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Enterprise Architecture as a Way of Synchronizing Enterprise Resource Planning Systems and Business Processes

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Abstract:

A major question for contemporary organizations is how to support business processes with ICT. One way to do so is by the adoption of a standardized software package such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems. However, this demands that either the system is adjusted to existing business processes or that the business processes are adjusted to the system's inherited processes, often described as an alignment problem. This paper suggests that instead of alignment, organization-technology synchronization would be better, since an organization's business processes as well as the technology used is continuously evolving. The question is then how synchronization could be achieved and if any tools exist that could support this. Our suggestion is that enterprise architecture (EA) could be seen as a tool to increase organization-technology synchronization. We investigated a role based approach for developing ERP systems and analyze how it is related to EA approaches. The conclusion from this is that EA definitely could be a way of supporting synchronization. However, more research is needed to support the statement.