

Chapter 9

An Investigation Into the Critical Success Factors of Implementing Information Technology Service Management Frameworks

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ABSTRACT

During the last decade, many organizations have adopted information technology service management (ITSM) frameworks such as information technology infrastructure library (ITIL). However, such efforts are challenging and costly and not all have been successful. Keeping this in mind, this chapter seeks to identify critical success factors (CSFs) that impact successful implementation of ITSM frameworks with a focus on ITIL. Hence, based on a mixed method, at first, with the semi-structured interviews and literature review, 22 success factors were identified. The data of 122 valid questionnaires were analyzed using robust exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to validate and categorize identified factors. Finally, 22 CSFs are categorized under five “organizational,” “human resources,” “project management,” “managerial,” and “process” main groups. The findings of this study have provided a very useful reference for IT standardization scholars and practitioners to identify the important issues of ITSM frameworks implementation projects in research and practice.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, information technology (IT) has become the backbone of businesses to the point where it would be impossible for them to survive and compete in the market without employing IT facilities. Due to the increasing role of IT in enterprises, its function has shifted from a technology provider and supporter to a strategic partner (Salle & Rosenthal, 2005). The traditional function of IT management (i.e. hardware and software installation, network management, applications management, etc.) now includes business-oriented service support, in which IT services are planned and managed according to their contributions to the required business processes (McNaughton, Ray, & Lewis, 2010).

IT service management (ITSM) -as a concept to support this radical transformation- is a strategy whereby information systems (ISs) are offered under contract to customers and performance is managed as a service (C. Pollard & A. Cater-Steel, 2009). ITSM provides a framework to structure IT operations that enable organizations to deliver quality IT services to meet business needs and adhere to service level agreements (SLAs) (Mesquida, Mas, Amengual, & Calvo-Manzano, 2011). Various ITSM frameworks have been developed to provide guidelines and best practices to help managers improve IT operations. However, the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) has become more popular due to the drivers such as: the pressure to reduce cost or do more for less cost, the push for end-to-end service management, introduction of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for measuring user experience, and requirement of IT to comply with legislations (McNaughton, et al., 2010; C. Pollard & A. Cater-Steel, 2009). Also, according to the results of an online survey conducted by Forrester, Inc. on 92 global IT decision-makers, the ITIL v3 was the most applied methodology for organizational setup or reorganization efforts (as asserted by 38% of respondents) following by Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and ITIL V2 (34% and 33% respectively) (Hubbert, 2010).

There is evidence of the growing global interest to ITIL. For example, in a recent global study, Axios Systems (2008) surveyed 255 IT professionals from global organizations at a series of service management events (conferences, seminars and workshops) across the UK, Australia and America. The results revealed that 64% of IT professionals believe following ITIL is a key to improve IT reputation. The study also depicted that 87% of the organizations followed ITIL guidelines. Further, it can be inferred from the statistics of the study done by Axios-Systems(2008) 33% of organizations intended to adopt ITIL within a year, and 36% were considering its adoption.

The key benefits expected from implementing an ITSM framework such as ITIL are: alignment of IT services with current and probable future business needs, more customer-focused and improved quality of IT services, better internal communication and communication with suppliers and customers, increased IT predictability and efficiency, and a reduction in the long-term costs of service provision (Addy, 2007; Cater-Steel & Toleman, 2009; McNaughton, et al., 2010; Peak, Guynes, & Kroon, 2005; C. Pollard & A. Cater-Steel, 2009; Van Bon et al., 2007; Yamakawa, Noriega, Linares, & Ramírez, 2012; Zare Ravasan, Mansouri, Mohammadi, & Rouhani, 2014). ITIL with introducing a consistent set of processes will highlight potential weaknesses in the previous operations and encourages pro-active improvements. Shortening resolution times, better management control, more reliable services, implementation of permanent solutions to formally acknowledged problems are some of the many ways ITIL will improve the quality of IT services via its proposed guidelines and best practices. As an example, service desk at JPMorgan Chase was able to achieve 75 percent first-call resolution and 93 percent customer satisfaction ratings. 80 percent of the calls coming into the service desk were answered within 20 seconds. The net result of improvement from ITIL implementation was the elimination of 500,000 calls to the service

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