

Enhance the ITIL Service Desk with LEAN Six Sigma

Where ITIL and LEAN 6 Sigma Meet

ITIL is the most recognized best practice framework for IT Service Management, and as such, many organizations have invested in researching and implementing ITIL practices.

However, implementing ITIL can be challenging. The ITIL framework specifically states that of the ITIL processes, organizations should:

“... adapt them to work in their specific environments”.

Organizations realize that while ITIL provides a high level strategic Vision that encompasses ‘Why’ and ‘What’ benefits they can achieve through improvements in IT Service Management, ITIL does not provide guidelines, advice or prescribe ‘How’ to identify the actions and activities required to implement ITIL compliant IT Service Management.

To answer the question “How” to increase IT Service Management capabilities, the ITIL framework recommends alternative methodologies including LEAN Six Sigma tools.

LEAN Six Sigma complements ITIL by focusing on the elimination of non-value-added activities of the process which leads to improving effectiveness and efficiency of IT Service Delivery, (e.g. removing redundancies, rework loops). Furthermore, emphasis is placed on evidence based facts collection and analysis to monitor and improve process performance and stability on a continuous basis.

LEAN Six Sigma and The Service Desk

The Service Desk is the central point of contact for clients and the foundational component of the ITIL processes. It can become an excellent focal point for organizational improvement of service delivery, and for collecting the necessary data to inform management decisions.

LEAN Six Sigma defines the gaps and issues from the current As-Is process flows, identifies root causes that impact efficiency and effectiveness and leads to improved desired state process flows. (See Case Study) This methodology provides the information needed for organizations to clearly articulate ‘How’ to improve their IT Service Management Capabilities.

LEAN 6 Sigma reduces waste, optimizes and stabilizes the process, and provides continued service delivery improvement in an evolving environment.

CASE STUDY: After the implementation of a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system in a mid-sized organization, using LEAN Six Sigma tools, the Service Desk identified that a statistically significant number of support requests were basic “How do I?” questions. (E.g. How do I export this data to Excel?)

This information enabled IT to work with other organizational functions to identify the appropriate training materials and job aids, and importantly, providing links to this material within the Service Desk Knowledge Base. These links significantly reduced Service Desk effort in answering these, how do I? questions as the links to the appropriate information could be immediately sent to the requesting individual by email.

continued



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About the Author

Elliot Ross is a strategic and results oriented IM/ IT Professional with over twenty years' experience in leadership and problem solving, enhancing business technology as it relates to operational and strategic planning. His business management experience in the private sector is complemented by his training in ITIL, Enterprise and Technology Architecture, ISO 9000 Standards and ISO 27001 Security Audit Compliance.

Elliot is known for his ability to deliver on critical technology projects relating to IT Infrastructure, IT Service Delivery and Service Support, through risk analysis, business process reviews, operational improvements and aligning IM/IT with strategic organizational goals and objectives. Elliot excels in establishing and maintaining client relationships at all organizational levels. He is experienced in negotiation and management of outsourced service contracts for hosting and IT infrastructure. He is a highly effective leader who has a keen interest in mentoring and coaching staff to achieve higher levels of performance. Elliot demonstrates excellent critical and problem-solving skills and a proven track record.

Elliot Ross holds certifications in ITIL and LEAN Six Sigma.

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The Right Door Consulting & Solutions is, not surprisingly, all about solutions, ways of finding efficiencies and saving in the current economic environment. Few firms can replicate our capacity to understand the challenges — and the opportunities — our clients face so we can mobilize the right consulting resources, the right solutions and deliver results. We are there as a supportive, collaborative partner whether the need is for a permanent hire, advisory services, or support for both short- and long-term projects.

**If you are interested in learning more about Mr. Ross' expertise,
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