

ITIL Lite, Fat, Skinny, or... ?

Processes are always there. They may be very immature or impressively sophisticated. You may be totally unaware of them, or use them very explicitly to manage your delivery. But they are always there.

The big issue is "are you able to make them work for you, in delivering the best services?" That's why you at least need to understand the concept of process management.

The Service Lifecycle Focus

ITIL v3 claims to have left the process focus and introduced the service lifecycle focus. Doing so, the v3 authors have cut several v2 processes in pieces, and reallocated them into a set of routines that support a lifecycle segmentation. Just have a look at the Change Management process, and you'll see. Danger is, that you won't see the forest through the trees anymore. As a consequence, people are requiring simpler solutions now, and the number of "ITIL Lite" solutions is growing fast.

Leaving the process focus behind, as ITIL does, implies that this organization domain is "packed and delivered". But in practice I can hardly find ANY organization that really is in control of its processes (or people or products, let alone the integration of those), so this is a clear case of MAZLOV error-thinking.



The maturity of a service organization - in terms of added value in the Value Chain - resembles a Mazlov hierarchy of needs: you can't master a higher level, if you're not in control of the lower levels. The lowest level is where you focus on Technology (running the machines and the network). Once you're in control of that, you can focus on systems and processes, delivering integrated results. After that, you can focus on the output of the organizations, the services. This still is an internally focused level, where the organization tries to deliver output as required. The big change comes into the organization, once it can control its services, and 'play with them'. Only then the organization can focus on customer interest, and align to the business. And finally, when the customer focus is in control, an IT organization can be run like a business, taking responsibilities for cost and risks, and stimulate the corporate results by participating in the primary business.

The Management System

Practices like in ITIL can help you find valuable examples of what you should be able to do, to master the service level in the above Mazlov scheme. They - by definition - don't tell you how to get there. Ergo - you'll need a management system, to get in control of your people, processes and products, before you can reproduce the practices in an effective, efficient, and consistent way. "ITIL Lite" solutions can support that by reducing the complexity of the aimed practices, but you still require a management system.

There's a big discussion going on about ITIL and ISO20000 (just released in a new version). The arguments pro ISO20000 tend to focus on the consistency of the solution, because - as a basic element - ISO requires a management system. ITIL doesn't. Whether it's Lite, Fat, Skinny, or whatever.

When people talk about a pragmatic approach, outside-in, focusing on customer interactions (actually 'use cases'), etc., they actually are defining the smartest, most flexible routines the organization can come up with, in response to customer interactions. It can be very rewarding to use best practices for such pragmatic realization.



paths' - especially if you can standardize them and use the lessons of others. After all, all service organizations want the same - so they can all follow the same (smartest) path to do so. ITIL can be helpful here, but a management system would provide more permanent results.

Recent developments in the Netherlands

The Dutch are currently adopting a fully standardized method for such a management system, containing these pragmatic paths, and achieve amazing results with it. The [method](#) uses a predefined set of pure processes, provides an integrated management system of people, process and product in very short time, and then focuses on organizational improvement. It allows you to get real results in the field of ABC, using sophisticated games like [Apollo13](#), enabling managers to finally start managing their organizations. It puts an end to ongoing discussions by working from a proven standard, so organizations can finally focus on results, customers, and business issues. The method allows organizations to use ITIL and other best practice frameworks for their original goals: to provide you with the inspiration of great examples of what organizations should be able to do. The big difference is that it also helps you to get there, and create permanent improvements to your service quality. In terms of Lite, Fat or Skinny, this might just be The Next Thing.