ITIL process templates - a contradictio in terminis?

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On a regular base, I run into people looking for "ITIL process templates". In fact, if you Google for that, you can find an entire market for that product. I still am kind of surprised that this is even possible. Aren't they all making a fundamental mistake?

ITIL is a set of practices (it says so on page 1). Practices are the results of processes, aplied by people, using products, describing how services can be delivered. So - if you're looking for a process model, you should look for something that is *beneath* ITIL.

The ITIL books *do* offer content that approaches process descriptions, but you can't create a solid process model from these components, as they also contain procedure and work instruction details.

Overlooking this, it seems that you'll have to choose from these alternatives:

1. You apply what you can find in ITIL, and accept the fact that these are not really processes. The inefficiency that comes with it is then accepted.
2. You develop your own process model, then map selected ITIL practices to these processes and create your management system.
3. You adopt a process model that is already developed; then you map selected ITIL practices to these processes and create your management system. Watch out! Several companies are offering "ITIL process templates", which is a *contradictio in terminis*. They actually offer workflow-like descriptions that belong in option 1.
4. You adopt a management system that contains a predefined process model; then you target selected ITIL practices with the management system.

Organizations that want to follow a process-based management structure should spend serious time on designing their management system. Sadly, most organizations still follow the common option 1, which is one of the main reasons why they get the traditional result that comes with most ITIL projects.

But hey - *nobody ever got fired for hiring an ITIL consultant ;-)*