



ITSM:  
It's about managing change

Implementing ITSM is as much an educational and change management task as a technology task; to ensure its success, IT executives must obtain executive and broad organizational support, engage IT staff responsible for both managing and executing ITSM processes, and overcome resistance to change.

It's also critical that the organization address its competencies, rather than merely skills, and ensure that the changes it implements are internalized.

## Executive summary

IT Service Management (ITSM) is a proven and effective framework for helping IT organizations become more adaptive, flexible, cost-effective, and service-oriented. It does this by driving fundamental change within the IT organization, from how it manages its processes, technology assets, vendors and deploys personnel, to how IT staff view their organizational roles.

Implementing ITSM is therefore as much an educational and change management task as a technology task; to ensure its success, IT executives must obtain executive and broad organizational support, engage IT staff responsible for both managing and executing ITSM processes, and overcome resistance to change. It's also critical that the organization address its competencies, rather than merely skills, and ensure that the changes it implements are internalized.

The IT organization must start by articulating ITSM's value to the organization and obtaining executive-level buy-in. This is accomplished by a communications program that, among other elements, articulates both

the short-term impact of an ITSM implementation and its ROI — both anticipated and, eventually, actual.

In some cases, IT executives may wish to leverage external change agents to speed implementation and maintain momentum once organizational support is obtained.

It's also critical that ITSM training be leveraged as an ITSM implementation tool; in this way, better understanding of ITSM principals can help the organization define and refine processes, secure buy-in and support, and recruit leaders who will ensure the success of the ITSM implementation. An effective training program can also help IT organizations identify potential resistance to change and win staff support.

ITSM provides the tools and templates to transform IT organizations into adaptive, service-oriented entities that contribute measurable results to the business. This white paper describes critical steps IT executives must take to prepare for change and manage an ITSM implementation to maximize its value and ensure that it achieves the full transformational effect it is capable of delivering.

# ITSM: it's about managing change

There was a time when information technology functioned as a set of discrete tools supporting discrete business processes. That is no longer the case. For corporations today, critical business processes are highly dependent on and integrated with IT; the two are essentially inseparable. The demands on corporate IT executives have therefore become both broader and more exacting. While raw system performance, reliability, and cost effectiveness is still crucial, it is no longer enough: the corporate IT service delivery organization must also support highly adaptable, measurable, scalable, consistent and controllable IT processes that are tightly coupled with the business processes that rely on them.

IT Service Management (ITSM) is a proven and effective framework for accomplishing this. But the reason ITSM is so effective is that it drives fundamental change within the IT organization, from how it manages its processes, technology assets, and vendors to how it deploys personnel.

Implementing ITSM is therefore as much an educational and change management task as a process design and technology task.

## **ITIL: means to an end**

ITIL was conceived from the beginning as a means to achieve transformative change. It began as a project launched by the government of the United Kingdom (U.K.) in the early 1980s. Faced with a serious economic downturn, the government recognized it must develop innovative ways to improve IT service efficiencies and thereby lower costs. To do this, the British Central Computer and Telecommunications Agency (CCTA), an executive Cabinet Office agency dedicated to improving the delivery of public services through IT, developed a set of best practice-based ITSM processes. These were documented using a common glossary of terms and published in an integrated series of 40 books. The series, since updated and packaged as seven books, is now referred to as the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL).

Recognizing the value of the ITSM processes defined by the ITIL, companies and governments around the world have since adopted them. Independent organizations such as the IT Service Management Forum (itSMF) have been founded to share ITIL best practices. Many consulting and educational firms now offer ITIL training and certification programs for IT professionals.

**“Corporations cannot respond flexibly and quickly to markets, customer demands, and regulatory obligations unless they are supported by flexible, reliable, service-oriented IT infrastructures that are tightly focused on meeting the needs of the corporations’ internal customers.”**

Yet like all tools, ITIL-defined processes are limited by how effectively they are used. In particular, implementing ITSM as a set of discrete, tactical tools without simultaneously reengineering IT processes self-limits the effect of ITSM.

Yet the majority of IT organizations are vulnerable to approaching ITSM in precisely this way. Typically, IT organizations were founded and have subsequently evolved along functional or architectural component lines. But in today’s business environment, functioning as a reactive IT organization is a potential business liability with significant negative consequences. Corporations cannot respond flexibly and quickly to markets, competition, customer demands, and regulatory obligations unless they are supported by flexible, reliable, service-oriented IT service delivery organizations that are tightly focused on meeting the needs of the corporations’ internal customers.

Conversely, failing to meet a corporation’s critical business needs has significant consequences for both IT organizations and corporations. IT organizations risk a loss of trust and potential budget decreases. Corporate risks include dysfunctional operation, failure

## **HP’s ITSM history**

Leveraging ITIL was a natural extension of HP’s commitment to helping corporations enhance the value of their IT infrastructures. HP began working with ITIL in 1993 and is today a recognized leader in ITSM best practice implementation. HP has been instrumental in establishing many itSMF chapters, and continues to contribute to existing chapters while actively supporting the formation of new chapters worldwide. HP’s ITSM experts contribute regularly to ITSM literature and documentation; HP has also enhanced its ITSM leadership and presence through strategic acquisitions of industry-leading ITIL education and consulting firms, and IT asset and service management software providers.

## IT: critical to critical business needs

Businesses today are increasingly dependent on IT organizations. Some of the critical business needs that are dependent on effective IT processes include:

- Product innovation and time-to-market;
- Just-in-time product manufacture;
- High standards for customer service;
- Regulatory compliance to meet mandates such as HIPAA (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), Sarbanes-Oxley, and Basel II;
- Cost reduction.

to innovate, and decreased agility — risks that expose businesses to lower profit margins, missed revenue opportunities, and erosion of shareholder value.

IT organizations therefore have only one option: to reconceive themselves as proactive, flexible, and service-oriented.

ITSM can help them do that — but only if it is implemented at a fundamental process level that fully engages IT staff responsible for those processes. When ITIL process management is fully internalized in the organization's daily practices, it transforms the IT organization functionally. The form such changes will take may include:

- Replacement of isolated, ad hoc processes with business-justified, consistent, scalable, repeatable and streamlined IT processes;
- Implementation of measurable, accountable processes;
- Implementation of integrated, end-to-end IT processes, avoiding technology silos;
- Utilization of new and on-going process improvements to support a proactive approach to IT processes and internalization of processes into daily practices; and
- Managing of competencies in a “people management” structure.

### Not just skills, but competency

Information technology is often understood as an amalgam of hardware and software, but people and processes are an integral part of any IT organization. Successfully implementing ITSM for transitional change therefore requires the IT organization to equip its staff with the necessary competencies. IT organizations must implement service-oriented organizational structures, roles, and responsibilities, and enhance department

staffs' traditional IT system and technical skills with customer-focused competencies.

Tools the IT service delivery organization can leverage to achieve these objectives include:

- Awareness workshops designed to challenge old behavior patterns and ways of thinking;
- Customized training programs;
- Soft-skill trainings;
- On-the-job training;
- Reinforcement;
- Personal development motivated by performance measurements and rewards.

Along the way, it is critical that IT staff view their organizational roles in a way that supports a reengineered IT organization. In practical terms, IT staff must:

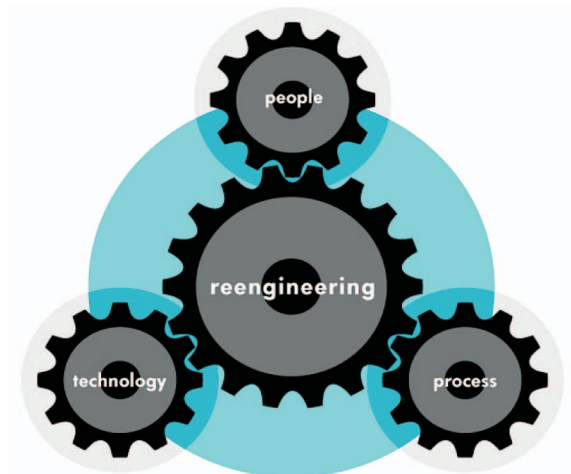
- View consumers of their services as customers;
- Temper their traditional inward perspective and start looking outward;
- Expand their focus on technology to include a focus on service-centric solutions.

Clearly, this involves more than straightforward skills training. So how do IT organizations transform staff competencies? How can IT management change the way people responsible for IT processes approach their jobs?

The answer involves three main elements:

- Securing executive level awareness;
- Leveraging external change agents;
- Leveraging engagement, awareness, and training as a change agent.

**Figure 1.** People are an integral part of any IT infrastructure; reengineering IT processes successfully depends on engaging IT staff and winning their support.



# Executive-level commitment

Every individual, and by extension every organization handles change in unique ways. Nonetheless any organization that desires fundamental and transformational change must begin with executive support for its strategic objectives. HP recommends that IT management should allocate approximately 70 percent of its change-enabling efforts on communicating to corporate executives and securing executive-level commitment.

Key elements of an ITSM executive awareness initiative include:

**Defining ITSM.** Executives outside the IT organization do not require mastery of the technical details of an ITSM implementation. But they do need to know that ITSM provides enables IT organizations to more effectively support the processes that are fundamental to their direct line responsibilities. To do this, the communications program must provide a high-level overview of ITSM principles and how they can be applied, with an emphasis on its process functionality rather than the technology per se.

**Articulating the value proposition.** The IT organization must frame its proposed ITSM implementation in terms of its strategic business value to the corporation. Doing this will ensure that executives not only understand ITSM but support its implementation.

Articulating clear goals. In conjunction with communicating the value of ITSM, the IT organization must define and communicate its specific goals and objectives.

**Disclosing gap analysis.** The IT organization must also clarify the gaps between its ITSM goals and current IT processes, to ensure that executives appreciate the extent of support required.

**Disclosing short-term organizational impact.** Transforming an IT organization at the process level will necessarily divert some IT resources and attention. Understandably, executives will be concerned about whether the IT staff will be able to meet their immediate, day-to-day needs while they are implementing ITSM. It's critical to communicate how the IT staff will allocate resources to ensure that existing processes will be supported during the ITSM implementation.

“IT management should allocate approximately 70 percent of its awareness-building efforts on communicating to corporate executives.”

**Reporting on progress and ROI.** The executive awareness campaign should not end once the ITSM implementation has been budgeted or begun as a tactical initiative. Instead, the IT organization should plan to periodically report on progress. In addition, the IT organization should report the implementation's return on investment once it is complete and has begun delivering results.

An executive awareness campaign can incorporate any number of communication tools.

Business simulations that step executives through the experience of an ITSM implementation are highly effective. Considering the enormity of change that an ITIL project may entail, spending the day that such simulators require should pay back many times over with the creation of a cohesive team with a greater understanding of the components, interrelationships, and vision that are required to successfully transform an IT organization.

Presenting a change plan that allows executives to understand how they fit into the implementation is also important. Sharing case studies of other corporations that have realized measurable results from ITSM is another effective way to ensure executive level understanding and support.

## Leveraging external change agents

Implementing ITSM has broad organizational implications. Yet the initiative itself requires highly focused attention and a specialized skill set. Any IT organization considering ITSM must also weigh whether it is best achieved using internal resources or by engaging an outside consultant to help manage and implement ITSM best practices.

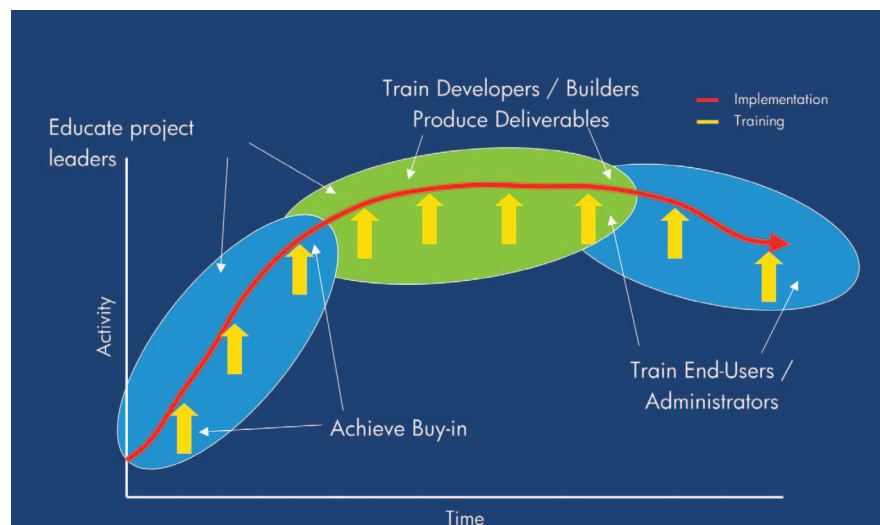
These considerations are partly practical. IT organizations cannot completely abandon their day-to-day service delivery during the ITSM implementation period. A consultant can augment resources to minimize the impact on-going operations during implementation.

But consultants can also function as change agents. External ITSM experts come equipped with hands-on experience implementing ITSM under a variety of circumstances and within a variety of corporate cultures. This expertise reduces learning curves through a concentrated and customized knowledge transfer, accelerating the pace of change and helping organizations maintain momentum once they've set a course of action. This, in turn ensures that the IT organization will not lose its organizational support during the implementation; instead, it will be able to demonstrate and report measurable progress toward meeting its ITSM goals and objectives throughout the implementation period, maintaining the enthusiasm of its staff and internal corporate customers.

"The expertise of external ITSM experts can reduce learning curves through a concentrated and customized knowledge transfer, accelerating the pace of change and helping organizations maintain momentum once they've set a course of action."

By the same token, because internalizing change is critical to a successful ITSM implementation, external change agents cannot substitute for internal champions prepared to drive change from within the service delivery organization. The organization should therefore leverage consultants to cultivate internal champions, rather than depend on external resources exclusively.

**Figure 2.** When ITSM training is delivered concurrently with implementation, it can be used to achieve buy-in and define processes, helping to ensure the success of the implementation. In addition, once implementation is complete, little or no refresher training will be required.



# Leveraging training as a change agent

Most IT organizations view staff training as ancillary, if necessary, to technology implementations. However, because ITSM involves operational processes rather than technology alone, a linear, sequential approach to training adds unnecessary costs and slows the pace of the implementation. For example, if an organization commits to ITSM, trains its staff, and only then implements the new processes, the skills trained prior to implementation will no longer be fresh once the organization is ready to apply them. Refresher training is required, and is thus wasteful. The ROI of the implementation is therefore undermined.

In addition, when training and the implementation are not performed concurrently, valuable momentum is lost. Enthusiasm for the ITSM initiative may also wane.

The alternative is to leverage ITSM training as an ITSM implementation tool. The executive awareness campaign described previously is one example: it acts as a training venue but doubles as a means to obtain organizational buy-in and support.

Once the organization has agreed to adopt ITSM, additional training can be incorporated into the implementation.

**Train main project leaders.** This training includes foundation-level training and some management level training; its objective is to provide key IT personnel with the skills they need to design ITSM processes. The training also provides staff with the opportunity to give input into the implementation early, and to obtain feedback that will ensure the implementation will meet

## Overcoming resistance to change

A study by Forrester Research has identified internal resistance to change as the most common “negative element” IT leaders encounter when they try to implement ITIL, cited by 52 percent of firms polled.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to conventional wisdom, most people don’t resist change arbitrarily. They have reasons for their behavior. Mandating change without people’s consent may make them feel they are losing control of their jobs, or being given responsibilities they don’t understand or don’t have the confidence to fulfill.

Conversely, when people understand and accept the reasons for change, and have a say in the way their jobs are restructured, they tend to be receptive to change.

It’s therefore critical to avoid judging people’s reaction to change and instead utilize a combination of communication, training and mentoring to both identify resistance and win people’s support. Structure training opportunities so that trainees can provide input into the ITSM process design, for example, and you’re less likely to encounter resistance based on people’s fear of losing control. Present ITSM in the context of solving identifiable problems, and you’ll win over pragmatists. Recruit people who are more comfortable with dramatic change to help drive the ITSM implementation, rather than force conservers into roles with which they are uncomfortable.

It’s also important to communicate that ITSM provides IT personnel with opportunities to build on their skills. Make it clear that the goal of ITSM is not to tell people how to do their jobs — or to take their jobs away — but to give them new opportunities to contribute to the vitality of the corporation and enhance their own professional success.

<sup>1</sup> March 14, 2006, Trends “Firms Must Take ITIL Beyond Operational Goals.”

“ITSM training should be used to help define and refine processes, secure buy-in and support, and recruit leaders who will ensure the success of the ITSM implementation.”

its intended objectives. It also creates process owners — champions who are invested in the implementation and will therefore work harder to see it succeed.

**Additional foundation training.** Once key ITSM processes have been defined, high level overviews of those processes can be incorporated into the foundation training program, which can then be offered to a broader audience of staff. Personnel trained during this stage will be ITSM process managers, responsible for administering key aspects of the implementation such as change or incident management.

**Generic practitioner training.** This training commences during the process development stage of ITSM implementation. It begins with high level, generic training to introduce staff to specific ITSM processes. This training can use a workshop approach with a mentoring framework and can incorporate content from within the IT organization — including individuals previously recruited as process owners and managers — as well as external experts provided by vendors and the business community.

**Customized practitioner training.** As process development is completed, customized practitioner training can be offered as well. At this point, training can be extended to end users, administrators, and general IT staff and can incorporate overview sessions, foundation classes, and workshops. However, at this point the training is no longer generic: it focuses on the actual processes as they will be implemented by the corporation.

With this approach, training takes on multiple roles. It is used to help define and refine processes, secure buy-in and support, and recruit leaders who will ensure the success of the ITSM implementation.

# Mastering change

Today's fast-paced, global economy means that corporations must be flexible, agile, and innovative to effectively capitalize on their market opportunities. Yet they cannot hope to do so if the IT organizations that support them are trapped in reactive, compartmentalized, inward-focused modes of operation.

Fortunately, there's a solution. ITSM provides the tools and templates to transform IT organizations into adaptive, service-oriented entities that contribute measurable results to their host corporations.

Yet it's a misapprehension to view ITSM as merely a set of tools. Its greatest value is its ability to transform IT organizations. As such, ITSM is not an end, but a means to an end; it not only helps organizations improve their IT processes today, but also provides a foundation to manage change more effectively in the future. To do this, however, ITSM must be embraced by the people responsible for managing and executing IT processes through effective awareness campaigns, utilization of industry resources, and ITSM training.

---

To learn more, visit [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)

© 2007 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The only warranties for HP products and services are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty. HP shall not be liable for technical or editorial errors or omissions contained herein.

4AA1-0123ENW, January 2007

