

VIEW OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY'S RELATIONSHIP TO BUSINESS



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We believe there are two basic concepts or principles that can be effectively executed and applied within an organization to help the organization succeed when it comes to Information Technology.

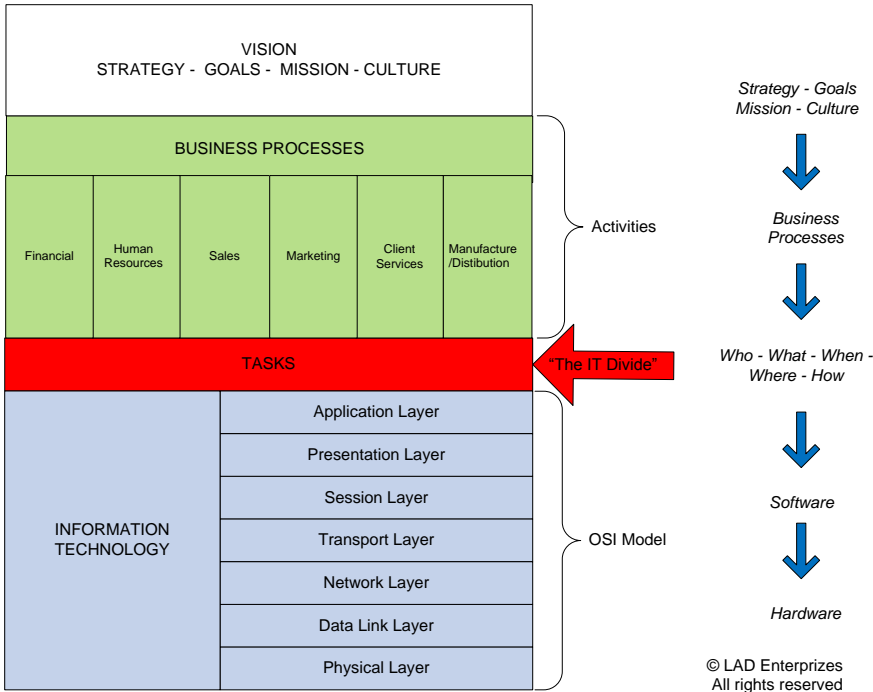
- Link Information Technology Solutions to Overall Business Strategy
- Keep IT Simple

LINK INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS TO OVERALL BUSINESS STRATEGY

Maintaining focus on the overall goals and mission of an organization while looking at Information Technology enables management to make appropriate investments, reduce cost, and provide value. We recommend a top-down approach and have found the seven layer OSI (Open Systems Interconnection) Model an excellent tool to help think about Information Technology needs. OSI is an international standard to help implementers, developers, technicians, and service providers ensure software and hardware properly work with one another and communication can occur within the network and with end-users.

We found the same approach can be used when thinking about your Information Technology needs. By looking at the **"big picture"**, it is possible to align your business processes and Information Technology needs with the overall strategy and goals of your organization.

THE "BIG PICTURE"



Strategy, Goals, Mission and Culture drive Business Processes. Business Processes determine necessary tasks (who, what, why, where and how). The tasks define the Information Technology requirements (software and hardware) to be investigated, decided upon, and implemented.

The challenge occurs when discussing the tasks and Information Technology requirements. The communication channel tends to break down. This is known by many as the “IT Divide”. Both sides have their own jargon, abbreviations, and unique experiences. Neither is able to explain, in terms understandable by the other, the necessary requirements, limitations, gaps, and potential solutions that are an acceptable fit. Executives, Managers and Technologists each go their own way out of frustration with one another. And the alignment of business processes and strategy with Information Technology goes by the wayside.

Information Technology success comes from having a common understanding. Everyone on the team needs to take a look at the total picture and approach the solution with the same view and goal. If this occurs it is possible to align business processes and Information Technology needs with the overall strategy and goals of an organization. The result is motivated employees, satisfied customers, and reduced costs.

Keep “IT” Simple

We have found many organizations have a tendency to complicate their Information Technology environment. It is our belief that Information Technology should not and does not need to be complicated. We believe organizations should focus on keeping “IT” simple.

By simplifying and consolidating an organization’s Information Technology there is:

- Reduced or lowered costs,
- Improved efficiency and increased consistency,
- Easier overall administration,
- Ability to respond quicker to change, and
- Better use resources (hardware, software and people).

Some Keep “IT” Simple” recommendations are:

- Standardize on hardware and software,
- Develop and follow policies and procedures,
- Document your network infrastructure,
- Purchase and use proven products from well known and reliable vendors,
- Select and integrate application systems prudently, and
- Limit business workstation use to business use only.

It is our experience that the more complex the environment, the more complicated it becomes as well as inflexible. This results in additional time and effort needed to maintain and/or change the environment increasing operational and maintenance costs. By keeping IT simple we have found funds can be reallocated from maintenance and routine operational activities to spending on strategic information technology and/or operational needs that support the overall organizational objectives and goals.

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