

Service Lifecycle

Each step of the improvement process is designed to assist in the activity of CSI. The process makes it reasonably simple to see what takes place; the challenge is to realize this in the live environment. The seven-step process spans the entire service lifecycle and is the driving force behind continual service improvement. Note how the 7 steps correspond with the PDCA approach, and the DIKW knowledge management model.

Service Strategy

Service strategy is at the core of the service lifecycle. Its purpose is to define the strategic approach for service management across the whole of the lifecycle. ITIL says that this includes understanding the perspective, position, plans and patterns that a service provider needs to be able to deliver services that meet the business needs. By understanding the business outcomes, we will be able to guide the focus for the whole of the service lifecycle.

Service Design

The purpose of Service Design is to deliver a new service or a change to an existing service which is capable of delivering the strategic outcome required. This involves not only the technology used to deliver the service, but the processes and policies needed to ensure that the technical solution delivers the intended value. It considers what will be required by the transition phase to implement the service in the live environment, how the service will perform, and what will be required to support it.

Service Transition

The purpose of Service Transition is to ensure that the services that have been agreed and designed through the stages of strategy and design are now delivered effectively into operation.

Service transition ensures that new, modified or retired services meet the expectations of the business as documented in the service strategy and service design stages of the lifecycle. It is concerned with the experience for the customer and user, and also for the support staff. All the stakeholders who will be receiving the new service, or change to the existing services, need to be considered as part of the transition planning. If a service is to be retired, the same careful and considered approach should be adopted, so that the retirement of the service is seamless, particularly if there is a replacement service being implemented at the same time.

Continual Service Improvement

The purpose of CSI is to continue to support the business with IT services, in the face of changing business needs. Continual service improvement is there to make sure that the changes in business processes that keep the business alive and thriving, are recognized, and the IT services that support those processes, change with them.

CSI is concerned with the improvement of all aspects of the service lifecycle, from strategy, through to design, transition and operation. Failure to implement processes that support our services, which are measurable, repeatable and manageable, will have an impact on the business. In addition to this, continual service improvement should be seeking for improvements in cost effectiveness and efficiency.

Service Operation

The purpose of the Service Operation stage of the service lifecycle is to deliver the service at the levels agreed by service level management. Service operations is responsible for carrying out all the activities required to deliver the service, and to manage the technology required. This may include applying updates, backing up data, and so on. In order to ensure that the planned value actually is delivered, operations must deliver the service at or below the cost in the original business case.

