ITSM Assist Limited

IMPROVING SERVICE QUALITY

PROPOSED L&D SOLUTIONS

by Trevor Wilson

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Introduction

With learning and develoment (L&D) for IT service management (ITSM) in mind, this document proposal focuses on **improving service quality.**

Firstly,

- Service quality is paramount to the success and survival of every business organisation therefore, becomes a key component of every business organisation's strategy.
- L&D cannot have a strategy that stands on its own when it is part of business strategy therefore, business strategy flows into L&D strategy.
- ITSM is the fibre of every service that modern business organisations provide today therefore, L&D strategy must flow into ITSM strategy.

Secondly, with service quality in mind, this document attempts to help L&D by the way of:

- Improving awareness and appreciation of ITSM concepts.
- Offering approaches to how L&D can help an organisaton implement ITIL® best practice principles without reverting back to old working ways.
- Providing L&D with suggestions to how an organisation can optimise an organisation's resources.

Thirdly, This document is comprehensive and proposes genuine solutions based on aspects such as:

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

This document also incorporates financial details therefore, if this document is to be considered as an actual proposal, it should be acknowledged that the contents of this document may need degrees of customisation and refinment to meet specific requirements, and may be subject to pricing updates.

The solutions proposed within this document have not been taken from the ITIL textbook, albeit many principles and defintions are indeed ITIL based however, this document has been composed by Trevor Wilson (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.

Vision/Goals

Vision: "To provide a portfolio of services that help the business to thrive by enabling all teams to work together effortlessly"

Goals: To Improve service quality
To adopt a service mindset organisation-wide
To ensure the consumer has total trust in everything we do
To make ITSM more open to audit and measurement

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 that teams and/or individuals must apply their respective specialisms in collaboration with other teams/individuals (specialisms), not in parts (i.e., with a siloed mindset).

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
- networks 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).

Audit and measurement

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!

Where are we now?

Situation analysis

(Goal) **To improve service quality:** Whilst there is evidence of degrees of consistency through cooperation within teams, there is no strong evidence of collaboration between these teams.

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

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. The most 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 these 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 within the organisation to support a consistent approach towards managing initiatives, particularly those initiatives which occur infrequently.

(Goal) **To 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 the specific individual executing the activity?

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.

(Goal) **To make ITSM more open to audit and measurement:** There is no evidence to suggest that workflow and work in progress (WIP) is made sufficiently visible. In addition, there is equally no evidence of regular internal audit for maturity assessment, or measurements that align with strategy and identify opportunities for improvement. Most improvements are implemented due to reacting to failures (e.g., applying corrective resolutions).

Where do we want to be?

Situation analysis

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

In addition, it is equally important that such a culture focuses on consistency, capability, and commitment, thus promoting services that our consumers trust. This means the manner in the way our services are constructed and executed should be open to audit and measurement, and subject to continual improvement. It is vital that the organisation does not revert-back to old working ways therefore, the proposed culture must be firmly embedded into the organisation. For these reasons, the following success factors have been identified.

Success factor 1: ITIL® 4 Certification Training

Establishing a service mindset. The most cost-efficient approach is for all personnel to undertake ITIL® 4 foundation level certification training as a minimum. This will quickly and effectively introduce a terminology and an appreciation of ITSM best practice principles to support a service mindset organisation wide.

Success factor 2: Servant leaders

Establishing strong ITSM advocators recognised as 'servant leaders' (not managers).

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 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 tacit knowledge that is in context and meaning to the business.

Success factor 3: Service management office (SMO)

Establishing a custodianship of ITSM principles, methodologies, and practices. The most effective and sustainable solution is to introduce a SMO to become the custodian of ITSM on behalf of the organisation, 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: In-house certification scheme

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. Upon satisfying the EI that such topics have been understood, the EI acknowledges this by the way of issuing certifications recognised world-wide. So, by 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 those practitioners (ITSM workers) understand their role in the context of expectation, and the required outputs and expected outcomes.

ITIL®

ITIL will become one of the primary methodologies that underpin the SMO, simply because ITIL represents the one aspect that is common to everyone regardless of their specialisms, this being a representation of **services end-to-end**. This does not mean the SMO will only have a presence of ITIL, far from it, however ITIL is the one common thread between all teams and individuals, representing the reason an organisation exists, which is to co-create value, and in turn directly and/or indirectly generate commercial revenue, or manage public based funding accordingly.

ITIL is a world-wide de-facto standard in IT service management (ITSM), there is no other comparable. ITIL focuses on services end-end' and embraces various specialist techniques and methodologies such as Agile, Lean and DevOps etc., So, to promote a service mindset the adoption and adaptation of ITIL principles should be one of core fibers of every organisation, team and individual.

How do we get there?

- **Objective 1:** Get as many people as possible through ITIL® Foundation level certification
  This is with a view of quickly and effectively forming the building blocks to create a service mindset that is consistent across the organisation.

- **Objective 2:** Introduce (where appropriate, infiltrate) 'servant leaders' into the organisation
  This is with a view of embedding the desired culture organisation wide. This approach will introduce a robust force (and where appropriate in numbers) that will quickly gain traction and popularity, thus converting and overcoming any resistance and not to mention, reinforce the message organisation-wide. Equally, this approach will ensure that all aspects are open to audit and measurement and in turn, subject to continual improvement.

- **Objective 3:** Form a service management office (SMO)
  This is with a view of establishing a custodian of ITSM practices and principles on behalf of the organisation.

- **Objective 4:** Introduce an internal (in-house) ITSM certification scheme
  This is with a view of establishing clear communication and development paths between practitioners and management.

Objective 1: ITIL® certification training

Situation analysis

To get as many people as possible through ITIL® Foundation level certification is vital to underpin this objective by the very nature that the concepts, principles, methodologies, and practices promote an end-to-end service mindset common to all teams and /or individuals.

When we consider undertaking ITIL® certification training the table below highlights five typical elements that can either become attractors or detractors depending on which viewpoint is taken, e.g., a business view or the view of an employee?

These typical elements represent those seen as values (v) and those seen as investments (i).

Typical elements	**For this exercise these are defined as:**
Best practice principles (v)	Improving end-to-end ITSM service efficiency
Improved capability (v)	Both personal and workplace capabilities
Certification (v)	Personal achievement/industry recognition
Study time (i)	The time spent away from the workplace while studying
Sponsorship (i)	Financial approval
Company branding (v)	Increasing the number of likeminded employees. This helps remove competing objectives and promotes collaborative working.

Business perspective

We can see from the table below, that the two **detractors** both relate to investment elements, comprising of "Study time" due to the impact on the business through being absent from the workplace while studying, and "Sponsorship" resulting from both direct and indirect costs.

This is clearly understandable as there is no benefit from a business perspective to increase such investments without securing a tangible return on investment (ROI), or a clear measure of value on investment (VOI).

	High Attractor	Medium Attractor	Detractor
Best practice principles (v)	✔		
Improved capability (v)	✔		
Certification (v)		✔	
Study time (i)			✔
Sponsorship (i)			✔
Company branding (v)	✔		
Score	3	1	2

Employee perspective

We can see from the table below that there are no detractors. However, the two investment elements ("Study time" and "Sponsorship") which the business see as detractors' conflict with the employee perspective. The employee perspective sees these elements at the opposite end, they see these as **high attractors.**

This is understandable in view that most employees are unable to self-fund such training and therefore, are totally dependent on the business to fund such personal development opportunities. Equally, employees value being given time away from the workplace to dedicate to study time.

	High Attractor	Medium Attractor	Detractor
Best practice principles (v)	✔		
Improved capability (v)	✔		
Certification (v)	✔		
Study time (i)	✔		
Sponsorship (i)	✔		
Company branding (v)		✔	
Score	5	1	0

In summary, we can see from the two tables that there is a difference in the weighting scores.

Proposed solution

From the table below (**the business perspective**), we can see that we have **removed** all detractors by promoting "Study time" to a high attractor, and "Sponsorship" to a medium attractor. Details are justified and explained in the next section, "co-creating value."

	High Attractor	Medium Attractor	Detractor
Best practice principles (v)	✔		
Improved capability (v)	✔		
Certification (v)		✔	
Study time (i)	✔		
Sponsorship (i)		✔	
Company branding (v)	✔		
Score	4	2	0

From the table below (**the employee perspective),** we can see that we have **demoted** "Study time" from a high attractor to a medium attractor. Details are justified and explained in the next section, "co-creating value."

	High Attractor	Medium Attractor	Detractor
Best practice principles (v)	✔		
Improved capability (v)	✔		
Certification (v)	✔		
Study time (i)		✔	
Sponsorship (i)	✔		
Company branding (v)		✔	
Score	4	2	0

In summary, the two tables above show a balanced weighting score

Co-creating value?

Taking both the business and employee perspectives into account, the two investment elements ("Study time" and "Sponsorship") requires a solution that provides value for both parties. To achieve this, the following is proposed:

Study time

(ITSM Assist/Business/Employee Relationship)

If ITSM Assist contributes by supporting the business through offering more flexibility so when business demand or the nature of the business dictate, the employee can support the business by the way of electing to study in their own time. This then becomes a high attractor to the business.

Proposed service solutions

ITIL® 4 accredited certification training (all solutions include online exam + free exam resit)

	Delivery format	**Study time/schedule**
Solution 1	Online (live)	Option A: Daytime (2-3 day' courses) Option B: Evening classes (6 x weekly sessions)
Solution 2	eLearning (self-paced)	Option A: ITSM Assist hosted Option B: In-house hosted

Sponsorship

(ITSM Assist/Business Relationship)

If ITSM Assist contributes by offering an extremely cost-effective pricing model (see next page, "Financial details"), the business will then be more inclined to fund such training, and more likely to promote the element "Sponsorship" to a medium attractor. This in turn also helps the employee to retain this element as a high attractor.

<u>Co-created values:</u>

Business values gained

- Improving service efficiency through ITSM best practice
- Improved workplace capability
- Company branding through the promotion of a likeminded and collaborative organisation
- Employee satisfaction

Employee values gained

- Improving service efficiency through ITSM best practice
- Improved personal capability
- Personal achievement/industry recognition
- Being part of a likeminded collaborative organisation

Financial details

Course	Solutions	Pricing
ITIL® 4 Foundation (FND)	**Daytime** online and/or **Evening** online Duration Daytime: 2-consecutive days Evening: 6 x 3hr weekly classes.	£412.50 plus VAT, per student (inclusive of exam plus resit)
	eLearning (self-paced) Duration 12-months access	**£325 plus VAT,** per student (inclusive of exam plus resit) **Note:** for every student assigned to these courses ITSM Assist will issue a half price credit accordingly. *****See half price credits below
ITIL® 4 Create, Deliver and Support (CDS)	**Daytime** online and/or **Evening** online Daytime: 3-consecutive days Evening: 6 x 3hr weekly classes	£287.50 plus VAT per student with half price credit (inclusive of exam plus exam resit) **Normal Price:** £575 plus VAT per student (inclusive of exam plus exam resit)
ITIL® 4 Direct, Plan and Improve (DPI)	**Daytime** online and/or **Evening** online Daytime: 3-consecutive days Evening: 6 x 3hr weekly classes	£287.50 plus VAT per student with half price credit (inclusive of exam plus exam resit) **Normal Price:** £575 plus VAT per student (inclusive of exam plus exam resit)
ITIL® 4 Drive Stakeholder Value (DSV)	**Daytime** online and/or **Evening** online Daytime: 3-consecutive days Evening: 6 x 3hr weekly classes	£287.50 plus VAT per student with half price credit (inclusive of exam plus exam resit) **Normal Price:** £575 plus VAT per student (inclusive of exam plus exam resit)
ITIL® 4 High-velocity IT (HVIT)	**Daytime** online and/or **Evening** online Daytime: 3-consecutive days Evening: 6 x 3hr weekly classes	£287.50 plus VAT per student with half price credit (inclusive of exam plus exam resit) **Normal Price:** £575 plus VAT per student (inclusive of exam plus exam resit)

Notes:

Half Price Credits

i) The business will receive 1 x half price credit for each student (employee or authorised representative of the business) attending a full price ITIL® 4 Foundation (FND) online course (daytime or evening class), or eLearning (self-paced course). This will support the business to secure an extremely affordable approach to progressing elected 'servant leaders' through the ITIL certification scheme accordingly.

ii) Half price credits once issued, never expire, and can be redeemed against those eligible courses comprising of create deliver and support (CDS), direct, plan and improve (DPI), drive stakeholder value (DSV) and high-velocity IT (HVIT).

Online Courses

i) Standard daytime course durations comprise of: ITIL FND = 2-days, CDS = 3-days, DPI = 3-days DSV = 3-days and HVIT = 3-days, all which include an online exam with a free exam resit (retake).

ii) Evening class program durations all comprise of 6 x 3hr weekly classes, all which include an online exam with a free exam resit (retake).

eLearning (self-paced) MP4-video Courses

i) eLearning courses provide 12-months on-demand 24x7 access, all which include online an exam with a free exam resit (retake).

ii) eLearning courses can be hosted by ITSM Assist's own learning management system (LMS) alternatively, the organisation can host internally (in-house). If hosted internally, there will be a one-off charge per course module to cover editing/upload time. Hosting internally will also require agreement/adherence the Axelos/PeopleCert policy regarding student examinations.

Conclusion

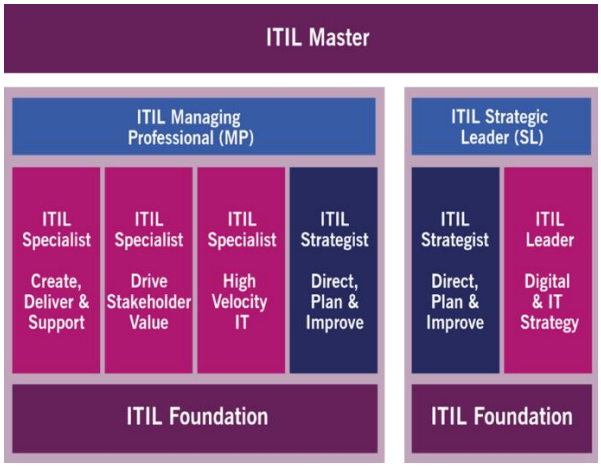
The flexibility offered along with the pricing models proposed will enable L&D:

- Form a credible strategy based on both business and personal development for ITSM
- Help the business introduce a culture which promotes a service mindset across the organisation.
- Create and environment with a view of promoting servant leaders and a service management office (SMO) within the organisation.

Objective 2: Servant leader

Situation analysis

In the context of this proposal document, servant leaders can comprise of a combination of related-ITSM skills sets, recognised through representation of various organisational business segments. For example, scrum masters representing software development teams are by default servant leaders. ITIL® specialists could represent either the entire ITIL framework or in part, such as representing one or more managing professional (MP) designate modules (shown below). Alternatively, servant leaders can apply their related-ITSM skills through the recognition and representation of other business segments in the same way members of parliament represent education, transport, health, or the environment etc., on behalf of the parliamentary office.



Proposed solution

It is proposed to introduce the required number of servant leaders who demonstrate at least one or more ITIL® certifications from the ITIL 4 managing professional (MP) designate modules (e.g., CDS, DPI, DSV, HVIT). Servant leader responsibilities can be additional to a person's primary day-to-day functional responsibilities.

Financial details

The proposed half price credit initiative will contribute significantly when introducing servant leaders.

Conclusion

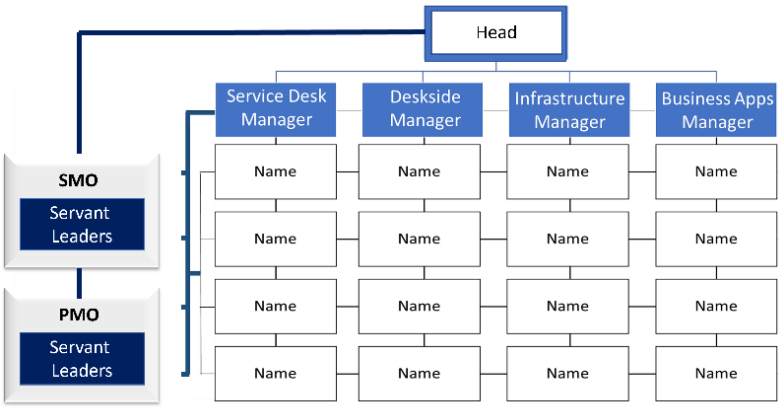
The introduction of servant leaders will help:

- Embed and institutionalise a service mindset throughout the organisation and maintaining a focus on best practice principles.
- Support the implementation of projects and other associated initiatives in a cost-efficient manner.
- ITSM become more open to audit and measurement and promote a culture of continual improvement within the organisation.

Objective 3: Service management office (SMO)

Situation analysis

The introduction of a SMO will represent custodianship and visibility of the organisation's ITSM principles, methodologies, and practices etc., The SMO will act on behalf of the organisation's governing body and capture lessons learned, new techniques and improvement initiatives and retain these as properties of the organisation. Servant leaders will report to the SMO which will be a cross-functional office representing cross-functional activities. The SMO will operate transparently with the project management office (PMO) ensuring a seamless approach to projects with minimal, if not zero duplication (see the organogram below). The PMO may also incorporate one or more related-servant leaders such as scrum masters, however the importance of ensuring a transparent relationship cannot be emphasized enough.



Proposed solution

It is proposed to introduce a SMO incorporating ITSM related-servant leaders. This typically will be a virtual office and will be sponsored by the organisation's governing body.

Financial details

Depending on the agreed design and the comprehensiveness of the SMO the only real tangible costs associated with this will relate to the formation of servant leaders.

Conclusion

The introduction of the SMO will:

- Provide a custodian of ITSM best practice principles, methodologies, and practices etc.,
- Provide visibility of the organisation's culture of a service mindset.
- Provide visible representation of the organisation's ITSM maturity

Objective 4: In-house certification scheme

Situation analysis

Introducing an internal (in-house) branded ITSM certification scheme will provide an excellent communication channel between practitioners and management. This communication channel will help practitioners verify and reinforce their understanding of definitions used, overall expectations including policies, procedures, outputs, and outcomes relevant to practitioner's specific job/role. In addition, practitioners will receive recognition following successful verification by the way of receiving an in-house branded certificate. This will contribute towards:

- Classification regarding internal career development
- Measuring improvement
- Appraisals
- Investment in people

Proposed solution

It is proposed to introduce an in-house ITSM certification scheme aimed at supporting a range of contextual meaning and relevancy related to specific service functions and responsibilities. This certification scheme will be based on a range of online exams designed to satisfy required levels of understanding. These exams can be designed in various formats such as:

- Multiple choice
- Missing words
- Written answers
- Verbal responses
- Practical responses
- and more…

Financial details

Depending on the specific requirements it may transpire degrees of ITIL® generics and in-house specifics need to be combined. In this case external help from ITSM Assist may be required. For further information, contact: twilson@itsmassist.com

Conclusion

The introduction of an in-house certification scheme will:

- Provide clarity between practitioners and management
- Support internal career development
- Support investment in people

ITSM Assist direct links

Online Daytime ITIL® 4 Certification Courses	
Foundation (FND)	https://www.itsmassist.com/fnd-online-live
Direct, Plan and Improve (DPI)	https://www.itsmassist.com/direct-plan-improve
Create, Deliver and Support (CDS)	https://www.itsmassist.com/cds-online-live
Drive Stakeholder Value (DSV)	https://www.itsmassist.com/drive-stakeholder-value
High-velocity IT (HVIT)	https://www.itsmassist.com/high-velocity-it
Managing Professional Transition (Bridge)	https://www.itsmassist.com/mpt-online-live
Online Evening Class ITIL® 4 Certification Courses	
Foundation (FND)	https://www.itsmassist.com/itil-4-fnd-evening-class
Direct, Plan and Improve (DPI)	https://www.itsmassist.com/itil-4-dpi-evening-classes
Create, Deliver and Support (CDS)	https://www.itsmassist.com/itil-4-create-deliver-support-evenings
Drive Stakeholder Value (DSV)	https://www.itsmassist.com/copy-of-itil-4-dpi-evening-classes
High-velocity IT (HVIT)	https://www.itsmassist.com/itil-4-hvit-evening-classes
eLearning (self-paced) ITIL® 4 Certification Courses	
Foundation (FND)	https://www.itsmassist.com/product-page/itil-4-foundation-e-course-online-exam
Promotional Offers	
For companies	https://www.itsmassist.com/promo-offers-for-companies
For individuals	https://www.itsmassist.com/promo-offers-for-individuals
Other	
L&D Solutions	https://www.itsmassist.com/learning-and-development
Free MP4-video learning downloads	https://www.itsmassist.com/video-downloads
Team Courses	https://www.itsmassist.com/team-course
Become An Affiliate	https://www.itsmassist.com/become-an-affiliate
Frequently Asked Questions	https://www.itsmassist.com/frequently-asked-questions
Articles	https://www.itsmassist.com/articles-itsm