NSIF™ | NON-SURVIVOR INTEGRATION FRAMEWORK

Your Architecture Strategy Is Built on Survivors.

Here's What That's Costing You.

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Every major transformation program your organization has ever funded produced two kinds of evidence. The first kind, delivered platforms, successful migrations, programs that completed, is documented in your enterprise architecture repository, cited in investment cases, and used to train your practitioners. The second kind, cancelled programs, deprecated systems, strategic bets that never scaled, vanished without a trace.

Your current transformation strategy is built entirely on the first kind of evidence. That is survivorship bias operating at organizational scale, and it is a structural flaw in how organizations govern enterprise architecture and business architecture investment decisions.

The Numbers Make the Flaw Visible

This is not a marginal problem. McKinsey found that 45% of large-scale IT projects fail outright. Gartner reports that 75% of enterprise software projects miss their original business objectives within three years. Capgemini found that 67% of digital transformations never scale beyond pilot. These are majority-failure domains. The reference architectures, benchmarks, and investment base rates your organization uses were drawn from the programs that completed, a minority of the full population.

> *The investment case built on survivor-only data is not conservative. It is structurally overconfident.*

What NSIF Is

The Non-Survivor Integration Framework™ (NSIF) is an original methodology created by Samuel Holcman that corrects this flaw systematically. NSIF integrates non-survivor data, the accumulated evidence from failed initiatives, deprecated systems, and abandoned programs, back into the architectural record, the investment governance process, the portfolio review cycle, and the enterprise architecture and business architecture talent framework.

The conceptual anchor is Abraham Wald's World War II insight: military analysts were reinforcing planes based on bullet-hole patterns observed on returning aircraft. Wald identified the error, the planes being examined were the ones that made it back. The armor was needed where the returning planes showed no damage, because hits in those locations had prevented return. NSIF applies this logic to enterprise architecture and business architecture at organizational scale.

The Four Domains

Data Archaeology reconstructs the architecture graveyard, the full inventory of failed initiatives, deprecated systems, and abandoned strategic programs. The outputs are a Non-Survivor Registry and Architectural Closure Records. For most organizations with a seven-to-ten-year window, this surfaces three to five major programs that were cancelled without documentation, each carrying directly applicable lessons for current investments.

Structural Correction recalibrates investment cases and risk models using full-population data. Every business case your enterprise architecture and business architecture teams produce contains embedded base rates. Structural correction identifies which rates are survivor-derived,

sources the full-population counterparts, and presents corrected risk profiles to investment committees before commitment.

Governance Integration embeds non-survivor signals into ongoing portfolio processes through three mechanisms: failure-inclusive portfolio reviews; pre-mortem mandates that make structured failure-reasoning a governance checkpoint; and Architectural Closure Protocols that ensure every program termination produces a closure record going forward.

Talent Calibration introduces failure literacy as a formal competency within enterprise architecture and business architecture programs. EACOE enterprise architecture and BACOE business architecture embed failure-pattern recognition, pre-mortem methodology, and cognitive bias management as core competency requirements, a direct correction of the gap in committee-driven, franchise-based framework curricula.

The Executive Decision

The implementation path for NSIF begins with a single data archaeology exercise: a structured retrospective covering the last seven to ten years of enterprise architecture and business architecture programs, producing a Non-Survivor Registry and the first set of Architectural Closure Records. This is not a multi-year program. It is a decision to treat failure evidence as organizational intelligence, which it is.

The organizations that build failure evidence into their decision-making infrastructure gain a compounding information advantage. Their investment cases are calibrated to actual population-level performance data. Their governance processes surface failure signals before those signals produce catastrophic outcomes. Their practitioners can navigate the conditions that precede failure, not just the conditions that preceded past success.

> *The graveyard your organization has accumulated is not a liability to be concealed. It is the most underutilized strategic evidence base in your portfolio. NSIF is the methodology for putting it to work.*

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Practitioner-built, evidence-based programs for enterprise architecture and business architecture.