



The Art of the Business and IT Thinking Together

If I had one question to ask an IT executive, it would be “What conversations are you and your team having, out there in the business?” These conversations have changed. In the 1980s and 1990s IT played the role of toolmaker. IT people asked “What do you want?”. The business people gave some kind of answer. Then IT people went away and built something.

Now the nature of the conversation is different. IT people are no longer toolmakers, simply responding to specifications. They no longer speak only when spoken to, and they cannot remain safely in the company of other IT people. Now, IT people of all levels must be out there in the business, asking questions, making suggestions, mending things before they break, and building systems before they are specified.

Today’s active IT specialist asks “What are we, as a business, aiming to achieve?”. This question is asked both in the business and within the IT teams. Forward-looking IT executives are now driving their teams to enter into bold conversations about how to drive profit, what success looks like, and how the business might be shifted, expanded, enhanced and streamlined. Now the IT people can’t just ‘go away and build something’. They have to stay in the business and change something. There is a huge installed base of technology, so the challenge is to adapt or re-use the IT systems, data and supplier relationships that are already in place, and to make use of them in a new way.

This is a bold conversation because once started, the IT people must then take accountability for delivery. This is more than simply delivering a technical solution ‘to time and to budget’. ‘Accountability’ in this context means delivering the growth, the regulatory compliance, the revenue and the profit that the business requires. So IT people become accountable in a new way: and IT executives must be ready for all that this implies.

To read my full article, click [here](#).

I welcome your thoughts.

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We use innovative experiential learning approaches to develop the insights and capabilities needed by today’s business and technology leaders. Our focus is always on outcomes, not process.

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Parting Thought

“Never forget that your best thoughts come from others.”

Oscar Wilde, 1854-1900