

WHAT IS...?

ITIL® Change Enablement (CE)

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What is Change Enablement?

The purpose of the **change enablement** practice is to maximize the number of successful service and product changes by ensuring that risks have been properly assessed, authorizing changes to proceed, and managing the change schedule.

CHANGE

The addition, modification, or removal of anything that could have a direct or indirect effect on services.

The change enablement practice includes the following practice success factors (PSFs):

- Ensuring that changes are realized in a timely and effective manner
- Minimizing the negative impacts of changes
- Ensuring stakeholder satisfaction
- Meeting change-related governance and compliance requirements

Key metrics for this practice are mapped to its practice success factors.

Changes to services and service components are accomplished using various approaches and methodologies, each of which represents a different level of business risk. Changes in software are often made through frequent and regular deployment of new features and modifications. These changes can be delivered through continuous integration/continuous delivery (CI/CD), as recommended by the DevOps approach and practiced in various iterative/Agile methods and techniques.

Changes in physical infrastructure may be slower, requiring a staged, 'waterfall' approach. Some changes of this type may be run as projects, using relevant project management techniques and controls.

Few organizations are fully at one extreme or the other. The change enablement practice must be adaptive to meet the needs of various approaches to change development.

Authorized changes should enable the desired outcomes and meet the organization's requirements regarding change throughput (the number of changes made and the speed of change realization) and risk management.

Balancing Stakeholder Requirements

The change enablement practice helps to build and maintain an organizational environment that ensures changes create intended outputs and achieve intended outcomes. The practice aims to balance the different and sometimes conflicting requirements and expectations from various stakeholders by:

- Making sure the expected value is understood from the viewpoint of and by all stakeholders
- Tracking and responding to the unintended negative and positive effects of changes on stakeholders and their objectives
- Considering the stakeholders' interest in transparency and communications *at the right level and in the right format* when it comes to tracking the progress of value enabled by the changes, rather than just the technical details
- Keeping in mind the importance of those technical details for the success of the changes from the execution, measurement, and continual improvement point of view

Changes that are implemented with technical precision, but which fail to enable the desired outcomes, fall short of expectations. Additionally, changes may have unintended outcomes, including negative impacts on users, service downtime, degradation, and destabilization. It might not be possible to avoid these outcomes, but it is important to control them.

Complexity-based Approach to Changes

The change enablement practice should ensure a balance between change effectiveness, change throughput, and risk control. This means that the approaches to change planning, authorization and ongoing control need to be selected carefully.



Changes are possible in all business situations, from business as usual to catastrophic. Business as usual situations are relatively predictable, with low levels of uncertainty. Catastrophic situations have the highest levels of uncertainty.

Organizations should be able to make changes in any situation on this spectrum.

Practice Key Concepts

Organizations should not try to design a single one-size-fits-all approach to change enablement. Changes have varying levels of complexity and predictability. Different types of changes with different levels of impact and risk require different workflows to effectively and efficiently support the service workstreams.

ITIL introduces three types of changes:

- **Standard** - a low-risk, pre-authorized change that is well understood and fully documented, and which can be implemented without needing additional authorization
- **Normal** - an unknown, medium, or high risk change that requires additional authorization for planning and control
- **Emergency** - a change that must be introduced as soon as possible

Changes can be standardized and automated where uncertainty is low, which helps to decrease the costs and accelerate the changes. Additionally, changes that have a highly constrained potential adverse impact (meaning that the risks are well-managed, services can be restored quickly in case of a failure, and there is minimal or no negative impact on customers) can also be handled in a standardized manner.

When there is no effective standardized approach to a change, organizations attempt to plan, authorize, and control that change. They follow a process that includes collective expert assessment, authorization, and control. The process is performed by a group of people combining expertise and authority. These are 'normal' changes, some of which are low risk.

A normal change can be triggered by the creation (manual or automated) of a **request for change (RFC)**, which is a description of a proposed change used to initiate change enablement. The change authority for these is usually someone who can make rapid decisions, often using automation to accelerate the change. When a normal change is high risk, the change authority might be the management board or the equivalent.

Change models provide guidance for handling normal changes. Organizations usually develop change models that determine procedures and roles for the assessment, authorization, and ongoing control of changes based on their type.

CHANGE MODEL

A repeatable approach to the management of a particular type of change.

Change models may also be helpful when managing uncertainty in complex situations. For example, a process included in a change model may include the safe-to-fail testing of several hypotheses before one or some of the solutions are implemented. This may help to address incidents and disasters that lack clarity around what changes are needed.

Change models can also be used for emergency changes and these models often include bypassed or delayed procedures, such as change request registration or updating of the change schedule. They may also determine a dedicated change authority of high power and availability, together with other special arrangements. The aim is to accelerate changes while keeping risks at an acceptable level.

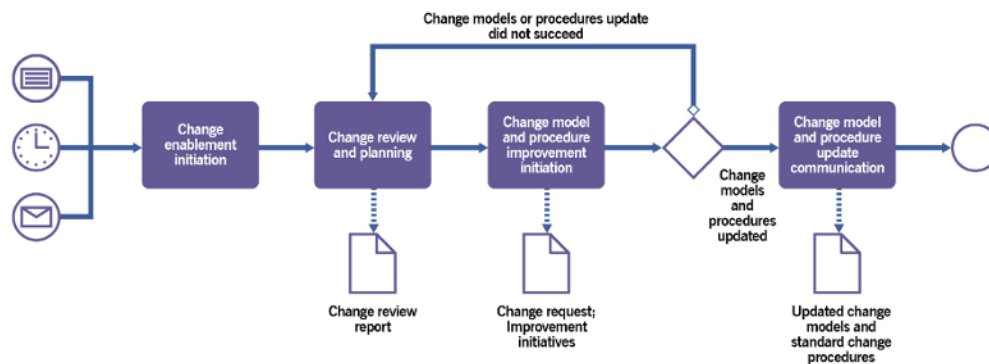
Change Enablement Resources

Each ITIL practice includes resources based on the 4 dimensions of service management.

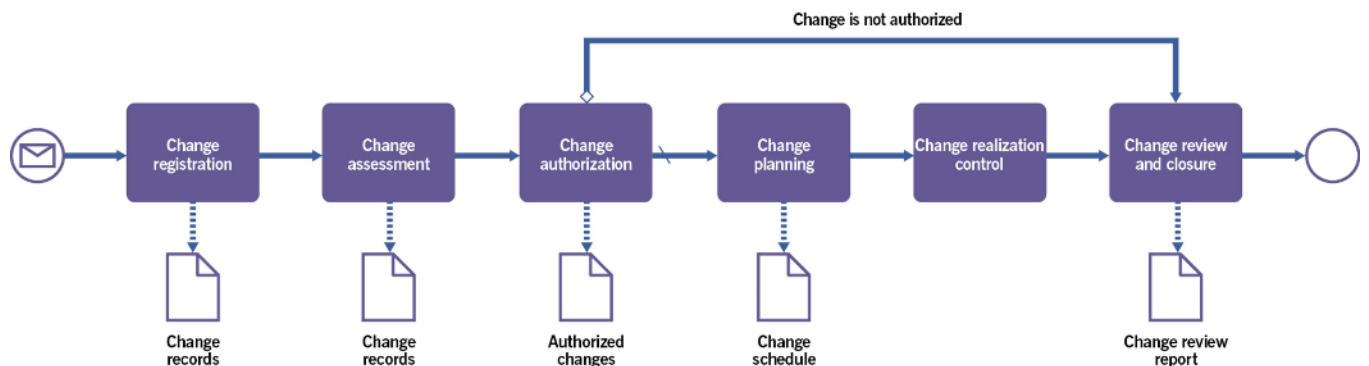
Value Streams and Processes

Change enablement activities form two processes:

The **change enablement planning and optimization** process is focused on the planning and continual improvement of the change enablement practice, change models, and standard change procedures. It is triggered by change reviews highlighting inefficiencies and other improvement opportunities. It can also be performed regularly depending on the effectiveness of the existing models and procedures.



The **change lifecycle management** process facilitates the change, and manages it through registration, assessment, authorization, execution, and closure. This process may vary depending on the change model.



Value Stream Contribution

The change enablement practice supports most service value streams as it governs the changes around or within a specific value stream. At each step of each service value stream there might be a need to request a change to an aspect of services provided. Also, each of these steps might be impacted by changes to services and service components upstream, downstream, or above the value stream in question.

It's important to focus on the end-to-end view of changes and include all teams and roles involved from ideation to execution. The suggested approach to change enablement must match the requirements of individual value streams.

Do not try to design a single one-size-fits-all approach.

Organizations and People

Three roles specific to the change enablement practice may be found in organizations: change manager, change coordinator, and change authority. These roles are often introduced in organizations with a large number of changes processed manually.

In addition to overseeing day-to-day activities, the **change manager** is involved in developing the organization's expertise in the practice and in improvements to the practice.

Some organizations introduce an additional role of **change coordinator** that has similar responsibilities but a more limited scope (specific types of changes, or part of the organization).

The **change authority** is the person or group responsible for authorizing a change. The change authority is responsible for the assessment and authorization of a change during its lifecycle (from initiation to completion).

It is important to make sure that changes are authorized based on resource, cost, and priority considerations. This does not need to be a bureaucratic procedure. Change models should define the requirements and procedures for authorization, delegating the role of change authority to the appropriate level (e.g., development teams, technical experts, or service and product owners).

The closer the change authority is to the work performed, the more visibility they have and the more effective and efficient the practice is.

Information and Technology

The change enablement practice can significantly benefit from automation both in terms of improved automation throughout the workflows and improved use of data for weighing pre-release options and analysing post-release outputs and outcomes.

Useful tool categories include:

- Workflow management and collaboration tools
- Analysis and reporting tools
- Work planning and prioritization tools
- Orchestration systems
- Knowledge management tools

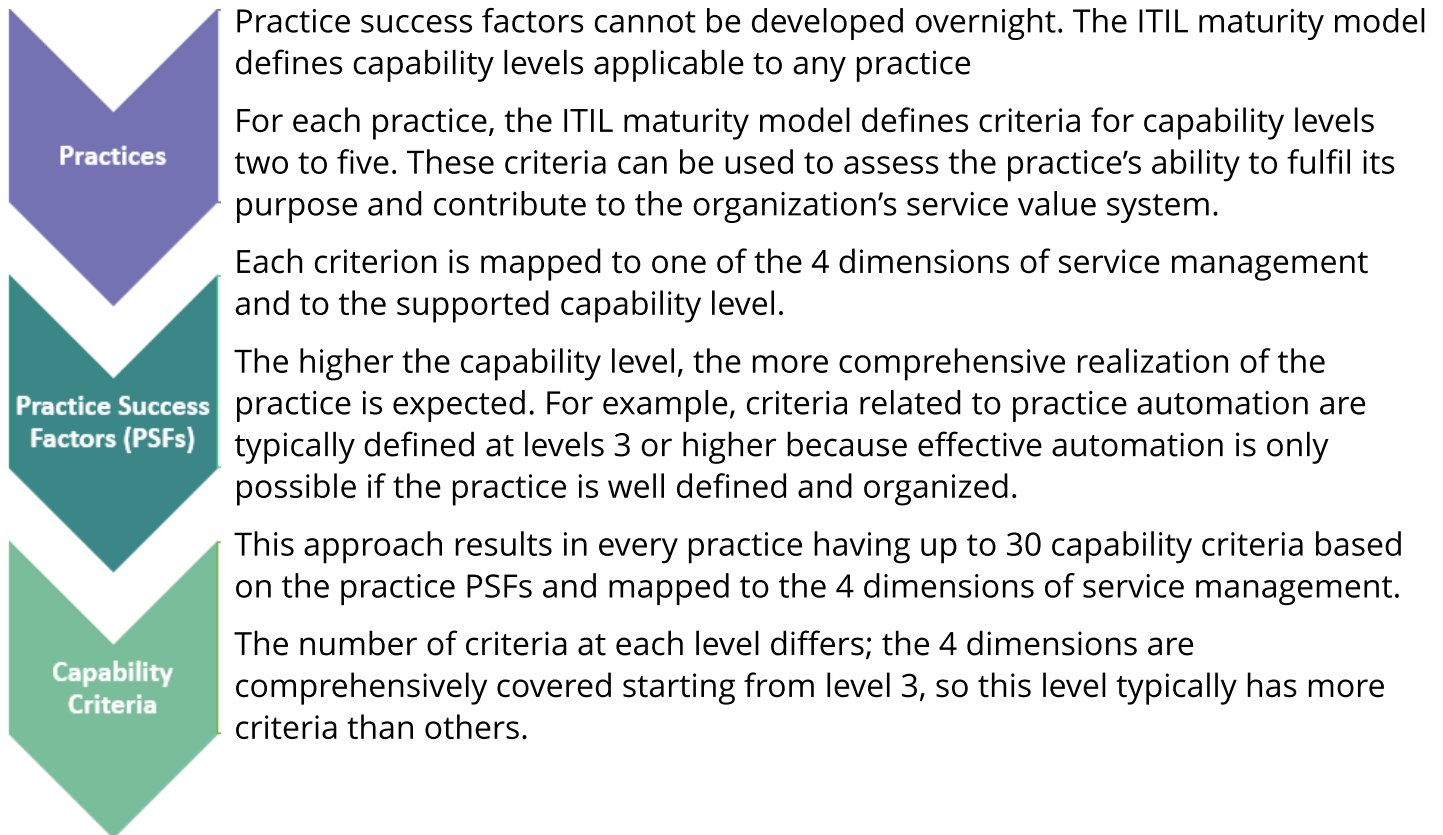
Partners and Suppliers

Very few services are delivered using only an organization's own resources. Most, if not all, depend on services provided by third parties.

Change models should define how third parties are involved in change realization and how the organization ensures the flow of changes.

Depending on the technical architecture used for the organization's products and services, there can exist several dependencies on the policies and procedures of third parties. Aspects like change schedules, potential resource conflicts, interdependencies between products (via APIs or similar), dependencies on platform software, and tooling compatibility should be assessed, along with areas such as supporting agile development or leveraging a highly automated deployment and release environment.

Measuring, Assessing and Developing the Capability of Change Enablement



Capability Level	Description
Level 1	The practice is not well organized; it's performed as initial or intuitive. It may occasionally or partially achieve its purpose through an incomplete set of activities.
Level 2	The practice systematically achieves its purpose through a basic set of activities supported by specialized resources.
Level 3	The practice is well defined and achieves its purpose in an organized way, using dedicated resources and relying on inputs from other practices that are integrated into a service management system.
Level 4	The practice achieves its purpose in a highly organized way, and its performance is continually measured and assessed in the context of the service management system.
Level 5	The practice is continually improving organizational capabilities associated with its purpose.

[Click here to learn more about the ITIL 4 Maturity Model.](#)

It's a Journey!

ITIL, like any framework, methodology, body of knowledge or philosophy, is only as valuable as the results it helps to achieve. How the practices are applied is critical. It is necessary at all times to remember what is to be accomplished and *why* it needs to be accomplished. Following book examples or practices blindly, without considering their appropriateness to the organization's needs is a certain way to fail. Success requires critical thinking.

So, when using ITIL:

- **Adopt** – Commit to adopting a service-oriented, customer-focused culture. Success in service management is based on a genuine commitment to this mindset. Evidence of such commitment can be seen not in the way the people in an organization talk, but rather in the way in which they behave and in how those behaviors are incentivized.
- **Adapt** – Strive to understand ITIL best practices, to understand why they are recommended, and then to apply critical thought to adapting those best practices to the organization's circumstances, needs, goals and objectives.

Once ITIL recommendations are understood at a critical level, it is possible to successfully assess their value to your organization in the context of the organization's vision, goals, objectives, circumstances and constraints. In this way, real value can be delivered to customers and captured by the organization.

Make a Difference!

Any service management related initiative will affect organizational culture. Effective communication plans, training, and clear policies and procedures are all needed to achieve the desired performance outcomes and enable collaboration between the many different people involved. Contribute to your organization's service management effort by expanding your knowledge of best practices and by enthusiastically using what you learn to lead transformational and continual improvement activities.

Want to Learn More?

Training helps individuals and organizations build and maintain their capabilities. Training also provides individuals the knowledge, skills and information needed to fill their role in the organization or achieve their career goals, along with a place to test and develop the confidence to use these skills in the workplace.

The ITIL® 4 qualification scheme provides a role-based, modular approach that is comprised of qualifications focused on different aspects of ITIL best practice to various degrees of depth and detail.

The structure of the ITIL qualification scheme offers individuals flexibility relating to the different disciplines and areas of ITIL and the ability to focus their studies on key areas of interest.

Read [What is the ITIL 4 Qualification Scheme](#).

See ITSM Academy [class options and dates](#) or view our [course catalog](#).

Additional Resources:

- [ITSM Professor Blog](#) - a WEALTH of knowledge published weekly since 2008
- [Webinar Archives](#) - Monthly since 2007
- [ITSM Academy Resource Center](#)



ITSM Academy

We are a female owned small business, established in 2004. Our extensive catalog contains accredited and sustainable IT Service Management (ITSM) education and advice including; ITIL[®], DevOps, Process Design (CPDE), Agile, Site Reliability Engineering (SRE), Value Stream Mapping (VSM) and Experience Level Agreement (XLA). Our business values are founded on trust, loyalty, professionalism and long term relationships.

...educate and inspire is not just our corporate slogan, it speaks to our core mission and goal.



Follow our founder and CXO, Lisa Schwartz, on [LinkedIn](#).

Instructors

Every ITSM Academy instructor is certified to the highest levels in the areas they train. They have years of hands-on IT practitioner experience, enabling them to effectively intertwine theory and real-life stories and scenarios. Using the highest quality content, this engaging training style encourages active group participation, allowing all learners to bring from class a wealth of practical and actionable knowledge.

Accreditations

All of ITSM Academy's certification courseware is developed or enhanced in-house and is accredited by independent, international organizations where applicable.



Game On! - Interactive Learning

Involves students in active learning, using the engaging qualities of a game, fueled by our subject matter experts.

Courseware Licensing (all developed or enhanced in house)

In addition to our public and corporate/onsite training, our courseware is available for licensing / co-branding under our flexible licensing program, including Train-the-Trainer (for qualifying organizations).

my.itsmacademy.com (digital portal)

Extends the learning experience with games, videos, exercises, sample exams, and course materials. It also provides instructors a vast repository of information and guidance to successfully prepare for and teach our courses.

Professional Education Hours (CPDs/PDUs/CPEs/CEUs):

ITSM Academy is proud to make it possible for individuals who attend our classes to earn professional education hours. (e.g., CPDs, PDUs, CPEs, CEUs). These professional education hours can be submitted to associations such as PeopleCert, the Project Management Institute and ISACA, if applicable.



The Story of the Academy

Today, ITSM Academy is widely recognized for its expertise in multiple IT frameworks (ITSM, ITIL, Process Engineering (CPDE), DevOps, Agile Service Management, Lean) and, more importantly, how they work together. But that's not where we started.

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