

THE ITIL[®] 4 FOUR DIMENSIONS OF SERVICE MANAGEMENT





Do we really understand the ITIL® 4 four dimensions of service management?

Do we really understand the ITIL® 4 four-dimension model? I highlight this because a recent discussion suggested to me that some may not be fully appreciative of its purpose.

Let me start by providing a crude but simple explanation.

If we were to put a technical hat on, in the context of IT we would refer to the term “infrastructure” as resources such as networks and servers etc., Such resources form the highway for information to travel. With this in mind, if we put a service management hat on, then we could refer to the “four dimensions of service management” as our equivalent of the infrastructure. Meaning the elements that bring a service to life.

So, without regurgitating from the ITIL textbook.

An organisation claims to have designed and implemented the practice "Incident Management" to find that the only element which they had designed and implemented is the process or processes associated with this practice. We then wonder why the practice designed is not demonstrating the expected benefits? The primary reason is that the design is incomplete.

Let’s briefly walk-through the four-dimension model, thus taking a holistic view.

1. Organisations and people; this design failed to truly consider the roles and responsibilities, systems of authority, skills and competencies including governance. Neither had this design considered a collaborative working culture, or how work should be managed e.g., swarming if applicable?

2. Value streams and processes; Whilst this design indeed considered the process or processes in question, it failed to design the relevant value stream. Meaning, we have an absence of a visual workflow, hand-offs, and potential bottlenecks etc. E.g., what does the journey look like? All we have is a bundle of activities (processes) that have no story. Therefore, the value stream and/or processes will just develop organically on the shop floor as to speak' and remain invisible and unnoticed.

3. Partners and suppliers; This design failed to consider the interfaces (including data interfaces) with those 3rd parties and internal suppliers involved. Neither did this design consider the type of supplier relationship (e.g., basic, cooperative or partnership), nor did the design give thought to service integration and management (SIAM) - if applicable.

4. Information and technology; This design did not properly consider the relationships with the information and technology in existence, particularly in terms of results-based reporting (if feasible), or the potential of exploiting machine learning capabilities etc. Not to mention, when we look at an incident ticket for the purpose of historical information and/or referencing, all we glean from this information is the "job is fixed, customer happy"! This level of information is simply unacceptable.

Hope this provides more clarity regarding the four dimensions of service management for those who were unclear.

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