

Nugget Systems Architect Activities

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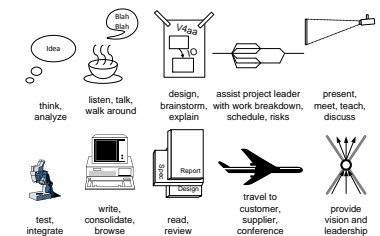
Abstract

The role of the system architect is described from the activities viewpoints. This description shows the inherent tension in this role: a small set of hard deliverables, covering a fuzzy set of responsibilities, hiding an enormous amount of barely visible day-to-day work.

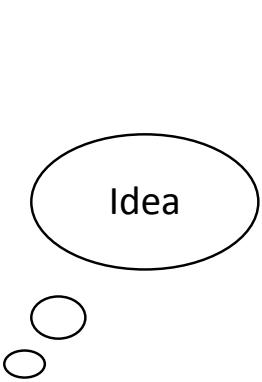
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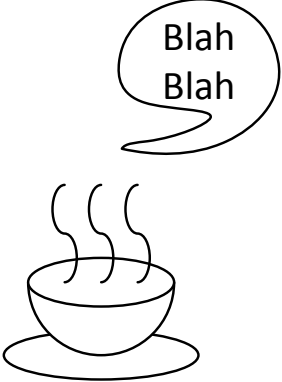
August 16, 2025
status: concept
version: 0



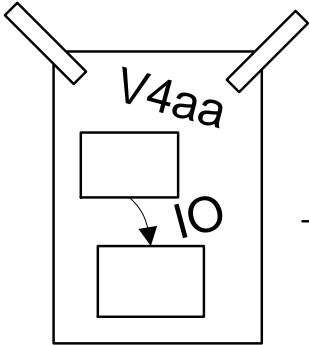
What does the System Architect do?



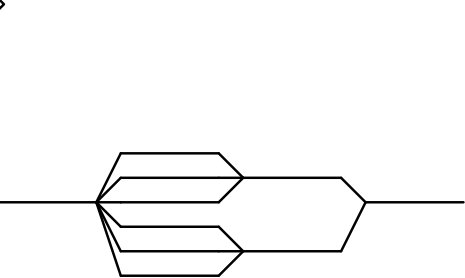
think,
analyze



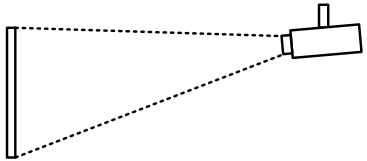
listen, talk,
walk around



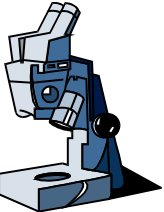
design,
brainstorm,
explain



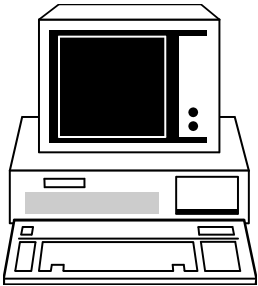
assist project leader
with work breakdown,
schedule, risks



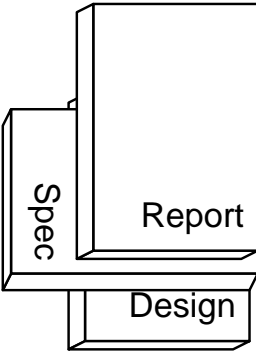
present,
meet, teach,
discuss



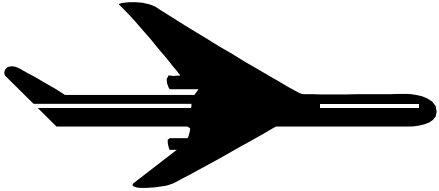
test,
integrate



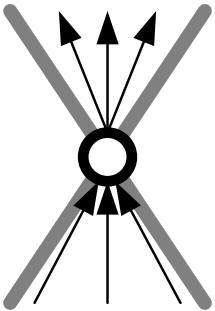
write,
consolidate,
browse



read,
review



travel to
customer,
supplier,
conference



provide
vision and
leadership

From Detail to Overview

	Quantity per year (order-of- magnitude)	architect time per item
consolidation in deliverables	10	100 h
meetings	10 ²	1 h
informal contacts	10 ⁴	0.5 – 10 min
sampling scanning	10 ⁵ – 10 ⁶	0.1 – 1 sec
product details	10 ⁷ – 10 ¹⁰	
real-world facts	infinite	

Visible Output versus Invisible Work

