

Chapter 6

Using People–CMM for Diminishing Resistance to ITIL

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ABSTRACT

Information Technology (IT) now plays a fundamental role in most organizations. This increased responsibility and consequent impact in business performance leads to a higher demand and tighter control on IT Departments. To respond to these requirements, IT Departments have been implementing Service Management frameworks, with ITIL currently being the most popular. However, many ITIL projects fail, and the most commonly documented cause is organizational resistance. The main goal of this research work is to test the hypothesis that using best practices described in the People Capability Maturity Model (People-CMM) framework for improving organizational maturity has impact on achieving a greater ITIL maturity as well. This hypothesis was evaluated in three real-world case studies, and based on the results; the conclusion reached was that the hypothesis cannot be rejected. However, more research is needed to prove a cause-effect relation between People-CMM and ITIL.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of Information Technology (IT) in organizations is ever growing, leading to a growing demand on IT management. To satisfy this demand, organizations strive to more effective and efficient practices for IT management. IT

Service Management (ITSM) is an integrative approach to effectively and efficiently support and deliver IT services, giving a better alignment of IT to organization's needs with guaranteed quality (Brenner, 2006).

Several frameworks were developed for applying principles of organizational IT Service

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-2648-5.ch006

Management, being the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) one of the most popular (Ayat, Sharifi, Sahibudin, & Ibrahim, 2009).

ITIL benefits are documented on books and ITIL has grown to become the most widely accepted approach for ITSM in the world (Kashanchi & Toland, 2006; Sharifi, Ayat, Rahman, & Sahibudin, 2008). Nevertheless, a good number of ITIL implementation projects do not reach their end (Ayat et al., 2009; Nicewicz-Modrzewska & Stolarski, 2008). For example, a paper concluded that about 30% of the organizations were disappointed with their ITIL implementation (Cater-Steel & Tan, 2005). The fact is that implementing ITIL is not easy (Roepke, Agarwal, & Ferratt, 2000).

Another study, conducted in several organizations with the objective of creating an ITIL maturity model, demonstrated that the number of organizations who have a poor ITIL implementation should not be ignored (Pereira & Mira da Silva, 2010). Worse than that, the same research concluded that most of the organizations were not aware of that fact.

ITIL involves Processes, Technology and People as illustrated in Figure 1 (Curtis, Hefley, & Miller, 2001; Taylor, Iqbal, & Nieves, 2007). Achieving a balance in this triangle is challenging, so these components (individually or not) should be the origin of the ITIL implementation difficulties.

Processes improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization (Ko, 2009) and are well

documented in ITIL books. But since all organizations implement roughly the same ITIL processes, we assume that processes are not causing those difficulties.

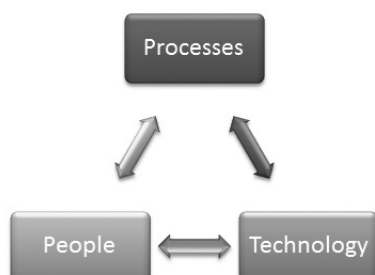
Technology executes those processes by reducing time, effort and costs. On the other hand, technology is becoming considered as a commodity (Carr, 2003). Acquiring technology that supports IT Service Management depends on the budget but there are many decent tools available in the market. So we assume that technology is not causing the difficulties.

People also play a fundamental role; in particular they execute the processes and use the technology. Many studies have been devoted to the importance of people in IT (André-Ampuero, Baldoquín de la Peña, & Acuña Castillo, 2010; Colomo Palacios, Tovar Caro, García Crespo, & Gómez Berbís, 2010). Unlike processes and technology, organizations are composed by different people, organizational structures, communication models and cultures. Assuming that the processes are feasible and the technology is available, probably the people component is the key variable for implementing ITIL successfully. This idea is reinforced in ITIL v3 where people, who were fulfilling different roles, is considered a strategic asset because they are simultaneously resources and capabilities (Taylor et al., 2007).

In fact, Evergreen (2006) shows that the main factor that affects ITIL projects is organizational resistance to change. Some work has been done to address organizational problems in ITIL implementation, including resistance to change (Figueiredo & Mira da Silva, 2009). This reinforces the idea that People are crucial in order to increase the success of ITIL projects.

For example, a Gartner study (Bittinger, 2005) showed that around 25% of ITIL adopters in the Australia region identified the lack of time due to fighting fires as a reason for not implementing ITIL, and an additional 12% considered they do not have enough skills. In Hong Kong, only 7% are too busy fighting fires, but a slightly larger

Figure 1. The three gears of ITIL (adapted from Curtis, et al., 2001; Taylor, et al., 2007)



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