



Mathematics and IT Management, or "What are objectives of COBIT's management processes?"

COBIT 5 clearly describes the COBIT process reference model as just "an example of a process model". It then says that *any* local process model would do, **if it only covers the basic governance and management objectives**:

"In theory, an enterprise can organise its processes as it sees fit, as long as the basic governance and management objectives are covered. Smaller enterprises may have fewer processes; larger and more complex enterprises may have many processes, all to cover the same objectives."

This means that we would have to be able to define an alternative process model that complies with this requirement of "covering the basic governance and management objectives". If we could find that, it would make COBIT available to smaller and less complex organizations, which imho would be "a good thing".

COBIT 5 lists three main governance objectives: benefits realisation, risk optimisation and resource optimisation. Generic objectives of the larger group of management processes are not defined; COBIT only says "*practices and activities in management processes cover the responsibility areas of PBRM enterprise IT, and they have to provide end-to-end coverage of IT.*"

The COBIT 5 core book defines processes through the following statements:

- "*Processes describe an organised set of practices and activities to achieve certain objectives and produce a set of outputs in support of achieving overall IT-related goals.*"
- "*A collection of practices influenced by the enterprise's policies and procedures that takes inputs from a number of sources (including other processes), manipulates the inputs and produces outputs (e.g., products, services).*"

It then says "*Process controls are generic control objectives...*"

Looking at a description of a single process, I only find fields covering "**purpose**" and "**goal**", but not a field for "**objectives**".

The definition of objective is: "*Statement of a desired outcome*".

There is no use of the term "**outcome**" in the practice or process definitions either.

This leaves me with the question: "What are objectives of COBIT's management processes?"

These objectives would be required to demonstrate that an alternative process model complies to the COBIT requirement of "covering the basic governance and management objectives". But where are these objectives described so I can test the alternative process model against these requirements?

You can probably imagine why I prefer mathematics over IT management ;-)