

Quick Reference Guide

ITIL® Framework

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David and Roderick are passionate about helping organizations understand and document their own business processes, using frameworks such as APQC's Process Classification Framework and standards such as BPMN as well as applying simple approaches to improve and simplify these business processes.

In our recently published White Paper, Quick Reference Guide: Business Process Frameworks, we outlined the main Business Process Frameworks commonly in use. In this Quick Reference Guide, we are covering the ITIL® (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) Framework.

ITIL® is arguably the most well-known and highly regarded process framework covering IT related processes. ITIL® is a reference model developed and managed by the UK Government. The owner of ITIL® is now currently listed as simply HM Government. Like several other of the frameworks we have covered, ITIL® has become the de facto standard framework for IT Service Management.

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Introducing ITIL®

Background

Like a number of the frameworks we have covered in past Quick Reference Guides, the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (or ITIL® is it is commonly known) has been around for over 20 years.

ITIL® has from its inception an initiative of various UK government agencies. It was created as a means of addressing the lack of quality of IT services procured by the UK government.

The idea behind the creation ITIL® was to lead to the significantly improved quality of service delivery while also leading to lower costs. The primary objective was to provide a set of processes and best practices that would drive both effective and efficient IT service outcomes.

Since the release of the IT Service Management publication released in 1989, it has evolved significantly from its early beginnings through 2 major and 1 minor versions, namely:

- ITIL® Version 2, released in early 2001;
- ITIL® Version 3, now called ITIL® 2007, released in 2007; and
- ITIL® 2011, released in 2011.

The first version of ITIL® grew organically over a period of about 7 years, eventually comprising of around 40 different books. The material covered in this initial version of ITIL® was rather similar to material developed by IBM, called Information Systems Management Architecture, in the 1970's and 1980's, especially in the areas of support/delivery.

ITIL® Version 2 saw these 40 plus books reshaped into a more targeted product – with nine books – explicitly bridging the gap between technology and business, and with guidance focused strongly on the processes required to deliver effective services to the business customer.ⁱ

The processes covered in these core ITIL® Version 2 books did not differ greatly from ITIL® Version 1, with only a few processes altered slightly. However the overall focus and perspective was largely much unchanged.

In May 2007, ITIL® Version 3 was released as a complete refresh of ITIL®. Overall, ITIL® Version 3 complements the processes known from ITIL® Version 2 with a significant number of new processes, while putting more emphasis on producing value for the business. However, the underlying principles of ITIL® were largely unchanged.

ITIL® Version 3, now known as ITIL® 2007, also saw the introduction of the Service lifecycle, which covers:

- Service Strategy;
- Service Design;
- Service Transition;
- Service Operation; and
- Continual Service Improvement.

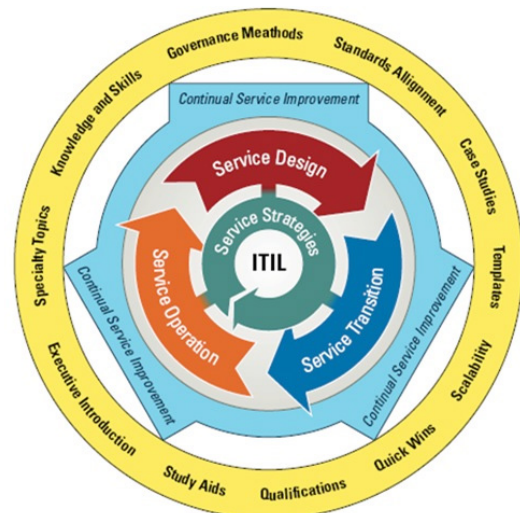


Figure 1: ITIL® 2007 (V3) Service Lifecycle

The Service Lifecycle is an approach to IT Service Management that emphasizes the importance of coordination and control across the various functions, processes and systems necessary to manage the full lifecycle of IT services. The Service Management Lifecycle approach considers the strategy, design, transition, operation and continuous improvement of IT services.

Each Service Lifecycle stage was covered in one of the set of 5 books.

ITIL® 2011 was developed to incorporate feedback received from the user and training community.

The official ITIL® Update FAQsⁱⁱ advises: *"ITIL 2011 is an update, not a new version"*.

No new concepts were added, with the overall aim of: *“resolve errors and inconsistencies in the text and diagrams across the whole suite”*.

What is ITIL®?

The Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL®) is a set of practices for IT service management (ITSM) that focuses on aligning IT services with the needs of business.

In its current form, ITIL® is published in a series of five core publications, each of which covers an ITSM lifecycle stage. ITIL® also underpins ISO/IEC 20000, the International Service Management Standard for IT service management, although differences exist between the two frameworks.

There are many reasons for why the ITIL® framework has become so successful, however 3 key reasonsⁱⁱⁱ are that it is:

- Vendor-neutral
ITIL® service management practices are applicable in any IT organization because they are not based on any particular technology platform or industry type
- Non-prescriptive
ITIL® offers robust, mature and time-tested practices that have applicability to all types of service organization.
- Best practice
ITIL® represents the learning experiences and thought leadership of the world’s best-in-class service providers.

What is Service Management?

To understand the importance and success of ITIL®, it is necessary to understand what Service Management is. But first, we need to understand what services are, and how Service Management can help service providers to deliver and manage these services^{iv}:

- Service
It is a means of delivering value to customers by facilitating outcomes that customers want to achieve without taking ownership of any risks or costs incurred. They facilitate outcomes by enhancing the performance of associated tasks and reducing the effect of constraints.
- Service Management
Service Management is a set of specialized organizational capabilities that provide value to customers in the form of services. These specialized organizational capabilities include the processes, activities, functions and roles that service providers use to enable them to deliver services to their customers. They also include the ability to organize and manage knowledge, and understand how to facilitate outcomes that create value.
- IT Service management
The implementation and management of quality IT services that meet the needs of the business.

How is ITIL® structured?

As we described earlier, the core ITIL® framework is divided into 5 volumes, each representing one of the lifecycle stages:

- Service Strategy;
- Service Design;
- Service Transition;
- Service Operation; and
- Continual Service Improvement.

Each of these volumes contains sections that provide details of:

- Principles
Describes the terminology and key principles forming the building blocks of the lifecycle stage best practice. These principles are the policies and governance aspects of the lifecycle stage that anchor the tactical processes and activities to achieving their objectives.

- **Processes**
Defines the processes and activities on which effective service transition depends and how they integrate with the other stages of the lifecycle.
- **Organizational Implications**
Identifies the organizational roles and responsibilities that are needed to manage each strategy lifecycle stage and processes. These roles are provided as guidelines and can be combined to fit into a variety of organizational structures.
- **Technology Considerations**
ITIL® service management practices gain momentum when the right type of technical automation is applied. This section provides recommendations for the use of technology for each lifecycle stage and the basic requirements a service provider will need to consider when choosing service management tools.
- **Implementation Considerations**
For organizations new to ITIL®, or those wishing to improve their maturity and service capability, this section outlines effective ways to implement each lifecycle stage.

- **Challenges, Risks and Critical Success Factors**
It is important for any organization to understand the challenges, risks and critical success factors that could influence their success. This section discusses typical examples of these for each lifecycle stage.

ITIL® Process Model in Detail

Overview

The scope of a process framework or process model is an important aspect of any process framework or model and ITIL® is no different.

ITIL® processes cover the entire IT service management lifecycle covering:

- Development of the service strategy, including the services to be offered;
- Designing the services to be offered;
- Deploying and Transitioning the services to be offered;
- Managing service operations for the service offered; and
- Ensuring that processes are as effective and efficient as possible through Continuous Process Improvement.

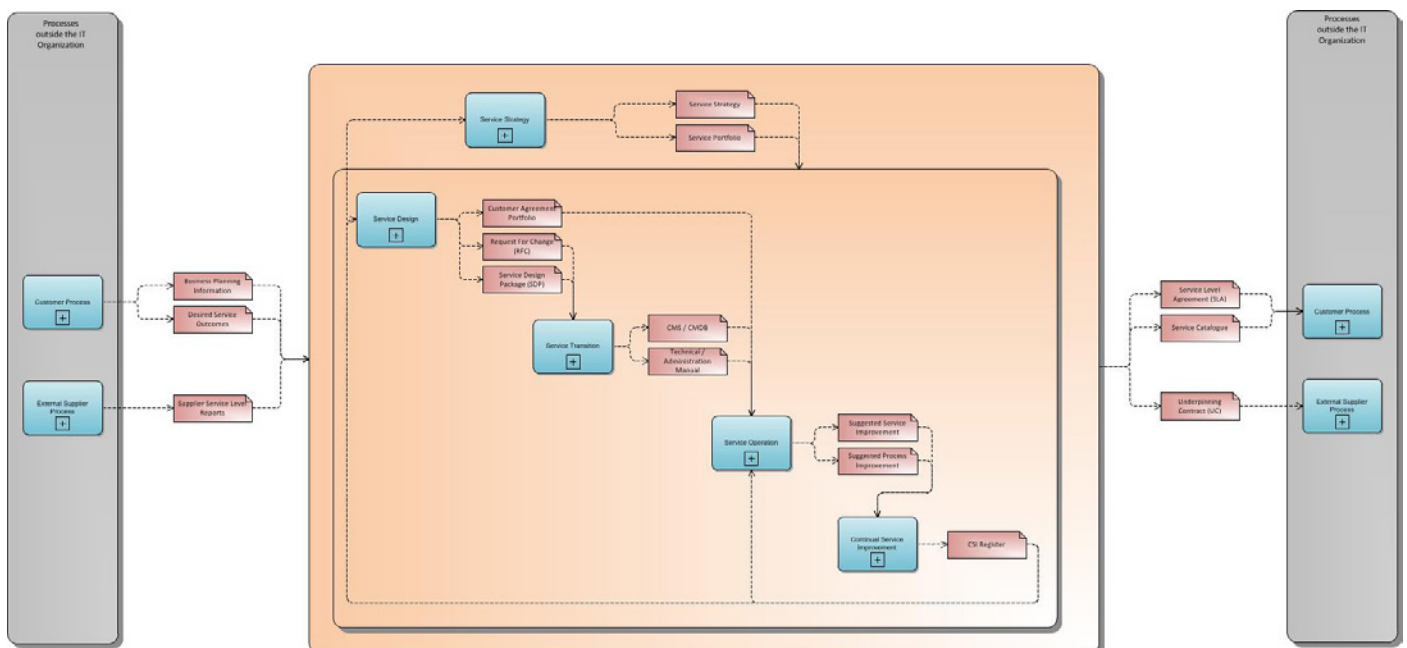


Figure 2: Overall ITIL® Structure

Service Strategy

Overview

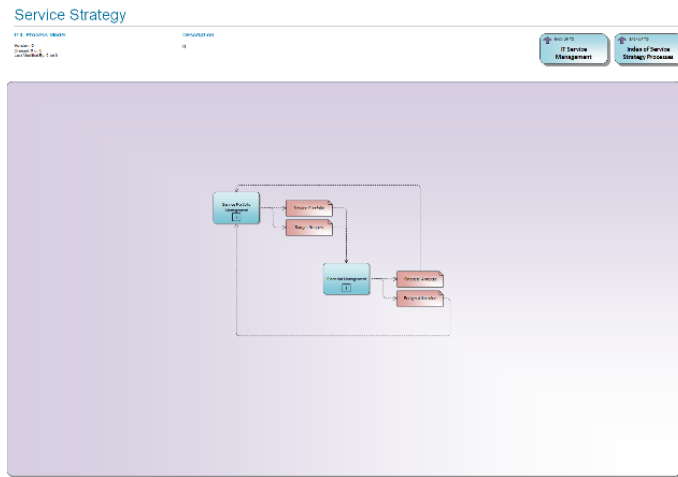


Figure 3: Service Strategy

The following definitions are provided using descriptions from the ITIL® Service Strategy book^v.

Context

At the centre of the service lifecycle is service strategy. Value creation begins here with understanding organizational objectives and customer needs. Every organizational asset including people, processes and products should support the strategy.

ITIL® Service Strategy provides guidance on how to view service management not only as an organizational capability but as a strategic asset. It describes the principles underpinning the practice of service management which are useful for developing service management policies, guidelines and processes across the ITIL® service lifecycle.

Purpose

The purpose of the service strategy stage of the service lifecycle is to define the perspective, position, plans and patterns that a service provider needs to be able to execute to meet an organization’s business outcomes.

Scope

The scope ITIL® Service Strategy starts by defining and discussing the generic principles and processes of service management, and these generic principles are then applied consistently to the management of IT services.

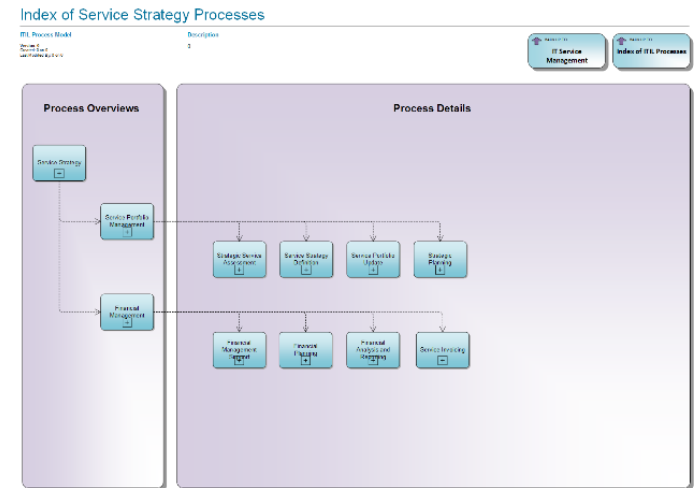


Figure 4: Service Strategy Process

Service Design

Overview

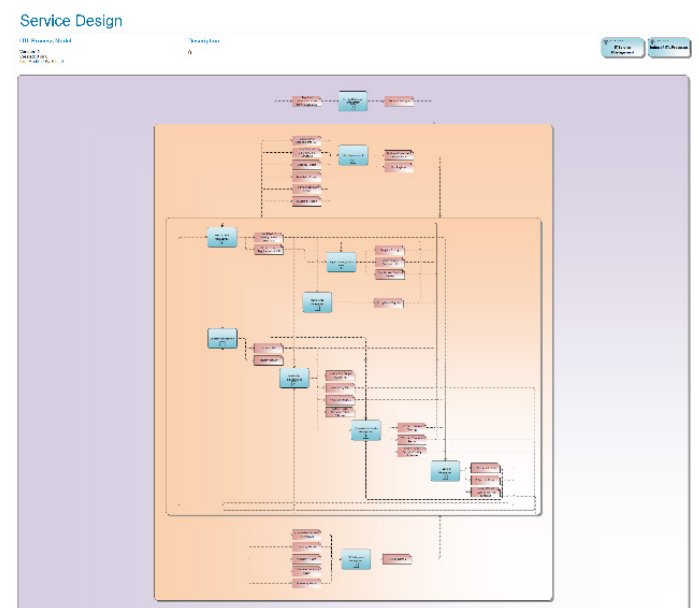


Figure 5: Service Design

The following definitions are provided using descriptions from the ITIL® Service Design book^{vi}.

Context

For services to provide true value to the business, they must be designed with the business objectives in mind. Design encompasses the whole IT organization, for it is the organization as a whole that delivers and supports the services. Service design is the stage in the lifecycle that turns a service strategy into a plan for delivering the business objectives.

ITIL® Service Design provides guidance for the design and development of services and service management practices. It covers design principles and methods for converting strategic objectives into portfolios of services and service assets. The scope of ITIL® Service Design is not limited to new services. It includes the changes and improvements necessary to increase or maintain value to customers over the lifecycle of services, the continuity of services, achievement of service levels, and conformance to standards and regulations. It guides organizations on how to develop design capabilities for service management.

Purpose

The purpose of the service design stage of the lifecycle is to design IT services, together with the governing IT practices, processes and policies, to realize the service provider's strategy and to facilitate the introduction of these services into supported environments ensuring quality service delivery, customer satisfaction and cost-effective service provision.

Scope

ITIL® Service Design provides guidance for the design of appropriate and innovative IT services to meet current and future agreed business requirements. It describes the principles of service design and looks at identifying, defining and aligning the IT solution with the business requirement. It also introduces the concept of the service design package and looks at selecting the appropriate service design model.

Index of Service Design Processes

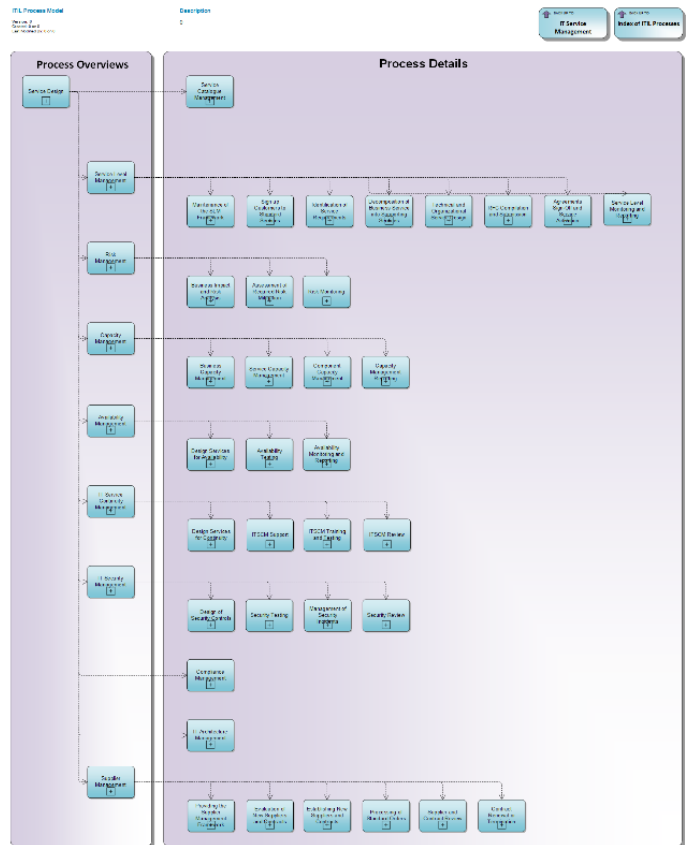


Figure 6: Service Design Processes

Service Transition

Overview

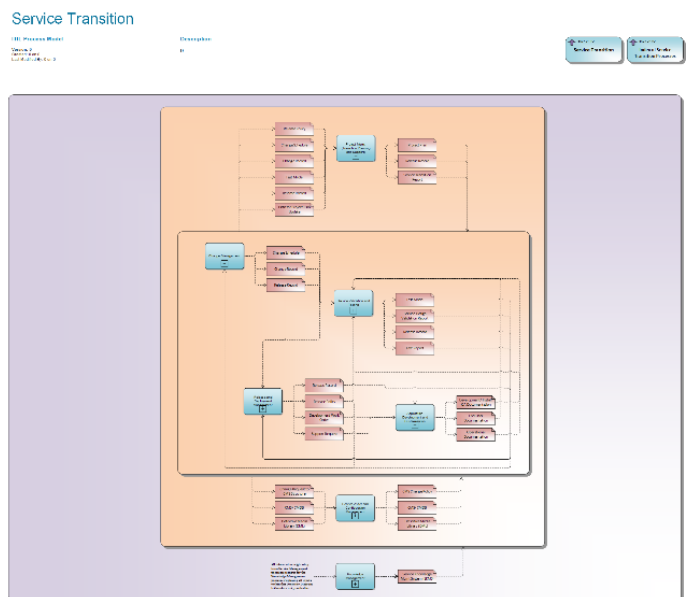


Figure 7: Service Transition

The following definitions are provided using descriptions from the ITIL® Service Transition book^{viii}.

Context

ITIL® Service Transition provides guidance for the development and improvement of capabilities for introducing new and changed services into supported environments. It describes how to transition an organization from one state to another while controlling risk and supporting organizational knowledge for decision support. It ensures that the value(s) identified in the service strategy, and encoded in service design, are effectively transitioned so that they can be realized in service operation.

ITIL® Service Transition describes best practice in transition planning and support, change management, service asset and configuration management, release and deployment management, service validation and testing, change evaluation and knowledge management. It provides guidance on managing the complexity related to changes to services and service management processes, preventing undesired consequences while allowing for innovation.

Purpose

The purpose of the service transition stage of the service lifecycle is to ensure that new, modified or retired services meet the expectations of the business as documented in the service strategy and service design stages of the lifecycle.

Scope

ITIL® Service Transition provides guidance for the development and improvement of capabilities for transitioning new and changed services into supported environments, including release planning, building, testing, evaluation and deployment. The publication also considers service retirement and transfer of services between service providers. The guidance focuses on how to ensure that the requirements from service strategy, developed in service design, are effectively realized in service operation while controlling the risks of failure and subsequent disruption.

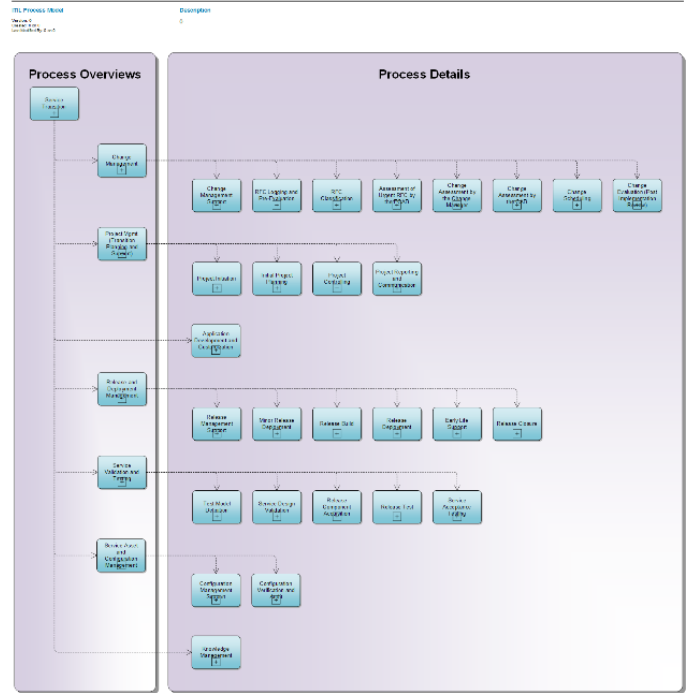


Figure 8: Service Transition Processes

Service Operations

Overview

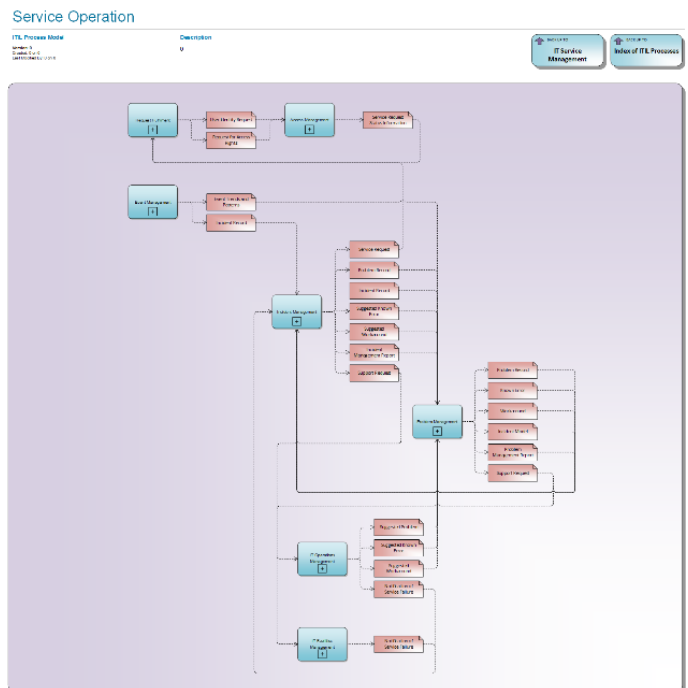


Figure 9: Service Operations

The following definitions are provided using descriptions from the ITIL® Service Operations book^{viii}.

Context

ITIL® Service Operation describes best practice for managing services in supported environments. It includes guidance on achieving effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery and support of services to ensure value for the customer, the users and the service provider.

ITIL® Service Operation provides guidance on how to maintain stability in service operation, allowing for changes in design, scale, scope and service levels.

Purpose

The purpose of the service operation stage of the service lifecycle is to coordinate and carry out the activities and processes required to deliver and manage services at agreed levels to business users and customers. Service operation is also responsible for the ongoing management of the technology that is used to deliver and support services.

Scope

ITIL® Service Operation describes the processes, functions, organization and tools used to underpin the ongoing activities required to deliver and support services.

Index of Service Operation Processes

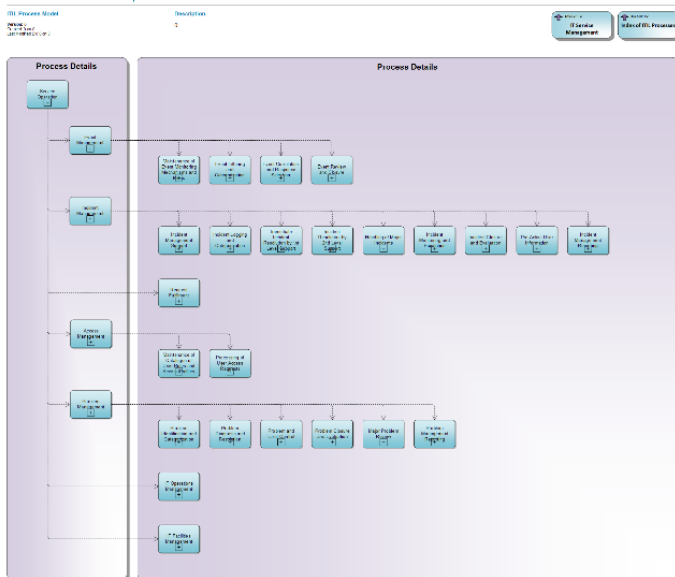


Figure 10: Service Operations Processes

Continual Service Improvement

Overview

Continual Service Improvement

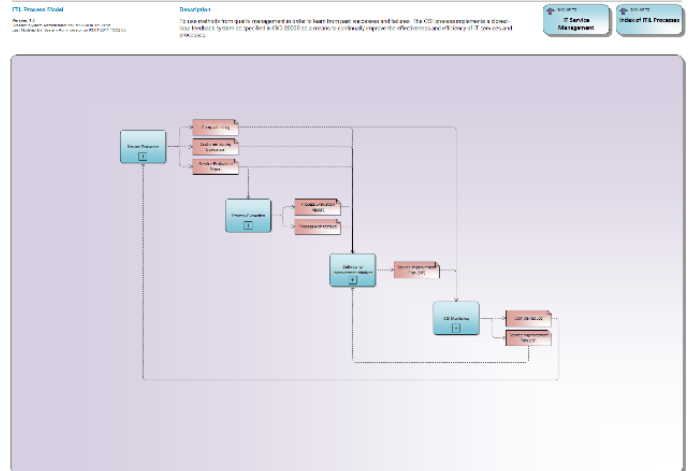


Figure 11: Continual Service Improvement

The following definitions are provided using descriptions from the ITIL® Continual Service Improvement book^x.

Context

ITIL® Continual Service Improvement provides guidance on creating and maintaining value for customers through better strategy, design, transition and operation of services. It combines principles, practices and methods from quality management, change management and capability improvement.

ITIL® Continual Service Improvement describes best practice for achieving incremental and large-scale improvements in service quality, operational efficiency and business continuity, and for ensuring that the service portfolio continues to be aligned to business needs. Guidance is provided for linking.

Purpose

The purpose of the CSI stage of the lifecycle is to align IT services with changing business needs by identifying and implementing improvements to IT services that support business processes. These improvement activities support the lifecycle approach through service strategy, service design, service transition and service operation. CSI is always seeking ways to improve service effectiveness, process effectiveness and cost effectiveness.

In order to identify improvement opportunities, the measurement of current performance is an important factor. Consider the following sayings about measurements and management:

You cannot manage what you cannot control.

You cannot control what you cannot measure.

You cannot measure what you cannot define.

Scope

ITIL® Continual Service Improvement provides guidance in four main areas:

- The overall health of ITSM as a discipline
- The continual alignment of the service portfolio with the current and future business needs
- The maturity and capability of the organization, management, processes and people utilized by the services
- Continual improvement of all aspects of the IT service and the service assets that support them.

To implement CSI successfully it is important to understand the different activities that need to be applied.

List of Continual Service Improvement Processes

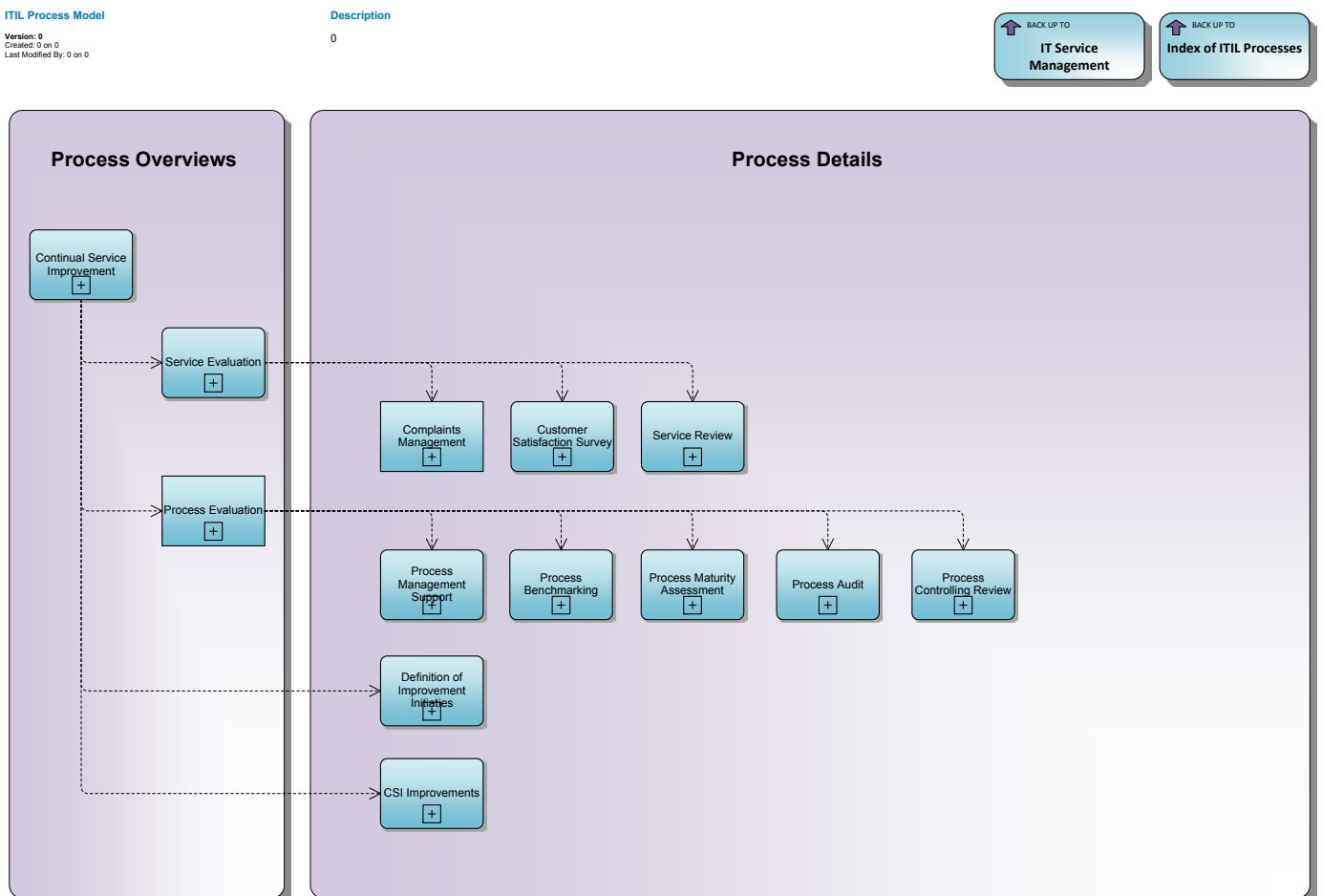


Figure 12: Continual Service Improvement Processes

Conclusion

ITIL® is probably the most comprehensive framework currently available relating to IT Service Management. ITIL® has been implemented in thousands of organizations across the globe. There are many examples of successful implementations as well as quite a few that were less so.

Like any process framework, using ITIL® is not an instant assurance of success. In fact, the ITIL® publications themselves contain details of the Challenges, Risks and Critical Success Factors in each of the Lifecycle stages. They also describe what technology support is required at each stage of the Lifecycle. Consequently, use of ITIL® combined with good process design, appropriate tools, applicable service training and careful implementation should provide your organization with a successful IT Service Management capability.

In her report Executive Briefing: The Benefits of ITIL®x prepared for the UK Government, Maggie Kneller identified the following benefits of implementing ITIL®:

- IT services which align better with business priorities and objectives, meaning that the business achieves more in terms of its strategic objectives
- Known and manageable IT costs, ensuring the business better plans its finances
- Increased business productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, because IT services are more reliable and work better for the business users
- Financial savings from improved resource management and reduced rework
- More effective change management, enabling the business to keep pace with change and drive business change to its advantage
- Improved user and customer satisfaction with IT
- Improved end-customer perception and brand image.

In the same report, Maggie Kneller also identified:

- Benefits associated with each lifecycle stages;
- Indicators of good and poor IT service management;
- Common mistakes in implement ITIL®;
- Achieving quick wins.

The challenge of capturing all this important and useful intellectual property can be both tiresome and time consuming, this is why Orbus Software's iServer solution for ITIL® is a useful starting point for any initiative considering using ITIL®. One of the benefits of using the iServer ITIL® solution is that you can use either the iServer Client or the Portal to navigate through the numerous diagrams and other artefacts within the iServer repository to locate what you need.

The iServer ITIL® solution currently supports ITIL® V3 (2007). However, Orbus have been working to develop a new iServer solution to provide support for ITIL® 2011 and this is currently scheduled to be released in Q1 2014.

References

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- ii ITIL® 2011 Summary of Updates - English
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- iv Introduction to the ITIL® Service Management Framework, 2011, ITILstudy.com
- v ITIL® Service Strategy, 2011
- vi ITIL® Service Design, 2011
- vii ITIL® Service Transition, 2011
- viii ITIL® Service Operation, 2011
- ixi ITIL® Continual Service Improvement, 2011
- x Executive Briefing: The Benefits of ITIL®, Maggie Kneller, September 2010, OGC

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