Information Architect Job Profile

Introduction

Information Architects are responsible for the structural design of information environments to ensure that knowledge and information is managed appropriately, that information is retrievable, usable and appropriately protected and managed throughout its life in order to meet business needs as well as legal/policy requirements.

This does not involve the development or engineering of systems – activities that are performed by roles outside the KIM domain. However, the Information Architect plays a key role in ensuring that systems engineers and developers understand and implement KIM best practice for the handling of information.

Information Architects typically achieve this by developing Information Handling Models (IHMs) and other standards and specifications pertinent to the management of information, including the secure sharing of information between environments. They may also be involved with aligning IHMs and/or developing mappings between them, e.g. when sharing information between different organisations or governments, or with the adoption of externally developed standards and approaches (e.g. RDF and Linked Data).

Tasks

Information Architects undertake the following tasks:

•   Map, understand and optimise information flows within their organisation

•   Develop information handling models

•   Establish processes to allow sharing of information between different environments

•   Develop new information architectures in response to changes in business need or the implementation of new technology

•   Work with system engineers and developers to ensure KIM best practice is incorporated in IT system implementation.

Skills Required by Information Architects

Awareness Level (AA/AO)

1.   Using, evaluating and Exploiting Knowledge and Information:

-       Has a basic awareness of KIM principles, tools, techniques and processes.
-       Operates KIM practices and procedures in accordance with instructions and knows when to seek more specialist support.
-       Recognises the importance of maintaining information quality and integrity and understands how system design can affect this.
-       Recognises the benefits of collaborative working; understands the nature of tools that support collaboration (including social media) and the impact of design and architectural decisions on their effectiveness.
-       Has a basic awareness of the organisation's knowledge and information resources and how the business uses them.

2.   Acquiring, Managing and Organising Knowledge and Information

-       Has a basic understanding of the different business requirements for protecting information and how access control is implemented within the organisation. Applies the appropriate standards and policies for handling, storing, disseminating and preserving information that they handle or process.
-       Has a basic understanding of the need to manage information throughout its lifecycle and how systems can implement lifecycle management. Applies retention and disposal principles to own information.
-       Has a basic understanding of good KIM principles and ensures that own information is made available and used.

3.   Information Governance

-       Has a basic awareness of relevant Information Governance legislation, policy and standards, e.g. understands basic Data Protection Act (DPA) principles and how they apply to own information.
-       Operates Information Governance practices and procedures, in accordance with instructions, and knows when to seek more specialist support, e.g. seeks guidance and/or support from a specialist colleague if information is required to be shared with a party but there is no identifiable legal mechanism.
-       Identifies discrepancies in Information Management policy or updates required, and brings such matters to the attention of the policy and/or service owners.

Practitioner Level (EO/HEO)

1.   Using, evaluating and Exploiting Knowledge and Information:

-       Applies KIM good practice and standards.
-       Understands the range and scope of the organisation's KIM resources and how the business uses them.

- Has good awareness of how to support information and knowledge flows across the organisation.
- Contributes to the development of Information Handling Models (IHMs) to ensure coherent and effective use and exploitation of information, and to enable effective collaboration.
- Works with stakeholders to identify information skills gaps and explores whether improvements to Information Architecture could make it easier for users to manage and exploit information, so lowering the requirement for users to develop specialist skills.

2.   Acquiring, Managing and Organising Knowledge and Information

- Applies KIM good practice and standards.
- Understands the different business requirements for protecting information and contributes to the development of IHMs to achieve appropriate protection for information, while ensuring it can be exploited appropriately.
- Understands the need to manage information throughout its lifecycle and contributes to the development of IHMs to implement agreed retention and disposal policies.
- Applies good KIM principles to manage and organise knowledge and information so that it can be made available and used.

3.   Information Governance

- Applies Information Governance good practice and standards.
- Has a good understanding of the relevant policy and legislative framework, and ensures that IHMs are in accordance with the requirements of the relevant compliance regime.
- Understands when, where and how to seek legal or specialist advice.
- Works with stakeholders to identify Information Governance skills gaps and explores and/or implements improvements to Information Architecture/IHMs to meet these needs.
- Identifies when IHMs or Information Architecture principles need to be established, updated or retired, in line with internal and external changes to policy or technology.
- Develops IHMs that take into account the organisation's risk management approach.

Leader Level (SEO/Grade 7 and equivalent)

1.   Using, evaluating and Exploiting Knowledge and Information:

- Identifies opportunities in cases where KIM is a key stakeholder.
- Develops the right architecture to ensure KIM can be integrated into strategic decision-making across the business.
- Exploits opportunities for the organisation to derive maximum benefit from its knowledge and information.

-        Develops and champions information handling models (IHMs) and Information Architecture principles to implement best practice in using, sharing and exploiting knowledge and information.
-        Manages, leads or facilitates improvements to KIM-related systems for the benefit of the business.

2.   Acquiring, Managing and Organising Knowledge and Information

-        Develops appropriate KIM and lifecycle IHMs and strategies, in line with the relevant legal and policy framework.
-        Develops innovative approaches for acquiring, maintaining and managing knowledge and information.
-        Ensures continuity of access to KIM resources, through technological and organisational change.
-        Defines the Information Architecture for the organisation.

3.   Information Governance

-        Develops IHMs that address the KIM aspects of knowledge and information quality; risk and handling; and contributes technical expertise to policy development on such matters.
-        Balances and mitigates different KIM risks in accordance with organisational approaches and strategies.
-        Monitors, promotes and improves the effectiveness of systems/infrastructure in implementing the relevant compliance regime.
-        Identifies gaps and has awareness of overlaps between different compliance regimes, and manages any residual risks or competing requirements.
-        Collaborates with Information Asset Owners (IAOs) and other stakeholders to ensure technology complies with the appropriate Information Governance regime

Senior Leader Level (Grade 6 and above)

1.   Using, evaluating and Exploiting Knowledge and Information:

-        Responsible for maximising KIM improvement for the entire organisation.
-        Leads on the design of KIM technical capability within the team and across the organisation.
-        Influences organisational strategy to ensure that KIM is sufficiently recognised, valued and resourced in technology delivery.
-        Advocates KIM and ensures the Profession is visible, both within government and across the wider KIM community.
-        Identifies relevance of KIM to cross-government initiatives and champions the use of KIM skills in other environments and within other professions.
-        Ensures KIM is considered as part of the strategic planning for technical delivery and change.

2.   Acquiring, Managing and Organising Knowledge and Information

-       Recognised as the visible authority within the organisation for managing and organising information.
-       Develops and communicates the strategic direction for acquiring, maintaining and managing knowledge and information.
-       Drives continuous improvement in the acquisition or development of KIM tools or technologies.
-       Ensures that Information Architecture principles are communicated and integrated across the business.
-       Drives efficiencies through effective architecture or use of technology.

3.   Information Governance

-       Identifies and develops appropriate Information Governance structures in conjunction with stakeholders and ensures there is accountability for information risks and issues and these are fully visible.
-       Ensures the appropriate internal governance and policies are in place to support compliance with relevant regimes.
-       Drives alignment with wider organisational, Civil Service and external governance, to enable full visibility and prioritisation of information risks and issues.