

**SERVANT LEADERS
A KEY COMPONENT WHEN
IMPLEMENTING ITIL®**





Servant Leaders - a key component when implementing ITIL®

Introduction

This document has been composed through my own personal knowledge and experience as an ITIL trainer on behalf of Axelos®/PeopleCert® combined with real-life experience. In other words, I have not simply copied and pasted from a textbook.

Situation Analysis

Those company organisations who thought that if their employees simply undertake ITIL® training the business would in turn automatically reap the benefits will have already realised that this is far from the truth.

Unless the purpose is to achieve more cosmetic and indirect business benefits then the end-result is almost likely to be disappointing, unless however, the correct infrastructure exists for those employees returning to the workplace after class.

Without the correct infrastructure and strategy, we will see short bursts of self-motivated initiatives however, these will more than often be short-lived. We will see people flirt with designing and partially implementing things in silos until the novelty eventually wears off.

Without the correct infrastructure and strategy people will 'talk the talk' but not 'walk the walk', meaning people supporting what they say with just words from the textbook without action. Equally, without the correct infrastructure and strategy those who fail their exam, may end up resenting anything to do with IT service management (ITSM) best practices.

Furthermore, without the correct infrastructure and strategy organisations will expose themselves to losing any knowledge gained in the event employees leave the company.

The issues highlighted lie with those organisations who are unable to embed and institutionalise the principles, methodologies and practices and therefore, placing the organisation with:

- A sense of failure to meet the desired results
- The realisation of the costs associated with such failures
- Questions being asked as to whether ITIL does what it claims to do?

So, how can an organisation establish the correct infrastructure and strategy and in turn, capture and maintain the principles, methodologies and practices learnt in the classroom? Whilst there are several key factors, one significant contributor falls within 'Organisations and People', particularly roles.

Firstly, we need to either redefine the term manager' to include servant leadership or differentiate managers from servant leaders. Meaning, regardless of title, seniority or executive decision-making we must introduce and promote servant leaders.

So, what is a servant leader?

In the context of IT service management (ITSM), servant leaders are strong advocators of ITSM, servant leaders are not managers. It is recommended therefore, to identify individuals to 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 any necessary cultural changes.

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, or more specifically, they become members of the service management office (SMO).

- 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

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