

N E W S   U P D A T E



[www.eabok.org](http://www.eabok.org)

Follow [@eabok](https://twitter.com/eabok) on Twitter

email: [eabok@mitre.org](mailto:eabok@mitre.org)

## Vol. 2 - August 2015

Welcome to the Enterprise Architecture Body of Knowledge (EABOK) eNewsletter. Here you'll find the latest news about the EABOK community and more. Enjoy!

### News & Notes

- [Enterprise Architecture East Conference, Oct. 6-7, 2015](#)—Members of the [EABOK Advisory Board](#) will give a presentation titled “**Building Architectural Relationships**” as part of this annual event which brings together enterprise architects and others from the federal government and related industries. EABOK is also sponsoring an exhibit during the conference, so stop by and say hello if you're in attendance.
- **Save the Date**—The EABOK Community Workshop is scheduled for **April 7, 2016** at [MITRE's McLean](#), VA campus. The details are being worked, but you can count on there being stimulating and lively presentations and discussions by leading enterprise architecture (EA) experts.



### Ask the Expert—The Human Side of Enterprise Architecture by Sally Bean

*Independent consultant and EA practitioner, Sally Bean, graciously accepted our invitation to share her knowledge and insights. Sally has an analytical background in IT, and views building relationships and strategic communications as being equally important to the success of any EA initiative.*

**Q: Can you tell our readers about your background and how you became involved in EA?**

A: I was a project leader in the IT department at British Airways in 1992, and learned that a new Business Systems Architecture group was being set up in order to take a more cross-functional

approach to improving the airline's processes and information systems. I thought this sounded really interesting and successfully applied to join it.

**Q: EA is commonly described as a blueprint for organizations to achieve their current and future objectives. Do you agree with this definition?**

A: Since becoming an independent consultant in 2002, I have helped a lot of organizations with their EA efforts and have been surprised at how different their approaches and outputs are. I have tracked the definition in Wikipedia over the past few years, and note that it has changed from a product to a process to a practice. Although I do sometimes use the blueprint metaphor when explaining EA to people, I think it is best to characterize EA as a practice rather than a product, because it's the collaborative aspects of EA that really deliver value. Given this diversity, I don't think it's worthwhile to agonize over a precise definition of EA. It's better to try and describe its purpose, value, and core activities/outputs in a particular organizational context.

**Q: You are a strong advocate for the "human side" of EA. Can you explain what this means and how it applies in real life?**

A: It means two things. Firstly, it's about making the practice of EA inclusive, where the relevant stakeholders are actively involved in architectural work, and about ensuring that people who are expected to adopt the results of EA work are motivated to do so. Secondly, (particularly in the context of Business Architecture) it's about making sure the actual results of EA work pay sufficient attention to the human aspects of business/IT change – e.g. the impact of business change on the organization's customers, employees, etc.

**Q: Some concepts around EA are fairly technical and not easy to explain. Therefore, how do you communicate about EA to busy employees who may not even know or care about EA? What do you most want them to know?**

For starters, EAs should paint a vivid picture of the pain within the organization that EA will address. It's also a good idea to use a metaphor to present the basic concept. This brings the topic to life, and makes it easier for everyone to understand. This could be a common metaphor such as city-planning, but you could also use gardening instead, or something else that resonates with your colleagues. Finally, relate the value of EA to their specific perspective within the organization, and say what they need to do differently to achieve that value.

**Q: Would you recommend that EAs conduct a stakeholder analysis when tasked with a new project? Why is this important to the overall success of an EA initiative?**

Definitely. Apart from making sure the right people are involved in the development of architecture, you need to understand where people will be positively or negatively affected by the initiative, e.g. through being able to do things more quickly, or a loss of autonomy. Then you can take steps to try and make sure they are supportive of the architecture effort. You also

need to understand the culture of individual stakeholder groups so you can tailor the style and content of your communications with them.

**Q: Can you cite an example where communications—or lack thereof—impacted the overall EA effort?**

One of the best examples is an early one from my airline days. We were looking at baggage performance in an end-to-end way, considering resource planning, service delivery, and lost bag recovery as a related set of processes and information systems. Firstly, we interviewed a wide range of stakeholders and also shadowed them at work so we had a good understanding of the domain. When we presented our recommendations about changes to new systems and databases, we produced a set of ‘before and after’ cartoons, showing how customer service would be transformed by the enhanced systems.

---

*Sally Bean is an independent EA consultant. She advises large organizations in the private and public sector on how to develop their EA capability and embed EA approaches into their ways of working. She specializes in the human and social aspects of EA, with particular interest in developing and evolving architects’ soft skills and team-working capabilities.*

Contact her at [Sally@sallybean.com](mailto:Sally@sallybean.com), or on Twitter [@Cybersal](https://twitter.com/Cybersal)

## Participate in the EABOK

The EABOK is a unique, community-based endeavor whose members believe that the best way to advance the profession is to share their collective knowledge. We consider new and previously published material on an ongoing basis, and if approved by our Editorial Review Board, your contribution will be posted on [eabok.org](http://eabok.org). There are no fees involved—all materials are free.

[Participate in the EABOK.](#)

[Click here to subscribe to this newsletter.](#)

To unsubscribe, [send an email](#), with “unsubscribe” in the subject line.

Questions? [Email us](#).

If there are any EA-related topics you want to read about in upcoming newsletters, [click here to send us your suggestions](#).



