Best Practices For ITSM Process Assessments

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AVP Product Strategy
Pink Elephant
Introduction

Continual Service Improvement
Why Conduct A Process Assessment?
Self Assessments vs External
The main purpose of Continual Service Improvement is to continually align and realign IT services to the business requirements by identifying and implementing improvement opportunities to support the business processes. CSI is looking for ways to improve effectiveness and efficiency and reduce costs.

ITIL is a Service Management Framework. This means that the processes described by ITIL exist for the primary purpose of planning, delivering and supporting IT services.
Quality Systems
Continuous Process Improvement

Quality Systems
- ISO 900x
- TQM
- EFQM
- Six Sigma
- Malcolm Baldrige
- Theory of Constraints
- Statistical Process Control
- Deming
- Etc.

Process Frameworks
- IT Infrastructure Library
- Meta Models
- IBM Processes
- EDS Digital Workflow
- Microsoft MOF
- e-Telecom Ops Map
- Etc.

Define
ITIL Best Practices

Improve

Measure

Control And Stabilize

- What is not defined cannot be controlled
- What is not controlled cannot be measured
- What is not measured cannot be improved

How To Conduct An ITSM Process Assessment
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A Process Assessment Is…

- A standardized survey which determines the quality and effectiveness of the IT Service Management practices in an IT organization
- A repeatable method of objectively gaining an understanding of the quality, structure, maturity and bottlenecks of an IT organization’s Service Management processes

No process can be more efficient than its limiting constraint or bottleneck.

Theory of constraints: Eli Goldratt
The Purpose Of Assessments

- A planning input and tool
- Investment validation
- Driver for compliance
- Provides a baseline to measure the success of an improvement project
Self-assessments

Pros:
- No external assistance required
- Flexibility in scheduling
- Promotes internal cooperation and communication
- Good place to get started
- Internal knowledge of environment

Cons:
- Lack of objectivity
- Acceptance of findings is limited
- Internal politics
- Limited knowledge or skills
- Resource intensive
External Assessments

Pros:
- Objectivity/credibility
- Expert ITIL knowledge
- Broad exposure to multiple IT organizations
- Analytical skills
- Quick turn around on report generation
- Minimal impact to operations

Cons:
- Cost
- Risk of acceptance
- Limited knowledge of environments
- Lack of preparation affects effectiveness
Process Maturity Models

**MATURITY LEVEL:** Degree of process improvement across a predefined set of process areas in which pre-defined criteria are attained (Capability Maturity Model® Integration (CMMI) )

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What Are Maturity Models?

- Maturity Models provide a generic profile of the stages through which the enterprises evolve for management and control of IT processes. They provide:
  - A set of requirements and enabling aspects at different maturity levels
  - A scale:
    - Where difference can easily be measured
    - That lends itself to pragmatic comparison
  - The basis for setting as-is and to-be positions
  - Support for gap analysis to define what needs to be done to achieve a certain level
  - Support for benchmark comparison with other organizations
## Process Maturity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maturity Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>0. Non-Existent</td>
<td>A general lack of process activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Initial</td>
<td>Evidence that the enterprise recognizes issues exist that need to be addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Repeatable</td>
<td>Processes designed so that similar procedures are followed by individuals. There is a high reliance on individual knowledge and skill level.</td>
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<td>3. Defined</td>
<td>A standardized and documented level of process. Communicated through training.</td>
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<td>4. Managed</td>
<td>Processes are good practice and are measured in support of improvement activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Optimized</td>
<td>Processes are best practice and have continual improvement models in place.</td>
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**“Levels of organizational development”**

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# How does it work?

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<tr>
<th>Maturity Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0. Non-Existent</td>
<td>Nothing present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Initial</td>
<td>No standard processes Ad hoc approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Repeatable</td>
<td>No formal training or communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Defined</td>
<td>Standardized and documented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Managed</td>
<td>Monitor and measure compliance to procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Optimized</td>
<td>Proactive and continuous self improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Defined Characteristics:**
- Visible results
- Documented procedures
- Formal training
- Active rather than reactive
- Onus on individual for compliance
- Formal planning
How does it work?

**Incident Management**

**Activities:**
- Incident detection and registration
- Initial support, investigation and diagnosis
- Resolution and recovery
- Management reporting

Survey questions are aligned to specific activities defined in ITIL.

Each answer is numeric. Select the level of maturity that matches.

0. ___________
1. ___________
2. ___________
3. ___________
4. ___________
ITSM Process Maturity

How does it work?

**Incident detection and registration**

Characteristics and bottlenecks:
1. ___________
2. ___________
3. ___________
4. ……

**Questions:**
- What is considered to be an Incident?
- What sources of Incidents are recognized?
- Are the Incidents notified registered?
- …

Questions are used as guides for scoring. The assessor must probe for in-depth information.
Question Approach

Question 1:
Is the definition of an Incident clearly understood and applied in the organization?

Participants score each question from 1 to 5.

Question 1a:
How important is this to your organization?

Questions are used as guides in the workshop to probe for capability, depth and perceived importance as compared to management targets.
# Benchmarking Process Maturity

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident/SD</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Level</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Configuration</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Benchmarking Considerations

- Consistent process and policy definition
- Scope and scale of deployment
  - Level of process maturity
  - Level of integration
  - Level of automation
- Consistent models for measurement
- Consistency in approach to the assessment
- Initial versus subsequent assessment
- Size of the benchmark database

Are the numbers relative to your environment?
Assessment Preparation

Milestones
Assessment Models
Communication
Kick-off Session
Assessment Milestones

Assessment Preparation & Planning
- Problem Definition
- Scope Definition
- Organizational Context
- Selecting assessment model
- Selection of Assessment Team, stakeholders and participants
- Assessment scheduling

Assessment Awareness & Kick-Off
- Scope
- Reason
- Explanation
- Context

Process Questionnaires

Data Gathering
- Data Validation
- Surveys
- Workshops
- Interviews

Data Analysis & Report Generation
- Problem Definition
- Answer Formulation

Report Handover & Presentation
- Findings
- Scores
- Quick Wins
- Road map
Assessment Models

- Electronic / Paper Survey Distribution
- Workshop / Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Hybrid Model
Assessment Team Roles

- Sponsor
- Coordinator / Project Manager, Client Admin
- Assessor Roles (Lead Assessor, Scribe) (Internal/External)
- Survey Participants (management, staff, contractors)
- Workshop/Interview Participants
- Scope Considerations:
  - Organizational representation?
  - Geographical representation?
  - Political considerations?
  - Customer involvement?
  - Vendor/Supplier involvement?
Assessment Scheduling

- Overall assessment duration
  - Planning phase
  - Communication, training and kick-off
    - Templates/scripts for invitations, introductions, schedules
  - Data gathering and validation
    - Surveys, workshops, interviews
  - Data analysis and report generation
  - Quality assurance
  - Presentation of results
  - Roadmap planning

- Scope considerations:
  - Multi regional / Global assessments
    - Sequential or parallel
    - Consolidation of results
Key Assessment Communication

- Sponsor communicates to stakeholders and participants (who, what, why, when, where and how)
- Kick-off workshop with assessment participants (face to face and virtual)
- Invitation and reminders to fill out electronic surveys
- Invitation and reminders to attend workshops and interviews
- Presentation of results

Note: A lot of calendar work, RSVP and attendance tracking
Gathering & Interpreting Data

Managing Surveys
Conducting Workshops
Interviewing Techniques
Managing Surveys

1. Set up surveys.
2. Select processes and questions.
3. Identify participants by process.
4. Gather participant profile and contact information (name, title, address, email, telephone, process involvement, etc.).
5. Load participants into the tool. (e-survey only)
6. Assign participants to processes.
7. Send out initial communication (invitation, login credentials, timeline, deadline).
8. Monitor survey completion status.
9. Send reminder communications.
10. Survey closure.
11. Provide survey results to lead assessor for input into any plan workshop or interviews, if using a hybrid model.
Typical Workshop Agenda 1-2 hrs

- Introductions
- Review assessment goals
- Review process elements
- Review collateral brought by participants (sample documents)
- Interview using in-depth probing of process questions
- Summarize
- Close

1. Be punctual.
2. Create an open atmosphere.
3. Set the participant(s) at ease.
4. Set expectations (timeframe, deliverables, communications).
Interview - Types Of Questions

- **Open-ended Question**
  - Prompts the respondent for descriptive information (what do you think, feel, do, understand…)

- **Probing Question**
  - Asks for more details based on the output of the initial open-ended questions

- **Closed-ended Question**
  - Prompts for a binary “yes” or “no” or a very brief answer

- **Leading Question**
  - This type of questioning tends to guide the respondents in a desired direction and should be avoided
Questioning Model

1. State the topic for the question (framing).
2. Ask a well-worded question.
3. Listen actively to the response.
4. Ask a probing question if necessary to ensure understanding.
5. Paraphrase and clarify the response (play back).
6. Frame the next question.
Obtaining Participant Input For Findings

- Re-affirm and protect the anonymous nature of the information being gathered from the participants
- Avoid the use of recording devices
- Make sure you take very good notes. Your report will be impacted directly based on the commentary and quotes you can document
- Don’t accept evasive or superficial answers. Ask the participants to clarify with examples
- Listen actively with a conversational/non-adversarial tone
- Maintain control of the interview and don’t let the wave of conversation pull you off track or topic (be careful of the participants’ hot topic they want to focus on)
- Leave some time at the end of the interview for questions. This provides a sense of closure for the participants
Dealing With Strong Personalities

- It is inevitable that the assessment will have to deal with strong and controlling personalities during the data gathering process. There is a risk that these people will control conversation and responses and dominate the workshop. The following approaches can be used to mitigate this risk:
  1. Move the person to an interview rather than a workshop.
  2. Avoid mixing different levels of participants within a workshop if possible (Management, Staff, Contractor).
  3. Ask the following questions within the workshop:
     1. Is there anyone with a differing opinion?
     2. Is everyone in agreement with what is being said?
  4. If the workshop is obviously being controlled by one individual, take an unscheduled break and speak to the person privately about the situation.
  5. Worst case scenario is that the workshop needs to be re-run without the dominate person in attendance (discretion of the sponsor).
Analyzing & Evaluating Assessment Results

Process Maturity Levels
Integration Scores
Culture Assessment
A primary consideration of process maturity is consistency of practice across the scope of the “Process Assessment”.

A narrow assessment scope can give a false positive!
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## Generic Process Maturity Levels

“Levels of organizational development”
# Using A Maturity Scale With Integration

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<tr>
<th><strong>Integration Level</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>0. Non-Existent</td>
<td>There is no integration or sharing of data between processes in an informal or formal manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Evidence that the enterprise recognizes the need and purpose for process integration exists; however, that need is yet to be addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Repeatable         | Integration and data sharing between processes occurs on an informal or infrequent basis.  
|                       | There is little to no documentation related to expected inputs and output from other processes.  
|                       | Process integration is largely unidirectional. |
| 3. Defined            | A standardized and documented level of process integration is defined and communicated through training.  
|                       | Process integration occurs bi-directionally. |
| 4. Managed            | Process integration is effective and is measured in support of improvement activities. |
| 5. Optimized          | Process integration is monitored and improved over time and has formal continual improvement models in place |
Process Index (Maturity + Integration)

Process Index:

- (Avg. Maturity x100) + (Avg. Integration x100) = Process Score
- \[ \frac{(\text{Avg. Maturity} \times 100) + (\text{Avg. Integration} \times 100)}{1000} \times 100 = \text{Process Rating} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
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<th>Integration Maturity</th>
<th>Process Score</th>
<th>Process Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability Management</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity Management</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Benefit Of Index

- Shows detailed improvements:
  - Process Maturity
  - Integration Maturity
  - Process Index Rating
Post-assessment Activities

Report Structure & Content
Quality Assurance Steps
Communicating The Results
Example Report Structure

- Executive Summary (3-6 Pages)
  - Process Maturity scores versus targets
  - Overall Observations/Conclusions
  - Overall Recommendations

- Report Body
  - Project Background and Problem Definition (1 page)
  - Process Maturity Scoring (1 page)
  - IT Organization and Environment (1-2 pages)
  - Project Scope, Constraints (1 page)
  - Process Analysis 1 (e.g.: Incident Management) (2-3 pages) x ?
    - Process Goal / Maturity Score
    - Process Specific Observations/Conclusions
    - Process Specific Recommendations
  - Organizational Climate / Culture (2-3 pages)

- Report Summary (1 page)
Giving The Report Context

- Project Background & Problem Definition
  - Write a brief summary describing why this report was commissioned and how the results will be used to support the initial problem definition

- Process Maturity Scoring
  - Provide a summary and definition of the assessment results and scores

- IT Organization and Environment
  - Provide the context of who participated in the assessment and how key stakeholders were involved

- Project Scope, Constraints
  - Provide a clear scope and constraint summary in order to give the assessment results context and boundaries
- **Detailed Process Analysis**
  
  - **Process Goal/Maturity Score**
    - Restate the ITIL process goal and list the primary process elements being assessed
  
  - **Process Specific Observations/Conclusions**
    - Compare current process execution against the ITSM standard with an identification of the impact of the observations (either negative or positive). Each observation should answer the “So What” question
  
  - **Process Specific Recommendations:**
    - Should highlight gaps against the ITIL good practices
    - Should be ordered and prioritized by quick win and business risk
    - Should be aligned with observations and conclusions
    - Should include a statement of benefits expected
Quality Assurance Steps

1. Draft report is reviewed by peers within the assessment team for content accuracy.

2. Draft report is reviewed by a group not directly related to the assessment team for grammar, documentation standards and spelling errors. (Examples: Marketing, corporate communications, etc.)

3. Sections of the draft report are shared with Process Owners to ensure no gross errors. Any changes to the findings must be supported by substantiated evidence provided by the process owners.

4. The report is adjusted and shared with the sponsor and senior leadership as Final.
Presentation Of Results

- Once the Final Report has been completed, the results must be communicated to the people in the organization.
- Not communicating the results in some form will result in negative sentiments regarding the assessment or in improvement activities associated with the final report.
- Types of communication:
  - Sponsor and senior stakeholder summary
  - Detailed process owner sessions
  - General information sessions
Quick Wins

A Quick Win describes an improvement in actual or perceived service quality, achieved within a short space of time with relatively little effort.

The assessment will point to many activities that can be done in a short period of time without necessarily launching a formal improvement project.

Versus

Pareto Principle At Work

80% of the effects comes from 20% of the causes
Looking For Quick Wins Where It Counts

Value Of IT Processes To The Business

Maturity of IT Processes

High $$

High

Low $$

Low

RISK!!

RDM

CM

IM

SLM

SACM

Additional Considerations:

- Added business value
- Ability to implement
- Quick gains
- Costs
- Resources
- Competing projects
- Culture
- Etc.

“Largely Overdoing It” In Relation To The Low Value Of IT To The Business

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Assessment Milestones

- **Assessment Preparation & Planning**
  - Problem Definition
  - Scope Definition
  - Organizational Context
  - Selecting assessment model
  - Selection of Assessment Team, stakeholders and participants
  - Assessment scheduling

- **Assessment Awareness & Kick-Off**
  - Scope
  - Reason
  - Explanation
  - Context

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  - Data Validation
  - Surveys
  - Workshops
  - Interviews

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  - Answer Formulation

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  - Findings
  - Scores
  - Quick Wins
  - Road map
Questions?

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