

Managing Information in Organizations

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Chapter 4 Role of Business in Information Management

Link 4.3 Answers to Cloze Exercise 4.1

Information is owned by the ORGANIZATION and therefore the management of this important resource should not be delegated to technical functions. An ENTERPRISE architecture is a framework that demonstrates the alignment among the organizational, information, information systems, and IT architectures. An INFORMATION architecture provides a diagrammatic representation of the information needed by the organization. A SOFT systems approach has been proposed for developing an information ARCHITECTURE. This approach recognizes that people view the same situation differently, through their own COGNITIVE filter. The first stage in developing an information architecture is to analyse the organizational CONTEXT. The organizational architecture provides the context that gives information meaning. The BUSINESS model is used to IDENTIFY some of the general information that the organization will need. The existing strategic ANALYSIS models used in organizations can contribute to identifying the information needed by different AREAS of the business. The second stage involves DEFINING information requirements by analysing the activities that the organization needs to undertake. A data to process MAPPING is then conducted to ensure that all the information needed has been identified. In stage THREE the structure of the information is defined using an entity-RELATIONSHIP model. Determinacy and CARDINALITY constraints define the relationships among entities specifying the STRUCTURE of information. The constraints provide the business RULES which aim to preserve the INTEGRITY of information. This prevents changes to the information which may ADVERSELY affect how the information can be used in other areas of the organization. The COMPLETENESS of the model is reviewed in stage 4 to ensure that the required information can be derived by ACCESS paths through the model. A DATA dictionary is then created which defines the META data, documenting the information architecture and the business rules which will be IMPLEMENTED by information systems and IT.