

Implementing ITIL

ITIL® 4

Considerations



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Introduction

This document focuses on considerations when implementing ITIL® best practice for IT service management (ITSM) with a view of improving service quality.

Firstly,

- Service quality is paramount to the success and survival of every business enterprise therefore, becomes the fibre of business strategy.
- ITSM cannot have a strategy that stands on its own when it is part of business strategy therefore, business strategy cascades into ITSM strategy.
- In view that Information and digital technology underpins almost all business activities today means ITSM becomes an essential component of every business.

Secondly, with service quality and implementing ITIL best practice in mind, this document considers,

- Approaches to minimising the risk of reverting back to old working ways following implementation.
- How an organisation's existing resources can be optimised during such an initiative.

Thirdly, This document proposes business solutions based on aspects such as:

- Introducing servant leaders
- Introducing a service management office (SMO)
- Adopting an internal certification scheme
- Managing resistance to such cultural change
- Introducing ITIL certification training

The solutions proposed have not been simply copied and pasted from the ITIL textbook, albeit many principles and definitions are indeed ITIL based however, this document has been composed by Trevor Wilson of ITSM Assist Limited (an Axelos®/PropleCert® accredited ITIL trainer, and an experienced IT service manager in the workplace). Those who would like further information or clarification about the contents of this document can contact Trevor directly at: twilson@itsmassist.com

Finally, this document has been divided into sections for ease of reference and understanding, and introduces a fictitious scenario in order to form a basis to prompt considerations when looking to implement best practices.

Scenario

Please note: The scenario created throughout this document is based on a persona, e.g., a fictitious company to help with clarity and understanding regarding the considerations proposed.

Goal: To promote a culture of collaborative working organisation-wide with a view of improving service efficiency, and in turn customer and user experience.

Objectives: Improve **service quality**
Adopt a **service mindset** organisation-wide
Ensure the consumer has total **trust** in everything we do

Service quality

Services are end-to-end' and quality' is defined as consistency.

Achieving high levels of service quality requires a culture of likeminded employees working in collaboration. This means teams and/or individuals must apply their respective specialisms in collaboration with other teams/individuals, not in parts (i.e., we need to eliminate a culture of siloed working).

Specialisms represent the various components that make-up a service (i.e., the customer journey end-to-end), such as:

Programming - database design and creation - network and infrastructure management - technical design and restoration - business analysis - project management - risk management - security management - and more.

Everyone regardless of their specialism should adopt an end-to-end service mindset.

If we are to focus on service flow in terms of efficiency, transparency, integration, modification, improvement, and speed and direction then All specialisms must operate in collaboration as part of the same value stream.

Service mindset

A service mindset is defined as a component of the organisational culture that defines an organisation's behaviour in service relationships. A service mindset includes the shared values and guiding principles adopted and followed by an organisation.

Trust

Gaining trust requires commitment, capability, and consistency (collectively).

Comment: Both audit and measurement are dependent on visibility and definition. Decisions can only be made on visible data, if we cannot define something then we cannot control it, and if we cannot control something then we cannot measure it!

Situation Analysis

Where are we now?

(Objective) **Improve service quality:** Whilst there is evidence of degrees of consistency through cooperation within teams, there is no compelling evidence of collaboration between these teams.

(Objective) **Adopt a service mindset organisation-wide:** There is no evidence of a culture that promotes shared service values organisation-wide therefore, resulting in disproportionate behaviour, disproportionate understanding, and disproportionate awareness and appreciation.

Whilst an environment of cultural diversity is encouraged, i.e., appreciating that society is made up of different groups of people who have different interests, skills, and competencies, etc., one cultural component that is lacking organisation wide is a 'service mindset.'

For example,

- An overall awareness and understanding of the various components and stages making-up each service (end-to-end) is inconsistent within the organisation.
- Various teams are using their preferred best practice methodologies such as PRINCE2, Scrum, DevOps and Agile etc., as competing alternatives, when in fact these are not competing alternatives. All relevant aspects that are meaningful to the organisation should be integrated as part of the organisation's own internal branded ITSM framework.
- In fact, there is no evidence of a defined ITSM framework in-house. Various teams are simply mimicking the textbook from their preferred methodology, some which provide service efficiency and others not. In fact, some methodologies adopted within one team would benefit other teams, but such other teams are unaware of these methodologies. For example, without such a defined framework we see one team using 'Kanban boards' when other teams would equally benefit from the use of Kanban boards. Furthermore, some teams share dependencies therefore, sharing the same Kanban board would be extremely advantageous, such as making visible waiting times, bottlenecks, work in progress (WIP), waste, and where excess or insufficient capacity exists etc.
- There are no guiding principles to help teams/individuals benefit from expert knowledge that exists or has previously existed within the organisation, thus supporting the company's brand and philosophy through adopting a consistent approach towards managing initiatives, particularly those initiatives which occur infrequently.
- There is no company glossary to support consistency in terms of definition and understanding and not to mention, to help onboarding new starters.

(Objective) **Ensure the consumer has total trust in everything we do:** This is also disproportionate throughout the organisation. Recent consumer interviews and feedback demonstrated that trust and peace of mind is secured purely on specific individuals executing activities?

For example,

- The same activity can be executed by one individual in a completely different manner and approach to another individual. Therefore, customer experience (CX) and user experience (UX) vary across the organisation. In some cases, this can vary so significantly the business can become compromised resulting in lost revenue opportunities.

Where do we want to be?

To achieve the objectives outlined the following success factors have been identified which should be open to audit and measurement. For clarification, success factors or otherwise sometimes referred to as critical success factors (CSFs) are essential components or conditions that ensure success.

Success factor 1

Establishing a service mindset. The most cost-efficient approach is for all personnel to undertake ITIL® foundation level certification training as a minimum. This will quickly and effectively introduce a consistent approach to the terminology adopted across the organisation, and an appreciation of ITSM best practice principles with a view of supporting a service mindset organisation wide.

Success factor 2

Establishing strong ITSM advocates. In order to achieve this objective, it is proposed to introduce Servant Leaders (not Managers). Following the aforementioned ITIL foundation certification training program, it is recommended to identify individuals who will assume the role of Servant Leader (see key attributes below). It is also recommended to introduce servant leaders in numbers proportionate to the organisation. This approach will quickly gain traction and popularity and in turn overcome any resistance to such a cultural change.

Key points/attributes of servant leaders:

- Servant leaders become the glue' which bond collaborative thinking and working. Typically, a servant leader is not a full-time role however, when in a servant leader role, servant leaders think and act organisation wide, not just in the interest of the team which they represent.
- Servant leaders become the central point of contact regarding a particular ITSM topic area and by default are dedicated, committed, and passionate about their topic area. Servant leaders educate and facilitate, and above all servant leaders promote the qualities that people bond with and become comfortable expressing themselves. Servant leaders in comparison are like members of parliament.
- Servant leaders are not managers, albeit a manager can also be a servant leader however, these are clearly two separate roles. Servant leaders are not police officers or inspectors, unlike managers, servant leaders do not promote hierarchical power. In simple terms, in a servant leader role, when a manager walks into a room, they should leave their manager title/status outside the room.
- Servant leaders will use the textbook as guidance but transform such explicit knowledge into context and meaning to the business.

Success factor 3

Establishing a Service Management Office (SMO). This will establish a custodianship of ITSM principles, methodologies, and practices (like a parliament for ITSM). Typically, the SMO is a virtual office made up of ITSM servant leaders.

Two key benefits of the SMO:

Those various techniques, methodologies, principles, and practices adopted by specific teams within the organisation which at present appear to be exclusive to these teams will be:

1. Captured by the SMO and where relevant, replicated to many teams within the organisation, and where appropriate shared accordingly.
2. The property of the organisation and not the sole property of teams/individuals.

Success factor 4

Establishing clear communication channels and development paths. In simple terms, the reason students take an ITIL® exam is to **communicate** back to the examination institute (EI) that they have understood the topic and to use as a marker for further **development**. Upon satisfying the EI that such topics have been understood the EI acknowledges this by the way of issuing certifications recognised world-wide.

So, introducing an internal (in-house) branded certification scheme customised to be meaningful, with direct context and relevancy to the business organisation, will **communicate** back to management that practitioners (ITSM workers) understand their role in the context of expectation, and the required outputs and expected outcomes. Furthermore, this will in turn act as a marker for further **development** in the interest of both the business and individuals.

Considerations

The points raised within this document relate to culture, which many initiatives fail to recognise and therefore, result in the expected values not being fully realised.

Simply put, people make things happen, for every initiative we must always consider how we mobilise people through such transitions, we must consider leadership styles and management structures etc.,

In summary, we must visit our operational capability, e.g., four dimensions of service management:

- Organisations and people
- Information and technology
- Partners and suppliers
- Value streams and processes

and equally those external factors,

- Political
- Environment
- Social
- Technological
- Economic
- Legal

(PESTLE)