Impact, Business-Outcome-Driven EA Program

Since 2013, Gartner has observed a dramatic resurgence and growth of interest in enterprise architecture. Much of the growth and interest in EA is being driven by the demands of digital business and the need for CIOs to start, restart or renew their EA programs. This resurgence is helping CEOs and fellow business leaders deliver on the promise of digital transformation and optimization.

Despite the growing demand for EA programs across a broad cross-section of organizations of all sizes, worldwide, the greatest challenge newly appointed and experienced enterprise architects most often face is knowing exactly where to begin and what steps to follow. Enterprise architects face this challenge when they are tasked (or self-motivated) to start or lead the advancement of their organization's existing EA capability and maturity.

Since 2012, we've observed through many discussions with EA and technology innovation leaders — covering the topic of starting, restarting or renewing EA programs — the eight best steps to follow to stand up a world-class, business-outcome-driven EA program (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Eight Steps to Start or Restart a World-Class, Business-Outcome-Driven EA Program

Steps to Stand Up a Business-Outcome_Driven EA Program

01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08
Adopt Business-Outcome-Driven EA	**Construct** Value Proposition	**Start With** Business Architecture	**Determine** Organizational Design	**Determine** Skill Sets and Staffing	**Determine** Governance and Assurance	**Determine** Business Value Metrics	**Construct** A Charter

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In this research, we detail the eight steps that successful EA and TI leaders follow to build a high-impact EA program.

Step 1:

Adopt a business-outcome-driven EA program

Start or restart the EA program by adopting a business-outcome-driven EA (BODEA) approach. EA programs that focus on business, technical or IT tactical requests generally do not demonstrate and deliver business value in the digital era. Focus first and foremost on linking all EA and IT efforts to business direction and strategy, then address the "why" and "what" — before the "how" of "doing" EA.

Step 2:

Construct a value proposition

Construct and pitch a value proposition for a BODEA program to achieve organizational buy-in and mandate. The BODEA value proposition must be appealing, enticing and credible to the audience.

Step 3:

Start with business architecture first

Organizations that support business architecture as an integral part of EA have a significantly higher ability to execute on business strategy. This is because they have a clear understanding of the strategy and its impact on business and IT, and guidance to drive delivery. Start BODEA efforts by constructing a set of business architecture deliverables that are both interesting and valuable to business leaders.

Step 4:

Determine organizational design

Work with CIOs and IT leaders to ensure the EA program's organizational structure is defined by its connections with other business and IT departments. The EA program's organizational design must reflect efforts to respond to disruptions and changes, ensure collaboration and enable flexibility around key digital business concepts.

Step 5:

Determine skill sets and staffing

Take stock of team members' current skills and design a plan to close the skills gap to enable digital business. Additionally, it's important to implement a training program to develop EA team resources and plan a career path for each team member.

Step 6:

Determine governance and assurance

EA and technology innovation leaders must define the extent to which the EA program has decision-making (governance) and compliance (assurance) rights, and take on the role of giving guidance and advice where needed in both projects and products. The "command and control" style of EA governance and assurance does not work in the digital era.

Step 7:

Determine business value metrics

Link the EA value proposition and the EA program's performance measurement to business metrics. Good measurement proves that the cost and effort required to run the EA program is adding value to the organization. EA leaders must focus the measurement on how EA is delivering business value by constructing efficiency and effectiveness metrics.

Step 8:

Construct a charter

EA leaders should construct a practical and realistic EA charter. A successful EA charter establishes the basis for the EA program's existence and reflects its purpose within the EA team, across the organization and with management. An EA charter based on "old-school" EA thinking will lead to a failed EA program.

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