

Exercise 7: Building Data Tables

Because most organizations will have this type of information, they will have a format for preparing each of the items. The information will probably not be in a structured form, so you will need to get it into a shape you can work with. Do not ask them to provide the same data in a different format just for you: be happy to get the data and transcribe it.

You may choose to use wall charts, mind maps or other tools for the first few items on the following lists. The chapter and this exercise show some basic spreadsheets you can use to get started. **The bonus materials on [the book's website](#)¹ include those spreadsheet templates in Excel format.** Again, these are quite rudimentary. As soon as you start doing this, you will see relationships between the sets of data that you have assembled, and you will start building much more comprehensive spreadsheets in preparation for transition to a proper data tool.

The following tables show - in a very simple form - how this sort of data will need to be organized to make it useful. With a real organization, yours may start out looking like these, but will quickly grow much more complex. These samples are available in Excel format at the book's [website](#)².

Organizational Table (Exercise A)

The organizational table is simply a tabular representation of the organization chart. The chart needs to be turned into a table because it serves as the foundation for the more elaborate tables that we will build on top of it.

Business Unit	Division
North	Production
North	Shipping
South	Production
South	Shipping
East	Production
East	Shipping
West	Production
West	Shipping
HQ	Marketing & Sales
HQ	Administration
HQ	Design

¹ www.simmer-system.com

² www.simmer-system.com

- A. If it does not already exist, draw a modified organization chart that matches the organization chart with the missions and functions that you have discovered.
- 1) You can start a new sketch, or can do this with the stakeholder chart created in the last chapter.
 - 2) Don't dive too deep: the lowest you need to go is the divisions that have members on the governance board that the PPFMO supports.
 - 3) Do not count situations where a division simply executes a process that another division owns. For, instance, every division is involved with hiring and personnel evaluations, but the HR department owns those processes.
 - 4) Highlight the situations where the same function occurs in multiple divisions. If you find yourself getting into topics related to those functions as part of the governance activity, the split responsibility will require more coordination and resolutions than other subjects.

Congratulations! You've built a business architecture. Now you know how that works. As an added bonus, the resource website includes a business architecture structured in the way that the architects like to see it.

Strategic Plan Assignment (Exercise B)

Most strategic plans establish goals and high-level initiatives that will bring those goals about. Those goals are assigned to the operating divisions to carry out.

Strategic Goal	Strategic Initiative	North	South	East	West
Goal I	Initiative A	x			
Goal I	Initiative B			x	
Goal II	Initiative C		x		
Goal II	Initiative D		x	x	
Goal III	Initiative E	x		x	
Goal III	Initiative F		x		
Goal IV	Initiative G	x			
Goal IV	Initiative H				x

To include these strategic initiatives in our organizationally-oriented table, we can simply realign the strategy's focus on the initiatives to show the work assigned to each business unit and division.

Strategic Goal	Strategic Initiative	Business Unit	BU Initiatives
Goal I	Initiative A	North	
			Initiative NA
			Initiative NB
Goal I	Initiative B	East	
Goal II	Initiative C	South	
Goal II	Initiative D	South	
Goal II	Initiative D	East	
Goal III	Initiative E	North	Missing
Goal III	Initiative E	East	
Goal III	Initiative F	South	
Goal IV	Initiative G	North	x
			Initiative NG1
			Initiative NG2
Goal IV	Initiative H	West	
		North	Initiative NW1
		North	Initiative NW2
		North	Initiative NX1
		North	Initiative NZ1

With the tabular structure, notice how assignments to multiple organizations require repeated rows. That will work for now, but as it grows more complex, you will start needing a database. In the example, yellow cells indicate either a high-level goal that is not reflected in lower level activities, or a low-level activity that does not trace back to a higher-level priority.

- B. Identify all the activities called for in the Strategic Plan that your organization is assigned to perform - or should have been.
 - 1) Compare that to the project and activity list. If any of those top-down assignments are not on the list, add them.
 - 2) For all entries on the project and activity list, identify whether they support specific entries in the Strategic Plan; if so, add a "Linkage" identifier that traces the activity to a specific location in the Strategy.

Budget Allocation (Exercise C)

The following two tables are self-explanatory: use them to record the funds and personnel allocated to the organizational groups.

Business Unit	Division	Current Budget (\$M)	Next Year Forecast (\$M)
North	Production	8.2	8.4
North	Shipping	7.2	7.7
South	Production	9.1	10.5
South	Shipping	6.5	7.7
East	Production	5.5	6.1
East	Shipping	6.7	7.8
West	Production	8.1	7.6
West	Shipping	6.2	7.5
HQ	Marketing & Sales	3.9	3.4
HQ	Administration	6.5	7.1
HQ	Design	4.1	3.8
	TOTAL	72.0	77.6

C. Assess the organization chart, as modified in Exercise A, and the budget documents.

- 1) How are funds are broken out in the budget? Does money align to the high-level missions announced in the strategic plan, or to business functions that may be scattered across the divisions, or is it handed out to organizational groups? In the short term, you are not going to change something that fundamental in the way the organization works, so you might as well go along with it. This intersection of how the organization sees and thinks of itself, and the way it hands out money, will form your basic program structure.
- 2) Work out what the 5 to 10 top-level directions are towards which the organization's money flows in the top-down allocation process. That is your working hypothesis of the program structure. It may change. Remember the Zero-Sum principle: all of the money must be allocated somewhere. No magic money.
- 3) Analyze the project and activity list to see whether all of the entries will fit into the program structure. Adjust the program structure if needed. Again the Zero-Sum rule: no magic projects sitting outside the budget and none sitting outside programs. It is possible for one or two critical projects to have their own program-like existence, reporting to a very high level; if so , then treat them as their own programs.
- 4) At this point, the structure you have drawn up is pure guesswork. DO NOT try to push it on anyone as the solution. Start from the top down, or as far up as you can get, and interview the managers of the organization groups and of the identified program areas and ask for their help in better understanding how the organization operates. Then, if it still seems relevant in light of what they just told you, show them your sketch-map and ask for help in correcting and improving it.
- 5) Make a specific effort to build relationships within the finance division. They may well have a way to view the organization from a programmatic perspective. Restructure your concept structure to conform to that view if it makes sense. "Follow the money" is usually the best advice. Sometimes their view makes sense but is not especially useful;

for instance, government organizations may allocate funds based on the politics within each appropriation type (operations, capital , construction, payroll and so on) with no real regard for how or even whether these chunks of money add up to an actual capability. If that is the case, you will have to modify your data management concept to accommodate those realities.

Personnel Capacity (Exercise D)

Collect personnel counts by general skill sets. The ease of doing this will vary depending on the degree to which the organization itself tracks personnel skills and assignments. It may be readily available from personnel and program records, or it may have to be a rough estimate by the divisions' managers.

At this point, if contracted labor information is readily available, then go ahead and use it. Otherwise, well be coming back to it in Chapter Nine.

Business Unit	Division	Total headcount	Machine operator	Materials mixer	Warehouse	Driver	Sales	HR + Admin	Finance	Engineer
North	Production	32	20	12						
North	Shipping	31			9	22				
South	Production	34	17	17						
South	Shipping	30			10	20				
East	Production	35	25	10						
East	Shipping	25			9	16				
West	Production	30	20	10						
West	Shipping	19			7	12				
HQ	Marketing & Sales	14					14			
HQ	Administration	12						7	5	
HQ	Design	10								10
	TOTAL	272	82	49	35	70	14	7	5	10

D. Analyze the personnel rosters.

- 1) Are there clear groupings of skill sets within organizations and groups? This will come in useful later when you start looking at hand-offs?
- 2) You should be able to determine the allocation of people to your notional programs, since the programs are aligned to the overall budget structure. If not, go out and talk to the program managers.