Reducing Uncertainty In Architecture Plans

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Two Planning Discussion Scenarios

“We have budget for <n> people on your Architecture Team. Here are the program milestones...”

“Ok. I’ll scope and prioritize our work accordingly.”

Here are the program deliveries. Bring me your proposed architecture plan.

“Can I get back to you on that?”

What “Planning Scenarios” Have You Witnessed?
How Much?
(aka “what if we don’t do that?”)

• What Is Included In “Architecture”?
  – What decisions?
    • Rules / patterns / building codes?
    • Blueprints / views?
  – Requirements?
  – Interfaces?
  – Coding standards?

• How Complete Does It Need To Be?
  – “Exhaustive” use cases?

• How Detailed?
  – Analysis or implementation level modeling?

• How Much Technical Risk Does The Project Have?

How Much Have You Even Tried To Predict Scope?

How Fast?

• How Long Does It Take To Address Each Architecture Issue?

• How Formally Does The Architecture And Rationale Need To Be Captured?
  – Intra-company guidance?
    • Informal may be sufficient
  – Basis for contracting?
    • Formal legalize may be necessary

• How Many Stakeholders Are There?
  – How diverse are their goals & interests?

• How Much Authority Does The Architect(s) Have?
  – How many people have to concur with his/her decisions?
  – Who has veto power?

What Sources Of Variation Have You Seen?
What Resources?

- How Much Funding Is Allocated?
- How Closely Related Is The Architects’ Experience To The Current Project?
  - What prior assets are available?
- With What Agility Can Resources Be Applied?
- Are “Architects” Also Tapped For “Non-architecture” Tasks?

Ever Underestimated The Technical Novelty Of A Project?

Contributors To Predictable Plans

- Maximize Organizational Support For Architecture Development Determinism
  - Establish trustworthy & trusted teams
- Articulate Architecture Work Scope. Target Technical Risks
  - Technology opportunity: better leveraging past work to improve estimates
- Establish “Lean” Effort & Process

Partner to continuously balance cost, schedule, and risk
Discussion Topics

What “Planning Scenarios” Have You Witnessed?

How Much Have You Even *Tried* To Predict Scope?

What Sources Of Variation Have You Seen?

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