

A Snapshot of ITIL v3

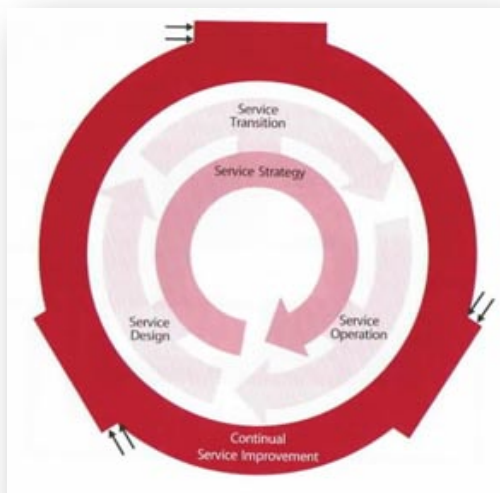
By I. Til, Extra Sr. Consultant

You just received in your office a large heavy box containing the set of five new ITIL v3 books your ordered. Altogether it's a masive 1.343 pages describing the methods and techniques for improving IT Service Management. Finally having the new methodolgy books in your possession is great, but its going to be a lot of information to *digest*. It's difficult getting through your daily eMail, let alone trying to study the new and improved ITIL Service Management methodology.

You may or may not be aware that a summary book titled *The Official Introduction to the IITL Service Lifecycle* has been published to help digest the enormity of the five core books. This book condenses the five core books to 238 pages including a 50 page glossary and 59 diagrams. This provides a great overview of the new ITIL version, but I would like to help you out even more by condensing it down to just a few pages.

A Service Management Lifecycle

The authors of ITIL v3 developed the updated IT Information Library with a lifecycle approach to the strategy, design, transition, operation and improvement of IT services. The image to represent this new design is a hub and spoke diagram which



has Service Strategy in the center and Continual Service Improvement on the rim. Two key principals of this new design is that services have a *life* and they must be managed and measured to provide value to the business.

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Each book focuses on the major aspects of the Service Management Lifecycle which are: Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition, Service Operation, and Continual Service Improvement.

Service Strategy

Like any good business you've got to have a plan to ensure your business is heading in the right direction, and stays on track. For a corporate IT organization embarking on a services provider operating model, as described in ITIL v3, it is vital to understand the services you currently have to offer, the market space you are in, the clients you have, the resources you have, and the value you provide. Now you may be saying to yourself, of course you would do this, but this strategic introspective is more commonly done by a company's product group rather than an internal IT Services group. This analysis should not be a *once and done* either, but rather a periodic assessment to ensure the service offerings are relevant and valuable to the business strategies of the corporate enterprise.

A major output of the Service Strategy is the **Service Portfolio** which lays the ground work for the all important end-user **Service Catalog**. The Service Portfolio represents all the commitments and investments made by the IT organization across all customers and market spaces. It also includes third party services which may or may not be visible to customers.

Service Design

It's happened so many times...you finally get a meeting with the Marketing Team's project manager to discuss their new critical-to-the-business application. He proceeds to tell you that this new application is actually going *live* next next week and they're going to need Help Desk support, real-time monitoring, and immediate desk-side support to load a special patch if an end-user receives errors x, y or z. You smile and gladly say "no problem", but you're thinking how the *heck* are we going to this.

One of the most important aspects of the Service Design stage is to ensure that your service support team is involved as early as possible in the development of a new IT application. More than likely, this new application will require additional support services, or necessitate that you augment or update existing services. The earlier in the application development cycle that you and your team can get involved the better. More importantly, your input to the development project may influence the application's design, or more than likely, its deployment.

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Early participation in the project will enable well thought out service attributes such as Availability, Capacity, Service Levels, Security and Continuity. In addition, it can yield benefits such as:

- Reduced Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)
- Improved quality & consistency of service
- Easier implementation
- Improved service alignment
- More effective service management
- Improved information and decision-making

Service Transition

You learned your lesson with the Marketing project and have successfully been involved with the new Human Resources application project from the very beginning, which is scheduled to go live next Quarter. Unit testing of the application is nearly complete and the project plan includes phases for Integration testing and User Acceptance Testing.

Just as the application is tested to ensure quality, so too should the support services be tested. Key to the the service transition plan is the allocation of resources. Transitioning to the new application and new support services may require increased resources to accommodate the *newness*. Together with the application project manager, a list of risks and contingencies should be itemized to allocate resources appropriately from Day Zero through steady state or *business-as-usual* (BAU) operation. Many factors will determine the degree of "bubble" support needed during transition. Additional resources may be required at the Service Desk, Change Management, Desk-side Support, Knowledge Management, Configuration & Asset Management, Release Management, and so on, to ensure a smooth transition to the new application and support services.

Service Operation

Once transitioned, the new IT services and applications are running BAU and is in the *factory*, so to speak. Now this is where the focus is on the day-to-day operation of the IT business processes to deliver and manage services at the agreed-to service levels to business users and customers. Service Operation is where the true business value is seen from a client's perspective. Under Service Operation are the established ITIL operational processes of Incident Management and Problem Management, plus the new processes of Access Management, Event Management, and Request Fulfillment. Also under Service Operation are the Version 2 defined functions of the Service Desk, plus the newly defined functions of Technical Management, IT Operations Management, Application Management and Monitoring and Control. These new processes and functions have always existed in IT organizations to some degree, but now they are recognized and formally defined in ITIL Version 3.

Continual Service Improvement

The primary objective of Continual Service Improvement or CSI is to improve all IT processes and functions for effectiveness and efficiency. In the Service Design phase, metrics should have been identified to provide valuable data on the performance of each of the services, processes, and functions. This information, collected on a continuous basis and reviewed periodically (daily to yearly) should expose gaps or possible areas of improvement. There are three types of metrics that need to be collected – technical, process and

services. The data coalesced into meaningful reports should be prepared for three types of audiences – The business, Senior IT Management and Internal IT Staff. Trending reports at all levels are very good analytical tools as well as a good marketing vehicle especially if the trend shows improvement.

The new ITIL Service Management methodology has been significantly restructured and enhanced, while yet maintaining the essence of the core ITIL methodology. Throughout the entire new set of ITIL books the authors have stressed *IT services* bringing *value* to the business in a *lifecycle* approach. Fundamentally, each and every IT service, internal and external, must be of value to the IT Portfolio or it will be improved, redesigned, or retired.

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Reference: The Official Introduction to the ITIL Service Lifecycle, The Stationery Office, Norwich, UK