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# ITIL Version 3 – What The Changes Could Mean To You

# ITIL Version 3 – What The Changes Could Mean To You

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## Introduction

The IT Infrastructure Library® (ITIL®) v3, released in 2007, is an exciting major overhaul of the previous version. Its focus on managing IT along business lines and a movement away from strict process control is having a dramatic impact on the entire IT industry. The concepts put forth in ITIL v3 extend into four key areas:

Improvements and clarifications on ITIL v2 processes including Service Level Management, Knowledge Management, Configuration Management and the new Service Catalog, Request Fulfillment, Event, Demand Management, and Access Management processes, as well as a host of others.

Inclusion of more prescriptive functional activity guidance. Whereas ITIL v2 contained one functional description (the Service Desk), ITIL v3 contains many more, and it also includes detailed explanations and descriptions of common activities and technology concerns for each major section of the new ITIL.

A focus on the role of business in IT and how IT management can and should interact with customers to develop IT strategy, including a new 4-step model for realizing service strategy that stresses the importance of strategy over process.

A “hub-and-spoke” design with a descriptive core framework as the hub and complimentary guidance based on relevant industry best practices such as CMMI®, Six Sigma, CobiT®, eTOM®, PMI®, and others; it also includes industry standards like ISO 20000, popular business books, and web content.

An enhanced and clarified descriptive core, more prescriptive additions, better guidance on business alignment, and recent international standards approvals move ITIL from a “nice to have” to a “must have” for any IT professional or organization. If you have been putting off ITIL, now is the time to begin. If you are already implementing ITIL, you must consider these new capabilities. In either case, you need to understand the impact that ITIL v3 is having on the IT industry.

## ITIL Version 3

The goal of the new ITIL is to provide a business-aligned implementation that you can customize to your specific situation. New topics include: understanding business catalysts and how they produce IT strategies; how you should respond to specific business drivers like compliance, regulation, demand management; and how to interoperate with other standards and best practices.

ITIL v3 uses an IT services lifecycle model in a hub-and-spoke design with fundamental core concepts as the hub and specific market and industry guidance as the spokes. Because ITIL involves best practices, it can never

be fully prescriptive and must always remain descriptive. However, the changes to ITIL v3 are more detailed and industry-directed and, thus, more prescriptive than the previous ITIL.

ITIL v3 also provides significant new resources to help align with business, communicate with customers, manage suppliers, and manage services.

### Reasons for ITIL v3

The UK's Office of Government Commerce (OGC) owns the core guidance and the ITIL brand, but they passed responsibility for stewardship to itSMF International (international ITIL user group). They also engaged the APM Group Limited (APMG) to manage the ITIL v3 certification process and program, which is dramatically changed from ITIL v2.

According to a letter written from the OGC to the itSMF discussing collaboration on ITIL v3 development:

"Ownership in this context means OGC is the ultimate authority on the content of core guidance in ITIL and provides visible endorsement through use of OGC-owned brands and trademarks."

"Stewardship means the assurance that the guidance is truly best practice through the engagement of experts in development and promulgation."

ItSMF stewardship is important and makes ITIL v3 truly representative of the industry and driven by input from the worldwide ITIL community. The ITIL v3 refresh committee solicited and reviewed 530 written responses and over 6,000 comments—representing 80% of the countries with an itSMF chapter.

As taken from the ITIL refresh publication, the top changes requested were:

**Provide consistent structure and navigation throughout the entire library.** ITIL v3 is much more consistent in its use of terms and its structure than previous versions.

**Preserve the fundamental core concepts of the existing Service Support and Service Delivery books while expanding and improving upon these fundamental concepts.** ITIL v3 has five primary books that incorporate all of the ITIL v2 processes. Further, ITIL v3 has clarified discrepancies many practitioners found in ITIL v2. For example, ITIL v3 has a new Request Fulfillment process; whereas ITIL v2 promoted a service request as a form of Incident.

**Include best practices that extend deeper into service management concepts and reflect ITIL's relevance to business in a more tangible way, and show how ITIL can be built into business processes and cycles.** ITIL v3 has more content practitioners can use in the form of tools, worksheets and models than ITIL v2. Additionally, ITIL v3 expands to include not only processes, but also functions. Whereas ITIL v2 has one function (the Service Desk), ITIL v3 offers many functional descriptions of common activities, how to organize, roles, technology considerations, and how to implement.

**Provide guidance on the softer issues of organizational structures, cultural issues, and an understanding of the interfaces to other best practices that help support effective ITIL practices in the workplace.** Primary improvements here include business alignment techniques, and aligning with popular complimentary guidance outside of the traditional IT mix. For example, a focus on knowledge management, and referencing popular non-IT books around financial and change management.

**Provide a knowledge management strategy to support the service management needs of business and IT environments today and tomorrow.** Within the ITIL the new Service Knowledge Management System (SKMS) guidance helps practitioners manage and grow knowledge – the cornerstone of productivity and efficiency.

**Demonstrate and articulate value, benefits, and Return on Investment (ROI) to establish the value proposition for ITIL.** ITIL v3 says not to start your ITIL journey with process, but rather business strategy and service value. This fundamental shift is extremely valuable to IT managers and practitioners since one of the top issues IT faces is communicating with business executives in business terms.

**Reflect the reality of today's business, operational, procurement, and technical environments including the use of ITIL in multi-sourced IT environments.** ITIL v3 excels in this regard with the introduction of service provider categories that include commercial IT service providers and guidance for supplier management.

The purpose of ITIL v3 as defined by the OGC is, "to ensure, on behalf of all interested parties, that ITIL provides a single, coherent description of IT service management core activities and products, based on best practice, supported by high-quality qualifications and services that are consistent with the core principles of ITIL." The new version delivers on all counts.

## ITIL v3 Structure

Logically, ITIL v3 has three components called Core, Complementary, and Web:

The "Core" component has five primary volumes covering the lifecycle of IT services from business need to service optimization. It subsumes and clarifies the entirety of ITIL v2 Service Support and Service Delivery while adding significant new content.

"Complementary Guidance" includes specific content targeting particular situations, industries, and environments. Examples here include industry frameworks like COBIT, Six Sigma, PMI, and eTOM; as well as international standards such as ISO 9000 and 20000.

A "Web" component provides a dynamic resource for commonly needed and topical materials. The web component has dedicated websites ([www.best-management-practice.com/Knowledge-Centre/](http://www.best-management-practice.com/Knowledge-Centre/) and [www.best-management-practice.com/IT-Service-Management-ITIL/](http://www.best-management-practice.com/IT-Service-Management-ITIL/)) that offer process models, whitepapers, glossaries, downloadable quick reference guides and even an "Ask the Expert" area to aid practitioners.

### The Core Component

The Core of ITIL v3 is a set of five primary volumes instead of the two primary volumes of ITIL v2 (Service Delivery and Service Support.) The v3 core follows a service lifecycle model spanning activities from service design to retirement. This includes the key concepts and generic practices that do not change frequently. The titles and descriptions of the primary ITIL v3 volumes are:

**Service Strategy:** Hub of the core; understanding and translating business into IT strategy; recognizing and responding to business catalysts; selecting the best practices based on industry, regulatory environment, firm size, etc. Service Strategy is the basis of the lifecycle approach running through the ITIL. ITIL v2 processes of

Financial Management merge with new processes like Demand Management and Service Portfolio Management to make Service Strategy the starting point for ITIL implementations and project justification.

**Service Design:** IT service and architecture design models to consider, including outsourcing, in-sourcing, co-sourcing, etc. Service Design includes (the ITIL v2 processes of) Service Level, Capacity, Availability and IT Service Continuity Management along with new processes of Information Security, Supplier and Service Catalog Management.

**Service Transition:** How to move a new or changed service from design into the live environment. Topics include Change and Release Management, service models, and checklists for taking designs into production (analogous to a software development lifecycle but for IT services.) Changes here include updating the ITIL v2 Configuration Management process into the Service Asset and Configuration Management process. ITIL v3 also includes significant enhancements for Knowledge Management and increases guidance on deployment activities.

**Service Operation:** How to manage services in the live or production environment; day-to-day management issues; how to react to failures; how to develop and monitor metrics of quality; and how to manage the reactive elements and processes. Service Operation includes Incident and Problem Management from ITIL v2, but expands and clarifies these operational tasks with the new Event, Request Fulfillment and Access Management processes.

**Continual Service Improvement:** How to continue the ITIL journey. ITIL v3 paints service management as a continuous process, and this volume describes how to monitor and improve a service over time. This volume is most similar to the ITIL v2 "Green Book" titled "Planning to Implement Service Management." Its focus is on the idea that Service Management is never finished, but must continue as long as the service is in use.

## Complementary Guidance

The next logical section of ITIL v3 is the Complementary Guidance. This part addresses application of the generic core guidance in particular market, technological, or regulatory contexts. The Complementary component will change as required, perhaps annually or quarterly. Examples include the recently revised "ITIL in Small IT Units" and the new "Official Introduction to the ITIL Service Lifecycle."

The Complementary component contains particular guidance by marketing segment or need. You can choose guidance based on governance like COBIT, methodology like CMMI and Six Sigma, particular technology, business model, or even business drivers like Sarbanes-Oxley.

Complementary Guidance helps you customize ITIL to suit your specific requirements. It also provides guidance on interacting with various other best practices and standards. A recent example of this is the white paper produced by the IT Governance Institute (ITGI, owners of COBIT) and OGC. They released a joint paper to explain how COBIT and ITIL should be used together to provide a hierarchy of guidance. They also say they plan to continue aligning terminology and content of their practices with other practices to facilitate easier integration.

Going forward, we can expect further integration and guidance with other standards and best practices. This guidance on integration with other standards makes choosing and implementing ITIL easier and the results more predictable.

## Web-based Knowledge Center

The web component is a dynamic on-line resource that can change as often as required—just like a company web site. Content in this component provides web-based support for existing and aspiring ITIL users. Examples of materials include glossaries, process maps, and ITIL definitions.

## Certifications

There are two broad groupings of certifications underpinned by the ITIL:

- Professional certification for individuals
- Organizational certification via ISO-20000 certification and audit standards

### Personal Certifications

APMG administers the professional certification program. APMG members include the OGC, the Information Systems Examination Board (ISEB), and the Examination Institute for Information Science (EXIN).

Currently there are four levels of professional certification for ITIL v3. A new series of so-called bridge courses allow accelerated ITIL v3 certification of individuals who already hold ITIL v2 certifications. The following scheme replaces the venerable Foundation, Practitioner and Manager certifications of ITIL v2:

**Foundation Level:** Equivalent to ITIL v2 Foundation certification, ITIL v3 Foundation focuses on knowledge and comprehension to provide a good grounding in key concepts, terminology and processes of ITIL. It (or the ITIL v2-v3 bridge program) is a prerequisite to all other ITIL certifications.

**Intermediate Level:** The Intermediate series replaces the Practitioner certifications of ITIL v2. There are three certifications at the Intermediate level: – Lifecycle, Capability, and Managing Across the Lifecycle. There are two independent streams or tracks (Lifecycle and Capability), that comprise nine modules covering most ITIL content. Each stream leads to the Managing Across the Lifecycle certification option:

**Intermediate Lifecycle Stream** - 5 individual certificates built around Service Strategy, Service Design, Service Transition, Service Operation, and Continual Service Improvement.

**Intermediate Capability Stream** - 4 individual certificates loosely based on the ITIL v2 Practitioner offerings but broader in scope to be in line with the updated V3 content.

**ITIL Expert:** To achieve the ITIL Expert in IT Service Management, candidates must successfully complete, in addition to the Foundation Level, a number of Intermediate units and the “Managing Through the Lifecycle” capstone course. This course brings together the full essence of a lifecycle approach to service management and consolidates the knowledge gained across the qualification scheme.

**Advanced Service Management Professional Diploma:** This level of the qualification will assess an individual's ability to apply and analyze the ITIL concepts in new areas. (This higher-level diploma is currently under development.)

The new certification scheme is currently transitioning, and the previous scheme is retiring. The existing v2 ITIL certifications (Foundation, Practitioner, and Service Manager) remain valid, relevant, and valuable. However, from a content perspective, the certification programs are dramatically different, given the expansion and refocusing of the ITIL.

Core to the new APMG strategy is the concept of earning education points. In this context, individual courses, such as Foundation and the 9 individual Intermediate courses, contribute points toward earning the ITIL Expert and Diploma certifications. Existing ITIL v2 certifications also count directly toward the ITIL Expert and Diploma.

In summary, the new ITIL v3 personal certifications are different, but similar to their v2 predecessors. They focus on the lifecycle underpinning ITIL v3 and offer significantly greater choice and flexibility than the previous scheme.

## Organizational Certification

ITIL v3 is not a standard and thus has no auditing criteria. Some choose COBIT for audits, but COBIT is not a standard either. For this reason, the International Standards Organization (ISO) released ISO 20000 in December 2005. For the first time, IT has an international standard for auditing and certifying IT.

ISO 20000 is part of the complimentary guidance described within ITIL v3. ISO 20000 is an industry standard like ISO 9000/9001, and like ISO 9000/9001, ISO 20000 offers organizational certification. As a standard, ISO 20000 shows IT professionals how to manage and improve IT while establishing audit criteria. It also provides auditors with a documented standard to use for measuring IT compliance.

The ITIL offers certifications for individuals; ISO 20000 is an organizational certification with international recognition based on ITIL. This removes one of the toughest problems faced in IT today—management commitment. Every senior manager in an ISO 9000-certified company knows the benefits that came from gaining that status. With ISO 20000, it will now be much easier to gain “mind share” among senior management. ISO 20000 is really two specifications, ISO/IEC 20000-1:2005 and ISO/IEC 20000-2:2005, referred to as ISO 20000-1 and 20000-2:

ISO 20000-1 is the specification for Service Management. It defines the processes and provides assessment criteria and recommendations for those responsible for IT Service Management. Organizational certification uses this section.

ISO 20000-2 documents a code of practice that explains how to manage IT with regard to ISO 20000-1 audits.

Both ISO 20000-1 and ISO 20000-2 derive directly from the ITIL best practice. ISO 20000 groups ITIL processes into five core bundles:

**Service Delivery Processes:** Service Level Management, Availability Management, Capacity Management, Continuity Management, and Budgeting and Accounting for IT Services (Financial Management) along with Information Security Management and Service reporting

**Relationship Processes:** Business Relationship Management and Supplier Management. This theme has been expanded and clarified throughout ITIL v3.

**Resolution Processes:** Incident Management and Problem Management; ITIL v3 now includes Event, Request Fulfillment and Access Management processes

**Control Processes:** Configuration Management and Change Management

## **Release Process:** Release Management

ITIL underpins ISO 20000, so you may already understand much of this standard. ITIL v3 catches up to ISO 20000 by including ISO 20000 concepts of Supplier and Security Management.

## Summary of ITIL v3

Significant new content; a shift in focus from process to strategy; new certifications based on clusters of processes; an alignment with ITGI on the COBIT framework; a new international standard based on the ITIL—what does it all mean? It means that a boom in ITIL adoption and a significant requirement for ITIL certification is now here.

The new focus on utility, business involvement, and expanded descriptions of functions and common operational activities means ITIL v3 delivers on its goal “to ensure, on behalf of all interested parties, that ITIL provides a single, coherent description of IT service management core activities and products, based on best practice, supported by high-quality qualifications and services that are consistent with the core principles of ITIL.”

Key new value encapsulated within ITIL v3 includes:

**ITIL v3 is more prescriptive:** The business aligned lifecycle theme of the ITIL, along with certification programs based on related process clusters, delivers a much more prescriptive ITIL. ITIL v3 is easy to customize and offers specific guidance based on the implementer’s unique requirements, thereby resolving many of the most common complaints implementers have had about the ITIL.

**ITIL v3 fully supports, endorses and recommends other standards and frameworks:** The specific support for other best practices and standards makes ITIL implementation more integrated and focused than ever before. Guidance on interoperability takes the guesswork out of implementing ITIL within specific industry or regulatory environments.

**ITIL v3 aligns with an international IT auditing standard:** Now that ITIL has caught up to ISO 20000 IT has a standard for auditing and certifying IT organizations and staff. Several governments state that ISO 20000 is a requirement for outsourced IT services. As the industry recognizes the value of ISO 20000, more companies will require their partners and vendors to reach ISO 20000 certification, just as they did for ISO 9000. ISO 20000 organizational certification virtually requires ITIL certification for individuals.

## Conclusion

As the IT industry standardizes its operations to solve business problems in the most efficient, effective, economical, and equitable way, ITIL v3 becomes a useful and critical tool. In combination with certification and audit frameworks like ISO 20000 and COBIT, ITIL v3 fully blossoms and takes IT and business alignment to a new level of possibility.

If your organization is already ISO 9000/9001-certified, you will have a much easier time gaining and maintaining management commitment for your ITIL implementation. In addition, if you are already implementing or adopting ITIL, there is now an international audit and certification available.

ITIL v3 includes an impressive array of solutions for achieving and sustaining Business IT Alignment, showing value and delivering return on investment. If you have been putting off ITIL, now is the time to begin implementing it. If you are implementing ITIL, you need to understand these changes and take advantage of them. The more prescriptive additions and alignment with business drivers that ITIL v3 contains can help you accelerate acceptance and success in your organization.

## Learn More

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[ITIL v3 Awareness](#)

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## About the Author

Hank Marquis is Chief Technology Officer at itSM Solutions LLC, a Global Knowledge Partner. Previously CTO at Opticom, a venture-funded producer of IT Service Management software, Hank is an ITSM entrepreneur, practitioner, and manager with over 25 years of practical hands-on experience gained at the U.S. Government, MCI, US Sprint, Timeplex, Compuware, and other organizations. He was an early ITIL proponent, adopter, and frequent contributor to the ITIL community. He writes the popular weekly DITY™ (DoIT Yourself™) column, lectures on ITIL, and teaches IT executives how to implement ITIL. He has written dozens of articles; several books; and Cisco, CompTIA, ISEB, and EXIN certification programs. He holds the highest ITIL credential—ITIL Service Manager (Masters) certification, with distinction in Service Delivery.