

Overview of OMG Business Motivation Model: Core Concepts

Introduction

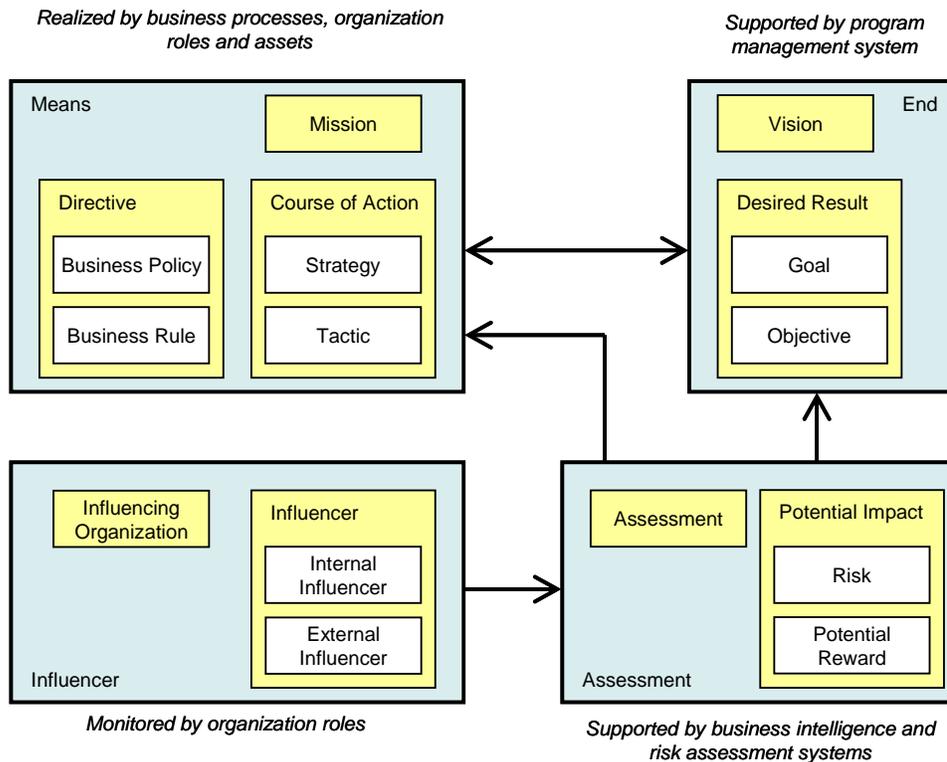
The Business Motivation Model (BMM) is an OMG Specification (www.omg.org/spec/BMM/1.0/PDF) for support of business decisions about how to react to a changing world. An enterprise would use it by acquiring a BMM-compliant tool and then creating its own BMM - populating the model with business information specific to the enterprise. There are two broad purposes:

- To capture decisions about reaction to change and the rationale for making them, with the intent of making them shareable, increasing clarity and improving decision-making by learning from experience.
- To reference the outcomes of the decisions to their effect on the operational business (e.g. changes made to business processes and organization responsibilities), providing traceability from influencer to operational change.

The specification assumes that an enterprise BMM will stand alone, connected to the relevant parts of the operational business by 'placeholders' - text references¹, which might include URIs.

Core Concepts

The BMM provides support in four areas, as illustrated in the diagram below:



The BMM is methodology-neutral, but a decision-making cycle is assumed:

- Influencers that can cause changes that might affect the enterprise are monitored;
- Changes that appear significant are assessed, taking account of relevant earlier assessments and decisions and the effects of related influencers;
- Decisions are represented in Ends (which define what the enterprise has decided it wants to be) and Means (which define what the enterprise has decided it needs to do in order to achieve its ends).

Influencers, assessments, and changes to ends and means are recorded in the enterprise's BMM. Entries for ends and means include references to those parts of the operational business that are affected.

¹ Tool vendors could include BMM in an integrated platform with a common repository, so that references to operational systems can be direct links. At least one (www.knowgravity.com) has chosen to do this.

Influencers

An influencer is something that an enterprise decides might affect it. There are two broad types:

- Internal Influencer: from within the enterprise (e.g. resource quality, infrastructure, habit).
- External Influencer: from outside the enterprise (e.g. customer, regulation, competition).

Influencers may (or may not) originate from recognized influencing organizations, such as regulators or competitors.

Assessments

When an influencer causes a significant change, the enterprise makes an assessment of its impact, identifying risks and potential rewards. There may be multiple assessments, perhaps from different stakeholders.

Assessments take account of relevant earlier assessments and decisions recorded in the BMM, and of other influencers related to the one causing the change. Assessments are supported by whatever business intelligence and risk analysis systems the enterprise has; the BMM entry for an assessment includes references to the detail that supports it – reports, studies, simulations, etc. – rather than containing the detail itself

The outcomes of an assessment are decisions about ends and means.

Ends

Ends define what an enterprise wants to be – the states it desires to be in. There are three levels:

- Vision (optional): an easily-understood summary of what the enterprise considers itself to be, or aspires to be. All objectives and goals should support (or, at least, not contradict) the vision.
- Desired Results:
 - Goal: an enterprise state or condition to be maintained or approached in the medium to long term, e.g. “To be one of the top three suppliers (by turnover) in our market”.
 - Objective: a measurable, time-targeted step towards one or more goals, e.g. “To increase year-on-year turnover by 2% in the current financial year”. Required or expected values of key performance indicators are recorded as objectives, although not all objectives are based on key performance indicators.

Desired results are supported by whatever progress management system the enterprise has. The BMM entry for a desired result includes references to the detail that supports it, rather than containing the detail itself.

Means

Means define what an enterprise has decided it needs to do to achieve its ends. There are three kinds:

- Mission (optional): the enterprise’s primary activity. How it is carried out is defined in its courses of action.
- Course of Action: defines what the enterprise will do in support of one or more of its goals. There are two kinds:
 - Strategy: a major part of the plan to accomplish the mission, usually long-term and with a significant impact on how the business operates, e.g. “Focus on repeat business from corporate customers”
 - Tactic: a course of action that supports one or more strategies - narrower in scope than a strategy and may be short-term. For example, “Provide personal incentives for corporate bookings”.

There is no hard and fast distinction between strategy and tactic; it will vary from enterprise to enterprise.

A BMM entry for a course of action provides a summary description of the course of action, plus references to the detail of the operational business - business processes, responsibilities assigned to organization roles, deployment of assets and resources, etc. – where the course of action is realized.

- Directive: governs what courses of action can and should be adopted, and how they must or may be realized:
 - Business policy: a broad directive that needs further interpretation (in business rules) in order to be put into practice, e.g. “Loans must be repayable”. Business policies may be documented in an enterprise BMM, or in a separate policy management system.
 - Business rule: reference to a rule in the operational business, e.g. “A home mortgage must not be for more than 4 x the borrower’s salary”. Business rules make business policies practicable, and guide business processes.

Scope

The scope of an enterprise BMM may be the entire enterprise, or an organization unit within it. Higher-level organization units may appear to lower level units as influencing organizations, outside the ‘enterprise’ boundary, and their directives may have the status of regulations.

An enterprise BMM does not have to represent the entire enterprise. A stakeholder can create a BMM of a partial view, referencing only those parts of the business that are relevant to his/her responsibilities and decision-making authority.