Motivational concepts are used to model the motivations, or reasons, that underlie the design or change of some enterprise architecture. These motivations influence, guide, and constrain the design.

It is essential to understand the factors, often referred to as drivers, which influence the motivational elements. They can originate from either inside or outside the enterprise. Internal drivers, also called concerns, are associated with stakeholders, which can be some individual human being or some group of human beings, such as a project team, enterprise, or society. Examples of such internal drivers are customer satisfaction, compliance to legislation, or profitability. It is common for enterprises to undertake an assessment of these drivers;

The actual motivations are represented by goals, principles, requirements, and constraints. Goals represent some desired result – or end – that a stakeholder wants to achieve; e.g., increasing customer satisfaction by 10%. Principles and requirements represent desired properties of solutions – or means – to realize the goals. Principles are normative guidelines that guide the design of all possible solutions in a given context. For example, the principle “Data should be stored only once” represents a means to achieve the goal of “Data consistency” and applies to all possible designs of the organization’s architecture. Requirements represent formal statements of need, expressed by stakeholders, which must be met by the architecture or solutions. For example, the requirement “Use a single CRM system” conforms to the aforementioned principle by applying it to the current organization’s architecture in the context of the management of customer data.