

## White Paper

# The Role and Importance of Business Process in Business Architecture

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David and Roderick are passionate about helping organizations understand and document their own business processes, using frameworks such as APQC's Process Classification Framework and standards such as BPMN as well as applying simple approaches to improve and simplify these business processes.

We are often asked many different questions around Business Architecture and Business Process, but two specific questions get asked frequently:

*"I understand the importance of Business Process, because we are actively involved in documenting our processes and use Business Process Management, but what role does Business Architecture play and how does this relate to Business Processes?"*

Or

*"I understand the need for a business architecture and how it is used to document our strategic direction. I also see how it assists with the translation of our business needs into the requirements for our application and technology, but what roles does business process play and how does it fit into business architecture?"*

The answer to both these questions is in fact the same.

Business Process is in fact an integral component of any business architecture, but furthermore business process is the link between the other components of the business architecture.

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# What is Business Architecture?

## An Overview of Business Architecture

Business architecture is defined as:

*“A blueprint of the enterprise that provides a common understanding of the organization and is used to align strategic objectives and tactical demands.”*

(source: OMG Business Architecture Special Interest Group)

Although there is no clearly defined single standard definition of what is contained in Business Architecture, there are a number of definitions which are slowly converging over time, for example:

- TOGAF;
- ArchiMate; and
- Object Management Group’s Business Architecture Work Group’s Business Architecture.

Orbus Software’s iServer Enterprise Architect product is available pre-configured for use with the TOGAF® v9.1 Meta-model and an accelerator pack for the ArchiMate® v2.0 modeling notation. It is also possible, of course, to implement any architecture framework and / or notation that you may wish to use. Consequently, it would also be possible to implement the OMG’s Business Architecture as well, once the standard is published.

Each of these standards may differ in their groupings and details, however they do broadly contain the same set of meta-model objects, for example each has elements covering:

- Business Strategy;
- Business Capabilities and Services;
- Business Functions and Processes;
- Information and Data; and
- Organization structure, people and roles.

As you can see from the three different diagrams, despite their similarities there are also differences:

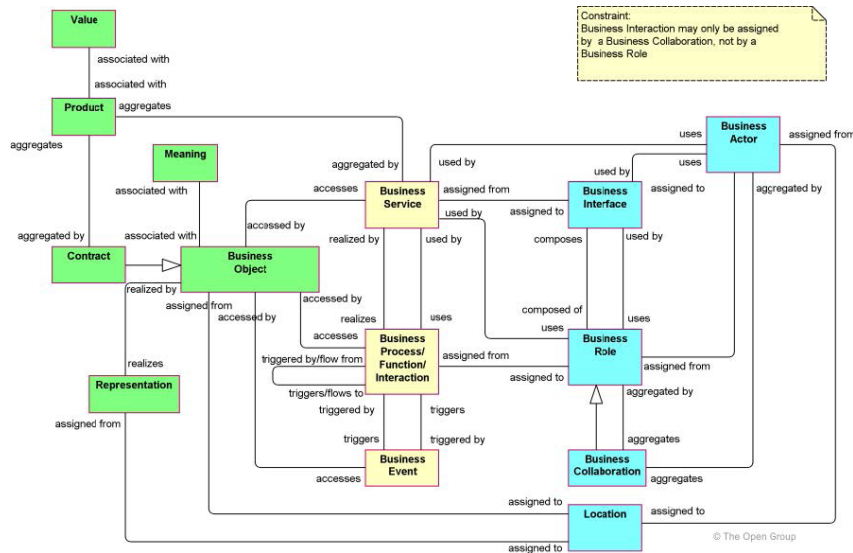


Figure 1: The Open Group ArchiMate V2.0 Meta Model

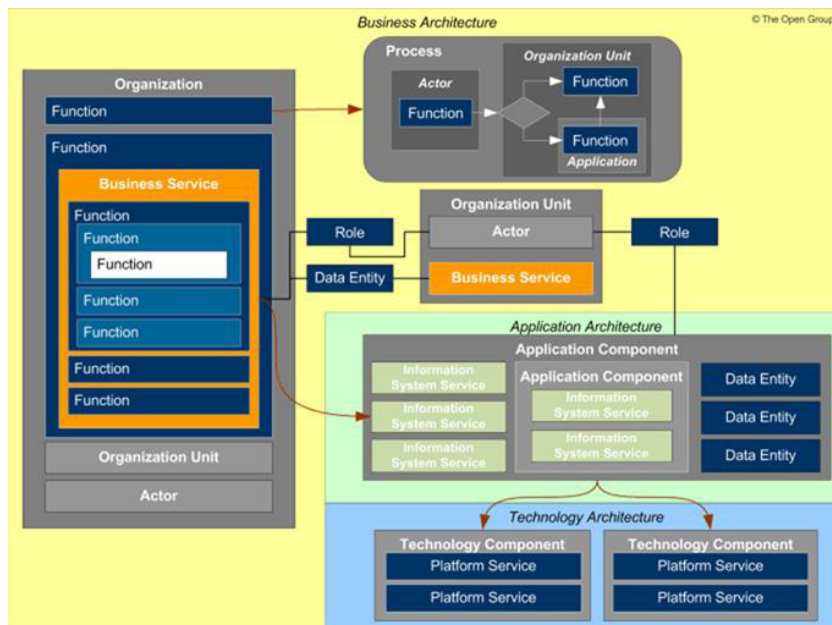


Figure 2: The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOGAF) V9.1 Content Meta Model

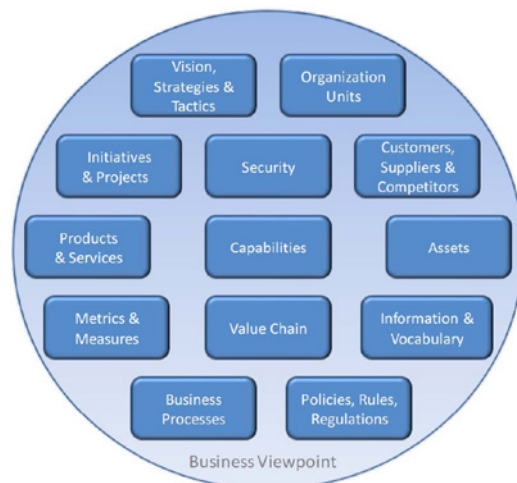


Figure 3: The Object Management Group Business Architecture Ecosystem

In essence, business architecture defines the structure of the enterprise in terms of its:

- Strategy and Direction;
- Governance structure;
- Capabilities, Functions and Business Processes; and
- Business information.

In defining the structure of the enterprise, business architecture considers:

- Customers;
- Finances; and
- The ever-changing market.

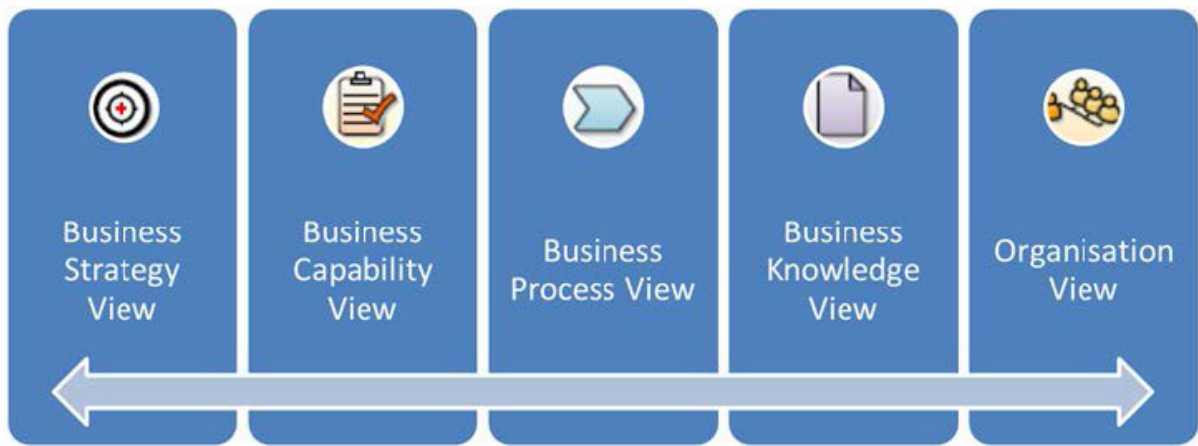
The business architecture then aligns these to strategic goals and objectives with decisions regarding:

- Products and services;
- Partners and suppliers;
- Organization capabilities; and
- Key initiatives.

Business architecture primarily focuses on the business motivations, business operations and business analysis frameworks and related networks that link these aspects of the enterprise together.

In order to develop an integrated view of an enterprise, many different views of an organization are typically developed. The key views of the enterprise within business architecture are:

- The Business Strategy view;
- The Business Capabilities view;
- The Business Process view;
- The Business Knowledge view; and
- The Organizational view.



**Figure 4: A high level view of a Business Architecture**

Each of these views builds up a picture of the organization and together they describe the ‘Why’, ‘What’ and ‘How’.

- The “Why” view sets out the strategy for the business and the capabilities;
- The “What” view sets out what is done and the detailed processes describe the how; and
- The “Who” view sets out the organizational model and the roles

## **Understanding the Different Views**

### **Business Strategy View**

The Business Strategy view captures tactical and strategic goals that drive an organization.

Goals are decomposed into various tactical approaches describing the achievement of these goals and providing traceability through the organization.

These tactical and strategic goals are mapped to metrics that provide ongoing evaluation of how successfully the organization is achieving its goals.

### **Capability View**

The business capabilities view describes the primary functions of the enterprise and sections of the organization that perform those functions.

This view further distinguishes between customer-facing functions, supplier-related functions, business execution, and business management functions.

### **Process View**

The Business Process view defines the set of strategic, core and support processes that transcend functional and organizational boundaries.

The process view sets the context of the enterprise by identifying and

describing external entities such as customers, suppliers, and external systems that interact with the business.

The processes also describe which people, resources and controls are involved in the process. And at the lowest level of detail describe the manual and automated tasks that make up the process flow.

Within the context of the Business Architecture, the Process View is much more than a series of process models mapped using BPMN. It is the Process View that provides a holistic view of the business. To achieve this, the Process View provides the context and the connection between the various roles within the organization and shows what they do, the business rules, how they are implemented and the risks that need to be managed.

In addition the Process View describes the decomposition of these holistic areas:

- Policies decompose into business rules which are implemented by an activity in the process;
- The risk register decomposes into individual risks each of which each has a control assigned to mitigate and manage the risk. The process model provides a means of documenting where the risk is and what the control is;
- The procedures describe the knowledge required to operate the process; and
- The organizational model decomposes into business units, teams and roles which are captured in the process model.

### **Knowledge View**

The Business Knowledge view establishes the shared semantics (e.g., customer, order, and supplier) within an organization and relationships between those semantics (e.g., customer name, order date, supplier name).

These semantics form the vocabulary that the organization relies upon to communicate and structure the understanding of the areas they operate within.

### **Organization View**

The Organizational view captures the relationships among roles, capabilities and business units, the decomposition of those business units, and the internal or external management of those units.

## Why Develop a Business Architecture?

The effort to develop a Business Architecture will provide the business with a defined and documented:

- Business Motivational model for the business, including the business' mission, vision, goals, objectives strategies etc.;
- Understanding of the core Capabilities of the business;
- Management, Core Value Creation and Enabling / Supporting Processes of the business, including providing the linkages from:
  - ◇ the business motivation and capabilities to the process, and
  - ◇ the process to the business knowledge and organization structure;
- Clearly defined roles for each process and the technology enabling the process; and
- The scope to align a balanced scorecard against the process.

## The Role of Process

### Overview

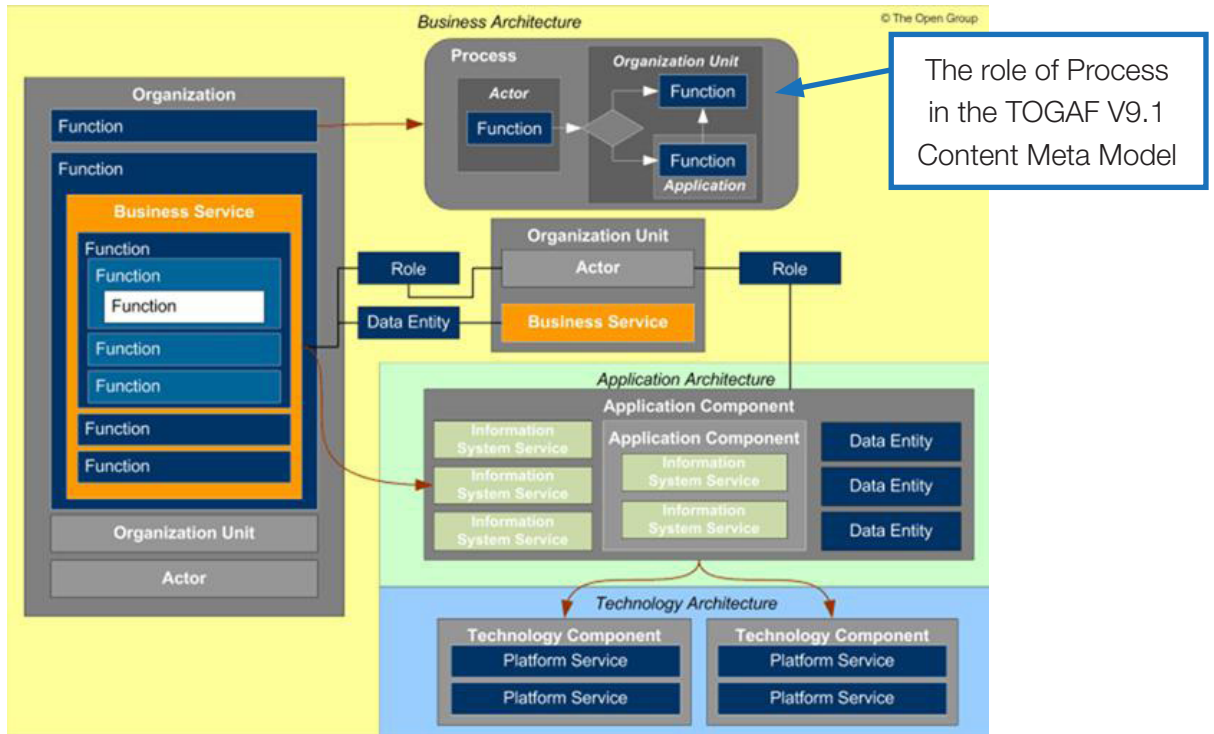
Process is central to a Business Architecture and this can be seen in the three of the most popular Business Architecture Meta Models, namely:

- The Open Group's Architecture Framework (TOGAF) v9.1 Business Architecture;
- The Open Group's ArchiMate v2.0; and
- Object Management Group's Business Architecture Work Group's Business Architecture.

Let's use the TOGAF v9.1 Meta Model to illustrate the role of Process in a Business Architecture.



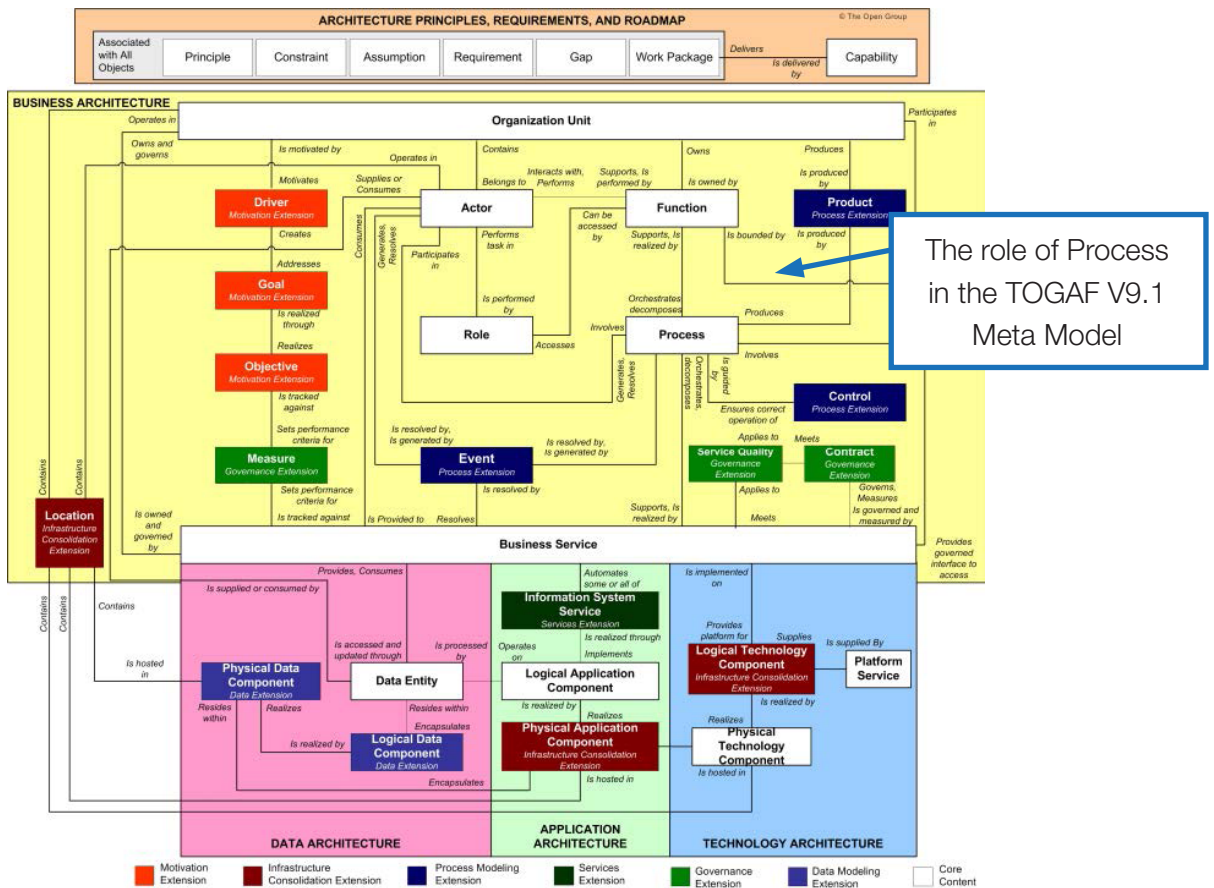
At its simplest, the TOGAF Content Meta Model shows how Process is at the core of the Business and the link between the various components of the Content Meta Model.



The role of Process in the TOGAF V9.1 Content Meta Model

Figure 5: The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOGAF) V9.1 Content Meta Model

In the more detailed view of the TOGAF 9.1 Meta Model, Process can still be seen as the link between various other views within the Business Architecture:



The role of Process in the TOGAF V9.1 Meta Model

Figure 5: The Open Group Architecture Framework (TOGAF) V9.1 Content Meta Model



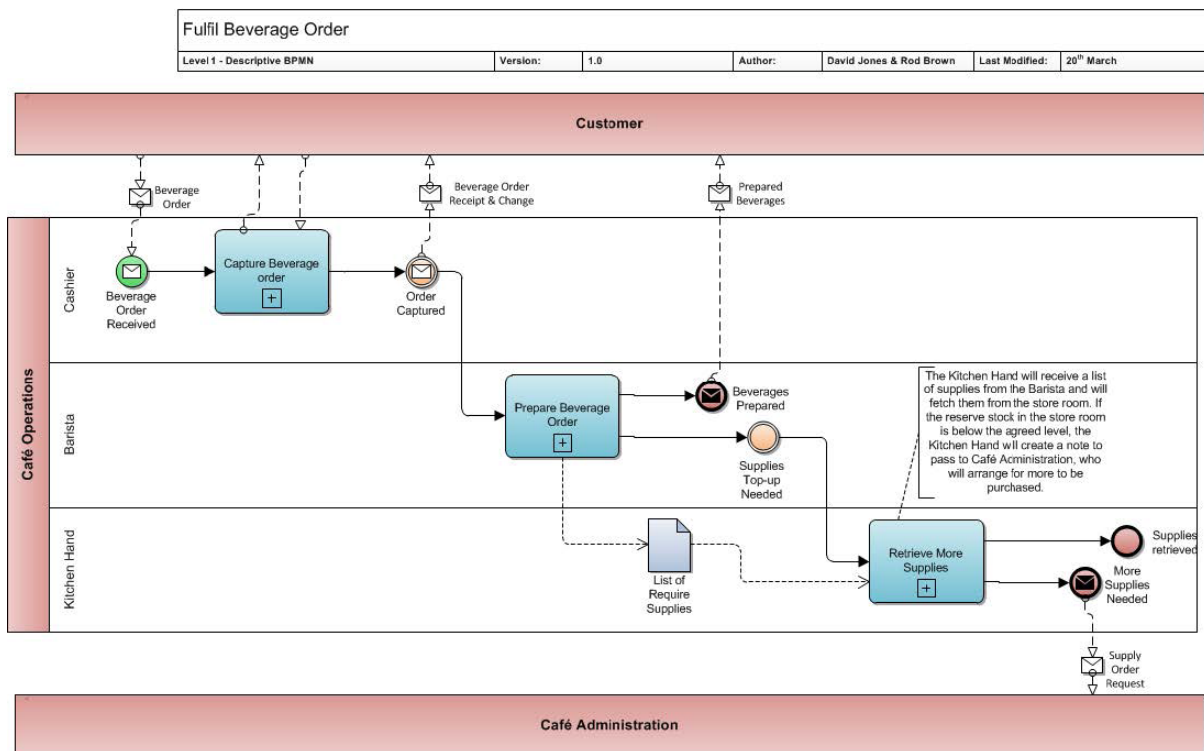
As discussed, Process is much more than a model documented in the Business Process Modeling Notation (BPMN). Process provides the link to business rules, to risk and controls and to the roles that complete the process.

The process can be thought of as the subject of an organization and as the key to understanding the capabilities provided by the organization.

## How Does Process Provide the Link?

Processes provide a link to the wider Business Architecture based on the information contained in the process. For example;

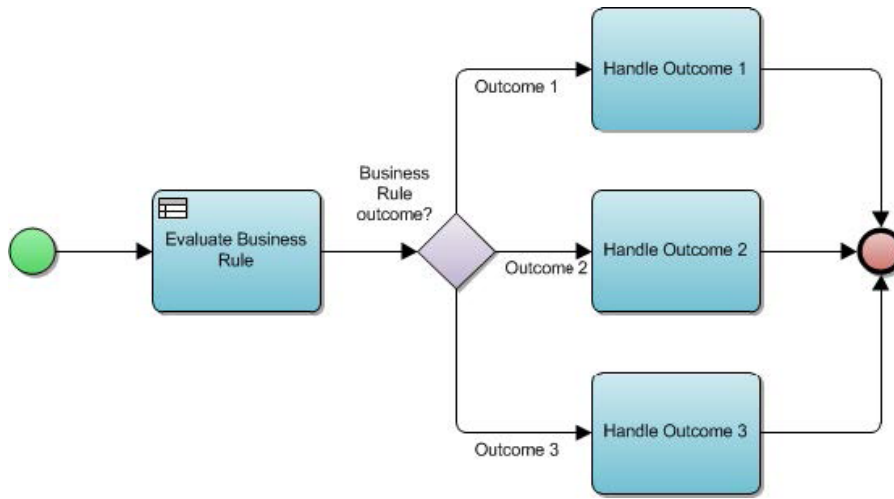
Visibility of the organization unit responsible for the process and the role completing the process is described by the pool and the lane respectively. Processes must be described within the context of one or both of these. Modeling within a repository will provide the ability to link the pools and lanes to an organizational model. This capability will in-turn allow the user to interrogate the organizational model to understand what processes are executed by what roles and who is the process owner.



**Figure 7: Example BPMN Collaboration Diagram**

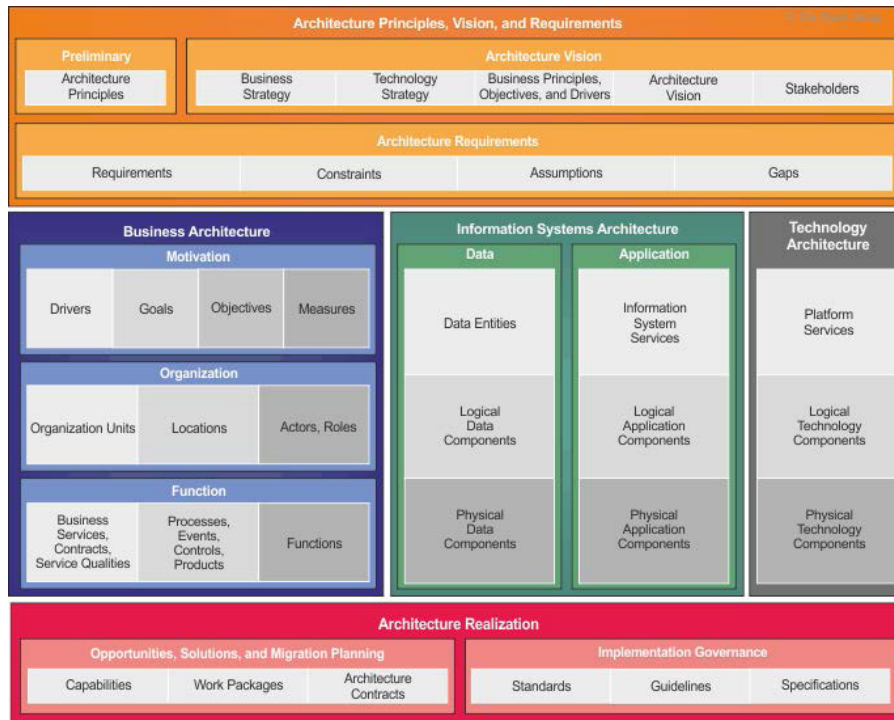
Organizations have many business rules that describe the constraints that the business must operate within. However to understand how the business rule is implemented and to understand the context one needs to read the process model.

Again this demonstrates how central the business process is to the business architecture. Linking the business rule to the process provides the ability to not only ensure the rule is implemented but that it is implemented correctly.



**Figure 8: Business Rule implemented in BPMN**

A documented process allows the risk manager to identify not only what the risks are but more importantly how the risk will be managed. In turn using a tool such as the iServer repository provides the capability to identify the documented risks across all processes and the controls that are in place.



**Figure 9: TOGAF 9.1 detailed Content Meta Model**

## Why Provide Visibility of the Process?

As explained so far the Process is central to an organization. It is what provides the link between:

- What the organization does;
- Who does it; and
- How it is done.

This can perhaps be best understood by thinking how the processes can provide the management team with the information to make informed decisions on such matters as;

- Do we outsource or in-source a process?
- What is the process we need to improve?
- Do we have the right risks identified and the appropriate controls?
- Do we have the right roles for the process?

## Conclusion

As we have demonstrated using various illustrations, Business Process is a critical component of any Business Architecture. It doesn't matter which way you look at it, all Business Architectures, no matter what Meta Model being used, Business Processes will be at the core as the means of linking the various components of the Architecture.

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