http://www.lifehacker.com.au/2016/09/breaching-the-strategy-and-execution-gap/
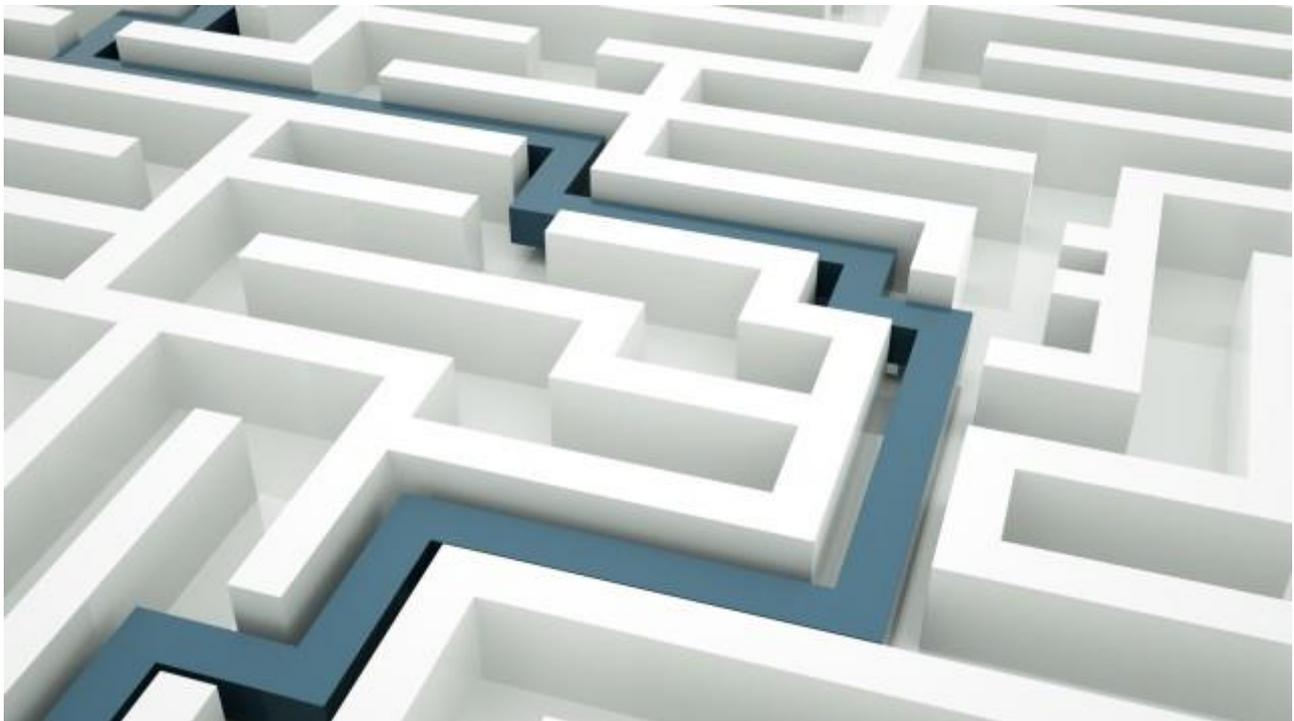
IT Strategy: Breaching The Strategy And Execution Gap

26/09/16

ANTHONY CARUANA *TODAY 12:30 PM*

Back in 2013, I wrote a four-part series on developing an IT strategy. It's an exercise I've been through a few times in my IT career but there was something I didn't have an opportunity to address back then. How do you breach the gap between strategy and execution? Here's that guide.

Previous entries in the series:

1. **Strategic Planning for IT: Business Plans**
2. **Strategic Planning for IT: Setting Objectives**
3. **Strategic Planning for IT: Delivery**
4. **Strategic Planning for IT: Filling In The Plan**

An IT strategy is important. But don't let the strategy get bogged down in detail. I've seen strategic plans that were little more than five year project plans. As a result, the strategy can become focussed on what you *can* do rather than what you *should* do.

In today's world, where agile development is king, it might be tempting to say a strategy isn't important as you need to be able to react to the changing needs of the business. But that's not true – at least in my view.

A good IT strategy creates an environment where agile business execution is possible.

So, what do you need in order to successfully execute that strategy?

Communication is critical. IT can't distribute applications and services in isolation. I had many clashes with senior managers when I last worked in IT when I refused to take on any project as an "IT project". Every project had to have a business sponsor with a vested interest in the project's success.

Resourcing is, as always, a key. Many IT projects struggle to succeed because they can't get access to business operatives as they are engaged in other activities.

The good news is there are tools around that allow business units to plan projects using their own processes but make it easy to see what resources they might need from other parts of the company.
Four example, at the NetEvents Global Press & Analyst Summit I attended last week, I spoke to Bethanie Maples Krogstad from Anaplan.

Anaplan is a planning tool that can be used for managing resources across multiple projects. Rather than locking everyone into using a mandated project methodology, Anaplan simplifies resource management so it's possible to see what resources are available right across the business.

Often, getting a project completed on time and on budget is dependent on access to the right people. And one of the key challenges on that score is coordination between the business strategy and IT strategy.

By getting the business and IT functions working together and sharing information, it gets a lot easier to bridge the gap between strategy and execution.

Anthony Caruana attended the NetEvents Global Press Press and Analyst Summit in Silicon Valley as a guest of NetEvents