



Six Guiding Principles to Changing Behavior and Speeding the Adoption of BSM and ITIL

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Executive Summary

According to Sharon Taylor, chief architect of the *IT Infrastructure Library Version 3 (ITIL® V3)*, there is more to ITIL than a series of processes that can be automated. “There’s a cultural part of ITIL that cannot be automated.” In other words, you cannot simply build an ITIL-based repertoire of processes, deploy technology to support them, and automatically achieve instant success. If you do not address the “people” issue, you’re doomed to failure. But what is the “people” issue, and how do you go about addressing it?

The issue is simply that people tend to remain in their comfort zone. In adopting ITIL practices, they may have to adapt to new ways, even though their old approaches have served them well in the past. That’s why you need to help them understand that even though the old way isn’t really broken, it is not integrated — and integration is the key to success.

A fundamental characteristic of ITIL is that it requires the IT staff to use consistent, repeatable processes for managing IT. What’s more, ITIL requires the integration of these processes across the IT organization and an understanding of how they “touch” the business processes and services. Many IT organizations, however, are so “heads-down” with day-to-day tasks that they may not have the resources available to help develop standardized, repeatable, and integrated processes to cover all aspects of IT operations and support. As a result, many IT staff members, especially highly skilled ones, have created their own processes that are not shared. In addition, IT organizations have had to use separate groups with specialized skill sets and separate tools to cope with the typical, complex IT infrastructure. This makes collaboration and information-sharing difficult across the IT groups, let alone within the business.

ITIL emphasizes how everything IT does should be focused on its contribution to business value. In this way, IT can continually improve and automate processes to boost productivity and results. Most importantly, the IT staff should prioritize actions according to how these actions contribute to the business.

It may appear that a radical cultural change in the IT organization is necessary to ensure a successful ITIL adoption. Fortunately, a “big-bang” cultural change is not necessary, or even advisable. No organization adopts ITIL in a single step. Your IT organization can best address the “people” issue through incremental behavioral change. This approach will, slowly but surely, bring about cultural change — without the trauma typically associated with it.

Business Service Management (BSM), the most effective approach for managing IT from the perspective of the business, is now defined and recommended within ITIL V3. BSM provides an ideal strategy to facilitate ITIL adoption. It combines best-practice IT processes with a shared view of how IT services support the basic business priorities of growing revenue, reducing cost, and lowering risk.

This paper:

- > Explores the business-centric, process-oriented mindset recommended by ITIL
- > Describes what is necessary to make the transition to an ITIL-based approach and the technology that enables it
- > Discusses the major “people-related” issues and presents a suggested approach to addressing these issues

The Great Divide

In many organizations, there is a significant gap between the current environment and the desired ITIL environment. In looking at IT organizations today, we typically see two major “people-related” issues: (1) a technical, “hero” mentality and (2) siloed functions.

Technical, “Hero” Mentality

The IT staff typically includes a number of people who are highly skilled in specialized areas, such as DB2 database or UNIX® server administration. The organization relies heavily on these people to resolve difficult issues and implement changes in the highly complex IT infrastructure. These people may typically operate in a “hero” fashion. They are called in when a difficult incident or a complicated infrastructure change has to be addressed. They “ride into town,” perform their magic, solve the problem or make the necessary change, and then ride off into the sunset to await their next call. While this might achieve short-term results, it can inevitably cause problems down the road because of non-standard processes.

This “hero” approach has serious shortcomings. It inhibits the transformation of an IT organization to a business-centric, process-oriented culture as specified in ITIL. “Heroes” may use procedures that they have developed over the years based on their own idea of best practices. These procedures are usually not shared or communicated across the organization, and may not be aligned with ITIL. What’s more, “heroes” are typically a solo act. They often don’t work closely with other team members, and may keep knowledge and information in their heads.

Siloed Functions

Many IT organizations are divided into specialized groups by function or technical domain, such as networks, UNIX, workstations, and application development. This approach has resulted in fragmentation of processes and handoffs that are cumbersome, time consuming, error prone, and often manual. Fragmentation can severely hamper process integration across groups, and that integration is a cornerstone of service management.

The ITIL Environment

To adopt ITIL, it is necessary to establish repeatable processes based on proven industry practices. This may require discontinuing some current practices or changing the way things are currently being done.

Your IT staff must understand the business implications of their actions, and make decisions and establish priorities based on the positive contribution to business value or the negative consequences to the business. In addition, all IT employees, including “heroes,” should employ repeatable, good-practice processes based on ITIL guidelines. IT management should adopt a rewards system that encourages a process-oriented approach and discourages “hero” behavior. You may want to ask yourself when, if ever, you have rewarded or publicly praised people in your organizations for following standardized processes.

Your IT staff must be encouraged to share knowledge among group members and across groups, creating a knowledgebase that the entire IT organization can leverage. This involves breaking down silos by integrating processes and streamlining information flow across groups. ITIL V3 speaks at length about the benefits of a mature knowledge management program.

Crossing the Divide

It may sound like a major journey to ITIL from where you are today. Keep in mind, however, that every journey begins with a single step, so adopt an incremental approach. Moreover, rather than make *ITIL adoption* your goal, make *service improvement* your goal. The question to ask is, “How can you improve service to increase business value?” Then determine how ITIL and BSM can help you achieve that goal. This approach makes the journey less esoteric and theoretical, and enables the establishment of clear, quantitative goals that can be more easily understood and measured.

The Role of BSM

The most difficult challenge you will likely face is to transform the IT organization from one that is more focused on technology to one that is oriented around the business. Most of the people on your IT staff have probably grown up in the technology environment and may not have been required to closely determine the impact of their actions on the business.

Here’s where a BSM focus can help. With this approach, IT shares the same overall goals as the business — grow revenue, reduce costs, and lower risk. According to Forrester, “Business service management dynamically links business-focused IT services to the underlying IT infrastructure.”² This approach, therefore, gives your IT staff the information it needs to relate action to business impact.

BSM solutions provide the technology necessary to support the adoption of ITIL best practices. These solutions provide:

- > A shared view, across all IT processes, of how IT resources support the business through services
- > Automated monitoring and configuration of technology
- > Automation of best-practice process workflows

BSM solutions can provide significant help in addressing the “people” dimension of ITIL adoption by providing a structure in which people can easily adapt to the required new behaviors. For example, a solution should establish and enforce a closed-loop change and configuration management structure. This structure eliminates the process gaps and manual procedures of open-loop management through integration and automation of change processes across the entire change lifecycle — from request through planning, approval, implementation, and verification.

By automating processes and providing step-by-step guidance to users, a BSM solution makes it easy to adopt the new processes. By requiring users to perform all required steps, it also forces adoption of the new processes.

Using BSM solutions with built-in processes is analogous to the differences between today’s modern automobile and its predecessors. Today’s automobiles have navigation systems that guide you step-by-step to your desired destination. They have voice-activated systems that give you easy control over certain systems. They have voice-response systems that gently alert you to problems and remind you to perform certain required activities, such as fastening your seat belts. Older automobiles have none of these.

Your BSM solutions should include ITIL process workflow to help guide and enforce best practices, such as how incidents are categorized. This approach:

- > Provides a structure of processes and workflows within which your IT staff can move comfortably to the new way of doing things
- > Gives your IT staff insight into the business impact of their actions, so they can operate from a business perspective
- > Enforces use of effective processes, ensuring that your IT staff does not stray from the ITIL path. For example, through the automation of change approval and change implementation processes, a BSM change management solution ensures that all changes are implemented according to these practices and with the proper authority.
- > Simplifies process execution through automation, leading people through processes with step-by-step guidance, and freeing people from routine tasks

- > Facilitates information-sharing within and across groups by providing a single data repository that is shared by all processes
- > Simplifies regulatory compliance by automatically generating an audit trail, so your IT employees don’t have to scramble at the last minute to manually gather audit information

Six Steps for Adoption of Service Management

It’s advisable to move incrementally toward a more business-oriented approach. Here are six steps that you can take to increase adoption of service management practices.

Step 1. Getting Started — Assess Your Current Situation

This first step is essential, yet often overlooked. Begin by assessing your current situation. Pay particular attention to the “people” issues in your environment. Here are some questions you can ask:

- > Does the IT staff have a “hero” or a process-oriented mentality?
- > Do rewards and public recognition encourage or discourage a “hero” mentality?
- > Do people share or hoard information?
- > Do the various groups in IT operate from a collaborative or a siloed mentality?
- > Does the IT staff operate from a technology-oriented or business-oriented approach?

Note that each of the above questions represents a continuum between two extremes. It’s important to assess where your organization is currently positioned on each continuum.

Step 2. Identify the Areas with the Greatest Potential for Improvement

Here you identify the sources of “pain” in your business. For example, you may find that a high percentage of your service outages are due to improperly managed changes to the IT infrastructure. You may also find that your incident resolution times are not meeting service level objectives.

Be sure to limit your list to a manageable number of areas. However, don’t just consider immediate pain points; take a long-term view. What’s more, it’s essential to establish priorities for the list based on potential to increase business value. Regarding involvement of business managers in BSM projects, Forrester writes, “if they didn’t do this initially, the project was delayed because the IT staff did not

understand the pragmatic business criteria required to make prioritization decisions.”³

Step 3. Develop a Roadmap

In this step, you develop a roadmap, prioritizing your actions based on business impact. Address the area with the greatest opportunity for improvement first, and then address the remaining areas in the order of their ability to improve business service. Be sure to clarify to the IT staff the basis on which you have developed the roadmap, emphasizing how going down this path will enhance IT’s stature and value.

Step 4. Select the Required Processes and Controls

For each problem area you have identified, determine how you can apply the right processes to improve the situation. Select the processes based on ITIL guidelines. You may also want to select the IT controls you wish to implement, such as those defined by COBIT (Control Objectives for Information and related Technology).

Keep in mind that ITIL is flexible. It tells you what you should do, and suggests how to do it. ITIL provides a process frame-

work based on good practices. You build the processes outlined in the framework to meet your specific requirements.

Step 5. Select the BSM Solutions that Most Closely Meet Your Requirements

Once you have selected the processes and controls you need, you can then select the BSM solutions that best support them. Solutions are available that support ITIL processes and many of the COBIT controls right out-of-the-box.

In the *March 2007 Forrester Wave: Business Service Management, Q1 2007*, Peter O’Neill writes, “Forrester favored those that truly make the connection between infrastructure and business services and conduct business impact analysis.”⁴ This mapping of business services to the infrastructure — combined with the business impact analysis — is essential to giving IT employees the insight they need to operate from a business perspective.

The solution should be based on a configuration management database (CMDB) that permits information sharing across the various solutions, as shown in Figure 1. The CMDB is an integral part of ITIL and provides the foundation for process integration.

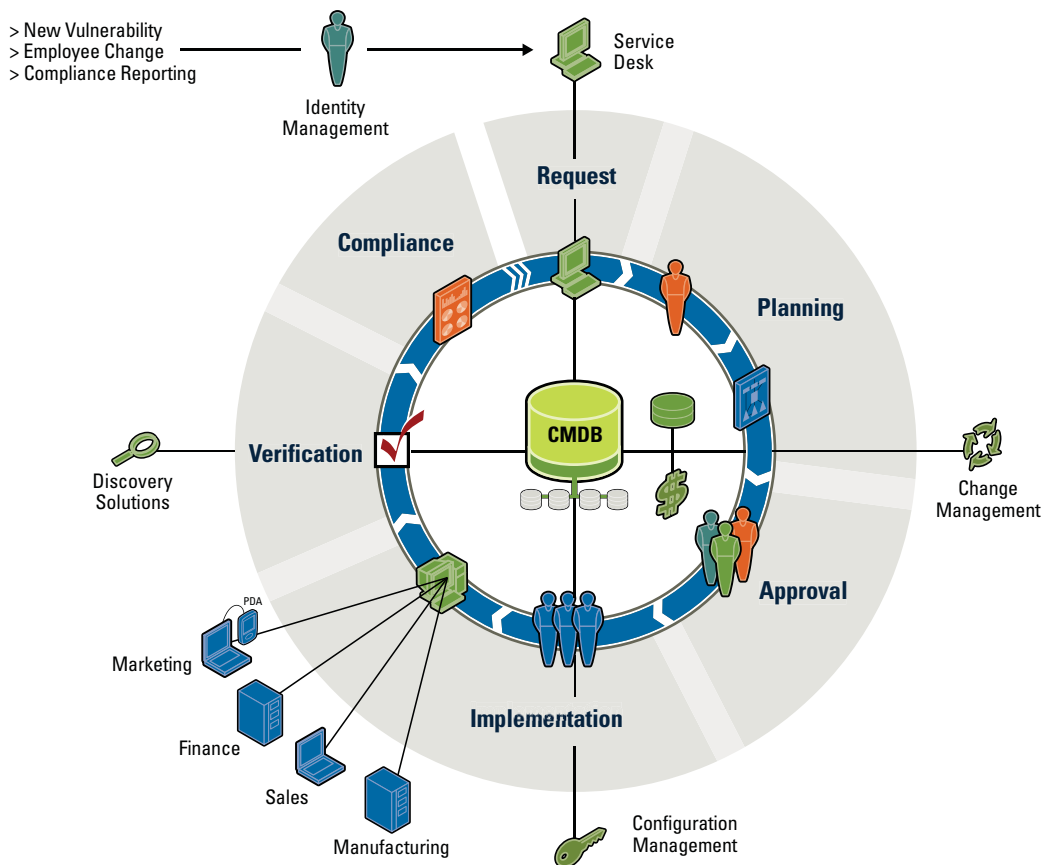


Figure 1. Closed-loop process for change and configuration management (just one way that integrated BSM solutions provide a structure for process transformation and coordination)

Step 6. Implement BSM solutions

Once you have selected the solutions, you can begin implementing them. It's advisable to take an incremental approach. Identify the subset of solutions required to address key pain points. Additionally, resist the temptation to make customizations to re-engineer the out-of-the-box processes. This not only reduces your implementation timeframe, but also facilitates easier maintenance and upgrades of the solution down the road.

Six Guiding Principles to Changing Behavior

Many of the actions that are part of an effective service management strategy based on ITIL guidelines require people to change the way they do things. Although changes will take people outside of their comfort zone, change is necessary for an organization to move forward in IT maturity. Hence, the "people" dimension is the most critical and most difficult challenge in adopting ITIL. In addressing the challenge, consider these six guiding principles.

1. Anticipate and Address Resistance Head On

Understand the importance of effective management of objections. Identify objections so that you can address and counter them. If your IT employees are reluctant to change their processes and embrace ITIL, understand the cause of that reluctance, and address it directly.

Motivate, as well as mandate, people to embrace change. Show people how the change results in important benefits for them. An ITIL-based approach and BSM solutions:

- > **Make the job easier.** By automating repetitive tasks and approaching more activities with business impact in mind, your IT staff can perform their jobs more effectively and more easily — with measurable and demonstrable results. In addition, they can communicate with business managers more easily by using a language that business managers understand.
- > **Help enhance skills.** Your IT employees can add valuable skills to their repertoire. They can learn industry best practices, and gain a higher view of IT that enables them to better relate IT to the business. That increases their value to the organization.
- > **Help increase the visibility of value contribution.** Your IT employees can demonstrate their contributions to business value using metrics that business managers understand. This raises the visibility of IT value and the individual contributor's value to the organization, increasing job security.

2. Look Beyond Process Transformation

It's important to keep the "people" dimension in mind in every step of the incremental approach discussed in the previous section, especially in the assessment and selection steps. Don't limit your focus to transforming processes. Be sure to understand the "people" issues involved in that transformation. Some people will be resistant to change. Work with these people, and attempt to win them over by motivation.

In assessing your current situation, look for potential sources of people-related problems in each of the problem areas you identify. These may include "heroes," siloing, and other impediments to change.

In selecting processes and controls, you may encounter resistance. Understand the nature of that resistance. Ask questions of your business customers. Clarify and confirm the resistance. Only in this way can you distinguish legitimate objections from cultural-based resistance. For example, if someone says, "This will never work," that's probably not a legitimate comment. If, however, someone says, "This won't work because ..." it shows that the person is at least interested in giving some thought to the issue. In the latter case, dig deeper. Valid objections can provide valuable insight. Get the resisters to write down their concerns so that you can review and track these issues.

3. Shape Behavior

There are four factors that shape behavior in an organization: leadership, structure, strategic definition, and the HR systems that support them. Of these, leadership and structure are the two most important with respect to behavioral change related to ITIL adoption.

Leadership

People need to know that the organization is fully behind the initiative. That's why it's essential to have leadership, as well as a sponsor at a senior level of management, such as the CIO.

There are three methods leaders can employ to shape behavior:

- > Clearly articulated strategy. Articulate, as early as possible, the BSM approach and ITIL strategy and its benefits to the IT staff. It's important that the staff knows why you are adopting ITIL.
- > Personal rewards. Everyone, including "heroes," appreciates recognition. That's why it's important to publicize early wins along the way and give credit to those who have contributed to these wins.

- > Modeling. Leaders should model, rather than dictate, desired behaviors. For example, seeing the leader attending an ITIL class would certainly motivate others to attend the class.

Structure

You need structure to bring about the desired behavioral change. Create an environment where your IT staff members can safely adapt to new ways of doing things. That environment must provide a structure that not only enforces standard processes, but also makes it easy for staff members to use the processes, such as through automation and step-by-step guidance.

4. Address Teaming Issues

Another major problem you may have to overcome is related to silos. ITIL V2 defines processes by functional area — incident management, problem management, change management, configuration management, release management, and service desk function — and speaks of integration across these areas. ITIL V3, released in 2007, recategorizes the processes from functional area to service lifecycle stages, stressing even more the necessity of integrating processes across functions.

ITIL requires the creation of cross-functional teams that are diverse and widespread — and that can only exist if you break down barriers and bring together groups that may not have worked together before. ITIL V3 recognizes that effective process integration requires that people involved in different IT groups have a broad outlook. Your IT staff should not only have expertise in their particular disciplines, but also understand the interaction of their areas of expertise with other areas. For example, a change manager should not only be expert in the mechanics of change operations, but also understand the implications of change in strategy, design, and operation.

In bringing groups together, be sure to maintain an environment in which the various groups can freely express their ideas — and their misgivings — without repercussions. A simple idea is to have a convenient means of submitting anonymous feedback.

5. Address Organizational Implications

An important aspect of the “people” dimension is the organization of the IT department. Adopting ITIL may call for some organizational changes. For example, organizational change may be necessary to better integrate siloed groups to accomplish process integration across groups.

ITIL itself provides guidance in handling organizational implications. (See *ITIL V3 Service Strategy*, Book 1, Chapter 6, “Strategy and Organization,” and *ITIL V3 Service Design*, Book 2, Chapter 6, “Organizing for Service Design.”)

ITIL V3 Service Strategy, Book 1, Section 6, “Organizational development,” describes five stages of organizational development: services through network, direction, delegation, coordination, and collaboration.⁵

- > **Stage 1. Network — Focus: Rapid, informal, and ad-hoc delivery of services.** In this stage, the organization determines which processes and services work, and then makes the necessary adjustments.
- > **Stage 2. Direction — Focus: Hierarchical structures that separate functional activities.** In this stage, more formal communications and basic processes are used. Functional specialists must deal with the challenge of following a process or taking their own initiative.
- > **Stage 3. Delegation — Focus: Proper application of a decentralized organizational structure.** At this stage, more of the responsibility moves from the functional owners to the process owners. This can be challenging when functional and process objectives collide. Managers may need to intervene in decision making.
- > **Stage 4. Coordination — Focus: Use formal systems to increase coordination.** At this stage, senior executives recognize that systems are critical. The senior executives take responsibility for the success of solutions, and ensure that planned service management structures are carefully reviewed and continually improved. Service management processes are decentralized, but the technical functions are centralized.
- > **Stage 5. Collaboration — Focus: Stronger collaboration with the business.** In this stage, there is more flexibility in managing relationships. The managers are skilled in dealing with conflict resolution and are focused on teamwork. This helps the organization respond more effectively to changes in business conditions and to work well across functions. Innovative ideas are encouraged.

ITIL V3 Service Design, Book 2, Section 6.4, “Roles and Responsibilities” discusses the importance of defining the roles and responsibilities within the organization for the various activities.⁶ It points out that when designing a service or a process, it is important to clearly define and scope the roles. The section uses the RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) breakdown of roles:

- > **Responsible.** The person or people responsible for getting the job done

- > **Accountable.** The single person accountable for each task
- > **Consulted.** The people who are consulted and whose opinions are sought
- > **Informed.** The people who are kept up-to-date on progress

6. Give Attention to Training

Training is an essential ingredient in getting people involved in the transition to ITIL. It's important to begin training as early as possible. That includes ITIL training, as well as training on BSM principles and technology (and how BSM supports ITIL). The overall goal is to change the perspective of people from a focus on implementing hot new technologies to a focus on implementing and automating processes that will improve service delivery and enhance business value.

Conclusion

Make no mistake, the transition to ITIL for most IT organizations takes time. It's a significant journey that requires not only the adoption of new processes and the technologies to support them, but also behavioral changes in IT staff. It's the latter that is by far the most important to success, and the most difficult to accomplish.

To ensure a more successful ITIL implementation, be sure to take an incremental, people-oriented approach that provides a solid road on which to make the journey. This road, grounded on ITIL principles and built on BSM solutions, offers a structure that guides IT staff in the right direction, facilitating the desired behavioral changes required to transition to ITIL.

For more information on BMC solutions that automate and integrate ITIL processes, visit www.bmc.com/itil.

Endnotes

- 1 Sharon Taylor, quoted in "Spreading the Gospel," Pete Swaby, *Information Age*, July 20, 2007.
- 2 "Business Service Management: Early Birds Are Catching The Worm, But IT Still Doesn't Get It," Peter O'Neill, *Forrester Best Practices*, February 6, 2007.
- 3 *ibid.*
- 4 "The Forrester Wave: Business Service Management, Q1 2007" Peter O'Neill and Evelyn Hubbert, Forrester, March 2007.
- 5 *ITIL V3 Service Strategy*, Book 1, Section 6.1, Published by TSO (The Stationery Office), Published for the Office of Government Commerce under license from the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2007.
- 6 *ITIL V3 Service Design*, Book 2, Section 6.4, Published by TSO (The Stationery Office), Published for the Office of Government Commerce under license from the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 2007.



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About Pink Elephant

Pink Elephant is the world leader in IT management best practices, offering conferences, education, and consulting services to public and private businesses globally. The company specializes in improving the quality of IT services through the application of recognized frameworks, including ITIL. Pink Elephant has been involved in the ITIL project since its inception in 1987, and was selected as an international expert to contribute to the ITIL V3 project — as authors of the *ITIL V3 Continual Service Improvement* book and through representation on the international exam panel. For more information, please visit www.pinkelephant.com.

About the Authors

George Spalding, vice president of global events for Pink Elephant, was selected as one of the 10 authors of the international team charged with creating ITIL V3. He has spent the last 25 years helping individuals on six continents in nearly 20 countries realize their full potential by simplifying complex topics and inspiring people to embrace change. After his appointment to the faculty of Yale University, he worked as a consultant to the White House on technical presentations and White House Conferences. In addition to a quarter century of commitment to improving the IT Service Management industry, Spalding is a much sought-after presenter. In 2007 alone, he keynoted the *2007 itSMF Canada National Conference*; participated in the *ITILv3 Launch* event in the UK; and he spoke at numerous itSMF chapter meetings and the *Annual IT Service Management Conference*. His credentials include: ITIL Manager's Certificate in IT Service Management (the "Masters") and Microsoft Certified Enterprise Services Trainer for MOF. He has the IT industry's top security certification, (ISC)'s Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), and the top auditing certification, ISACA's Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA).

Ken Turbitt, global best practices director at BMC Software, assists corporations in aligning with the best practices for IT. He was involved in ITIL V3 quality reviews and has provided input to several of the authors. He has held an International Standards Examination Board credential, has had an ITIL Manager qualification for more than 12 years, and has been a Gartner qualified TCO consultant for more than ten years. Prior to joining BMC, Turbitt was an IT services consultant and managed the Infrastructure Resource Management (IRM) consultancy practice within Fujitsu/ICL.

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