

## PAPER TIGERS in ITSM ([link](#))

One of the most ignored fields of IT management is **Operations Management**. It took ITIL until 2007 before recognizing it even as a topic, but we still lack a lot of information about the Operations Management process. I've been looking at this topic since early 1992, and wondered why we all just seem to ignore the one process where it actually happens: the process where we really handle the IT infrastructure and produce the IT service. All other processes are just paper tigers: paper (requests) go in, and other paper (orders) come out.

In 2001, I produced a pocket guide on this topic called "Operations Management, a new process". The book was translated into English in 2004. It is sold out now (although I do have some copies for the true collector!) and will not be reprinted. I've tried hard to get the authors of ITIL v3 to pick this up, but that attempt wasn't very successful.

Nevertheless, the text on the Operations Management process (and practices) is improving.

When ITIL 2011 was written, I looked again for this highly interesting topic. But now I'm puzzled. I was looking at the Monitoring process and ran into a number of definitions that are supposed to help me understand. ITIL 2011 defines 4 types of monitoring: Active and Passive monitoring, plus Proactive and Reactive monitoring.

- *Active monitoring*: Monitoring of a configuration item or an IT service that uses automated regular checks to discover the current status.
- *Passive monitoring*: Monitoring of a configuration item, an IT service or a process that relies on an alert or notification to discover the current status.
- *Proactive monitoring*: Monitoring that looks for patterns of events to predict possible future failures.
- *Reactive monitoring*: Monitoring that takes place in response to an event. For example, submitting a batch job when the previous job completes, or logging an incident when an error occurs.

The first two terms are defined by the object they monitor, the other two don't define the object, but only describe an activity.

I'm trying to translate this to my practice, since ITIL is all about Best Practice. But now I'm puzzled. Is there anyone who can explain the difference between Reactive monitoring and Passive monitoring (according to ITIL)? And is there anyone who knows how I should translate this to tooling?