



Top 10 Things Managers Should Know About Implementing ITIL

Pink Elephant's consultants help hundreds of organizations each year to implement ITIL best practices. Because of their vast experience and knowledge, our consultants are often asked about the best way to approach ITIL implementation projects. Here's some general, high level guidance and important considerations.

Number Ten: ITIL implementations need to be managed as a formal project.

To be successful, a deliberate well-planned project management approach should be taken. It is best not to engage in ad hoc unconnected activities. Some key considerations include:

- Create an overall vision and strategy
- Assign a program / project manager
- Create a project team
- Assign: Executive Sponsors, Program Sponsors, Process Owners and other key roles (refer to previous PinkLink articles for guidance)
- Develop a project plan and manage it effectively
- Assign accountability for desired outcomes

Number Nine: It takes resources including time and money.

Implementing an ITIL Service Desk and all ten support and delivery processes takes years, not weeks or months. Consider the following:

- There must be sufficient time for planning, and selling the benefits of ITIL
- Implementing a single process to a desired level of maturity requires a great deal of management attention
- There are many costs associated with implementation: education costs, project costs, purchase of new or upgraded tools and systems, and possibly even the use of external consultants
- There will be IT staff required for development and implementation of the processes, which means new roles have to be created

Number Eight: It will require education and training.

Because everyone has to "speak the same language", a thorough well-organized education plan should be developed and executed.

- ITIL implementation involves all IT employees – from the very top on down, and all across the board. It's important to include everyone, and to customize education to suit individual roles and responsibilities
- Numerous courses are available on the market to educate (and certify) employees
- Training has to go beyond just the ITIL IT Service Management model. An education plan should also include: Organizational Design, Organizational Change, Leading Change, Process Maturity, Quality and Continuous Improvement, Overcoming Resistance to Change

Number Seven: More than ITIL processes will change.

Implementing ITIL means that attention has to be given to many areas of the organization, not just ITIL processes. These include:



- HR management: compensation, org structures, and reward and recognition have to support new roles and responsibilities
- People: new roles, job descriptions, beliefs, values and disciplines have to be firmly planted
- Technology has to support new processes
- Interrelationships with other business processes has to be considered

Number Six: A strong Communication Plan will need to be executed.

In order to ensure successful outcomes, a strong communication strategy and plan are must-haves.

- Communication strategy should provide direction
- Communication plan should lay out what needs to happen, when, who will be involved and what needs to be communicated
- Execution of the plan is ongoing and accountability should be assigned for desired outcomes
- Senior Management plays a key role throughout the entire program, not just kick-off
- Communicate often, and on an ongoing basis, using many different mediums

Number Five: It takes Management commitment and participation.

- It all starts at the top. Senior management must show visible commitment often, and on an ongoing basis
- Follow Kotter's eight step model and advise for Leading Change (refer to previous PinkLinks for detailed descriptions):
 - Create a sense of urgency
 - Develop a guiding coalition team
 - Get the vision right
 - Communicate for buy-in
 - Empower action
 - Create short term wins
 - Don't let up
 - Make change stick

Number Four: Organizational culture will need to change.

In order for change to stick, cultural issues have to be addressed. Examine your culture closely:

- The personality of the organization: behaviors, beliefs, systems, written and unwritten policies and procedures, and values
- Leadership and management styles and corporate climate
- Are you promoting a culture of service and continuous improvement?

Number Three: There will be resistance.

Be prepared. Resistance to change is inevitable and everyone experiences it to some degree. Leaders must be prepared to manage this aspect of change effectively in order to help the organization move quickly from resistance and denial to acceptance.

- Resistance patterns are predictable and can be managed, provided a plan has been developed
- Most people resist change because of perceived or real threats. If these are identified, communication efforts can address these head on



- An effective communication plan helps to overcome resistance to change – this is the secret weapon for overcoming resistance to change

Number Two: It takes everyone's involvement.

One way to overcome resistance to change is employee involvement.

- Everyone has good ideas to contribute – give employees the opportunity
- A cross representation of IT is the best solution to building a single process. Don't focus on just one group or department; get everyone's input. All stakeholders can make a valuable contribution
- Getting as many people involved as possible creates a sense of ownership

And, the number one thing that every manager should know about implementing ITIL is: It's worth doing!

Implementing best practices according to ITIL will:

- Provide improved business results
- Move you from a reactive to a proactive organization
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency of IT processes which often leads to reduced IT costs
- Improve service delivery

In Conclusion

There is no silver bullet. Best Practice process development and implementation take a strong commitment from the organization. And remember, it is not necessary to implement ITIL as is, rather use it as a guideline and ensure it is fit for purpose.

Want To Learn More?

1. Attend Pink Elephant's **9th Annual IT Service Management Conference & Exhibition** in Orlando on February 6-9, 2005. This year's program features 9 tracks with over 80 sessions, including many case studies presentations from IT managers who've successfully implemented ITIL best practices.
<http://www.pinkelephant.com/pinkevents.asp?confid=sm5&id=pl46n-1>
2. Attend Pink Elephant's new **Public ITIL Overviews** – they're free. These half day sessions are designed for senior managers who are new to ITIL and want to gain a high level understanding of key strategic benefits and features. There are numerous locations and dates scheduled. Click [here](#) for the full program and calendar.

<http://www.pinkelephant.com/conference/POV05?id=pl46n-1>