



Welcome

Speculation and success

How speculation determines whether projects succeed or fail

Hello and welcome to this You Tube presentation on speculation and success. My name is Charles Richter and I am the principal consultant for Ripose Pty Limited. In this presentation I will show how the success or failure of projects, that lead to the automation of business requirements, depend on senior management's decision to proceed with them and that their decisions are based on the speculation of their advisors. I will show how these decisions can be based on predicate logic and especially the use of a simple truth table. I will also demonstrate through the use of two truth tables, how business requirements and IT can be fully aligned.



Speculation

- Conceive
- Divine
- Dream
- Fantasize
- Guess
- Imagine

In business and indeed in life, everyone speculates. That is all part of being human. So what is speculation? Using the Concise Oxford Dictionary, I discovered the following definition “to form a theory or conjecture, especially without a firm factual basis; to meditate or; to gamble reckless”. Using the Oxford thesaurus, I uncovered the following synonyms; Conceive; Divine; Dream; Fantasize; Guess; Imagine. Without full knowledge of the entire business, management, operatives and their advisors need to either uncover the meaning behind the business and/or speculate as to what they believe the business is supposed or ought to be. Truth has a great deal to do with whether the outcome of such speculation will assist the business to succeed or fail. As someone once stated, ‘the first casualty of war is truth’ and running a business is a bit like fighting a war, plenty of objectives, targets, allies and opponents.



Success

- Accomplishment
- Fruition
- Fulfilment
- Triumph
- Victory

So what is success and how can it be measured? Again I turned to the Concise Oxford dictionary and found that success is “the accomplishment of an aim; a favourable outcome”. Or using the Oxford thesaurus success has the following synonyms: Accomplishment; Fruition; Fulfilment; Triumph; Victory. Hence success can be measured by the achieving one or more of these synonyms. Failure is measured by not achieving these synonyms.



Introducing the truth table

A truth table is a mathematical table used in logic — specifically in connection with Boolean algebra, boolean functions, and propositional calculus.

Examples of truth tables:

1 proposition

Proposition	A	B
Correct	Y	N
Continue	Y	N

2 propositions

Proposition	A	B	C	D
Person 1 correct	Y	Y	N	N
Person 2 correct	Y	N	Y	N
Continue	Y	N	N	N

So what is a truth table? According to the Wikipedia it is a ‘mathematical table used in logic — specifically in connection with Boolean algebra, boolean functions, and propositional calculus’. And truth, according to the Concise Oxford dictionary is something that is ‘in accordance with fact or reality’. Putting the two together we have 2 examples of a truth table. The first example is a truth table with 1 proposition. The proposition is in the first column, and the truth factor in columns A and B. If the proposition is correct then the truth factor in column A is Yes and therefore the decision is to continue, however, as the truth factor for column B is No, the decision is not to continue. The second example is a truth table with 2 propositions (is person 1 correct and/or is person 2 correct). Column A represents the fact that both people are correct and therefore the decision is to continue, however if one or both people are incorrect, then the decision is not to continue. Truth tables are useful up to a point, the more propositions there are, the more columns. The number of columns depends upon the number of outcomes raised to the power of the number of columns of the number of propositions. In the first example the number of propositions is 1 and therefore the number of columns are 2, either Yes or No. Two propositions give rise to 4 columns (2 raised to the power 2) and 3 propositions lead to 8 columns (or 2 raised to the power 3) and 4 outcomes have 16 columns (or 2 raised to the power 4) etc. Before demonstrating the use of a truth table, I will need to identify the people involved in the proposition column.



Who are the advisors

Stakeholders

- Business operatives
 - Management
 - Rank and file operatives
 - Advisors
 - Non technical advisors
 - Technical advisors
- Customers
- Suppliers
 - Outsourced advisors

Knowledge is needed in order to make sound decisions. As not every manager is capable of having all the knowledge of the business, they are beholden to either employing advisors (or outsourcing to a supplier who have the advisors both non technical and technical) with the expertise to uncover the collective knowledge of all business operatives (or to sift through all available information and turn it into useful knowledge). The advisors utilise frameworks or techniques which assist them to systematically uncover the knowledge and feed this knowledge back to management, who are then able to make the decision to continue with the projects. These non technical advisors are called (for better or for worse), enterprise architects or EA for short. Once the decision is made to continue with a project, the responsibility is passed on to the technical advisors, who have the expertise to turn the collective knowledge into a reality which will enable the business to succeed (either thrive or survive). However, as most advisors do not themselves have an in depth knowledge of the business, they need to speculate as to what the business operatives are talking about. This speculation can turn out to be either true or false, depending on how well they use the tools at their disposal (in this case the framework), thus opening the door to the likelihood of failure. I will now proceed to use a truth table to demonstrate the effectiveness of the speculative outcome of the enterprise architect, followed by a truth table demonstrating the likely outcome of the project once the technical advisors have completed their designs based of the knowledge acquired from the enterprise architect or architects. For more details on the business operatives, please see the YouTube presentation on the stakeholder



Speculate to continue based on the EA

Truth table based on the EA to speculate correctly

Role speculation	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Business analyst	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
Knowledge architect	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Strategic architect	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Continue	Y	Y ¹	Y ¹	Y ²	X	N	N	N

In this truth table you will notice that there are 3 rows in the role speculation column, hence there will be 8 possible truth factors (columns A through H). Column A represents that the speculation reached by the enterprise architect (a person or persons performing the role of business analyst, knowledge architect and strategist) are all correct and that the outcome is to continue to the next phase. In the case of columns B and C, where 1 of the 3 may speculate incorrectly, the decision is to continue however the decision is now based on politics rather than science (depends on who has the most influence with the decision makers). In the case of column D, even though 2 roles speculate incorrectly, the decision may be to go ahead on political grounds if and only if the business analyst is the major influencing factor. In the case of column E, the decision could go either way, depending on who has the most influence. In the case of columns F through H, the decision should be to not continue, however senior management could override and push ahead.



Success factor based on speculations of EA & IT architects

For the EA & technology architects to speculate correctly

Role speculation	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Enterprise architect	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
Data modeller	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
Data base designer	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Project will succeed	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N

Once management decides to continue with the project or projects the success or failure of said projects depends upon the speculations of two additional technical architects, namely the data modeller and the data base designer. This truth table shows that the projects have a high success rate if all 3 roles speculate correctly (column A) or in the case of column E where the enterprise architect speculates incorrectly however the 2 technical architects speculate correctly (lucky guess). In all other cases (B through D and F through H) the chances of success are near to impossible and could depend on pure luck. In the case of column A, business and IT are fully aligned only partially aligned in columns B through D and unaligned in columns E through F. The reasons why projects will fail are: Columns B and F - correct facts but poor data base design; Columns C and G - incorrect facts but a good data base; Columns D and H – incorrect facts and poor data base design;



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In closing, aligning business requirements and IT depends on the correct speculations of the various roles of the advisor or in this case the information architects. Get all the speculations right and the alignment is easily achieved, get one or more speculations wrong and the alignment will never be achieved. I would like to thank you for viewing this presentation. The pdf of this presentation is available (for a small fee) should you want to assist us further the aims of Ripose.com and especially Ripose.org. You can find the aims of [ripose.org](#). You can reach me by sending [me an e mail](#). Once again, thank you for your attention.