

Quick Guideline for ITIL Compliant CHANGE MANAGEMENT Implementation

ITIL (the IT Infrastructure Library) is the most widely accepted approach to IT service management in the world, ITIL provides a comprehensive and consistent set of best practices for IT service management, promoting a quality approach to achieving business effectiveness and efficiency in the use of information systems.

ITIL is based on the collective experience of commercial and governmental practitioners worldwide. This has been distilled into one reliable, coherent approach, which is fast becoming a defacto standard used by some of the world's leading businesses.

This guideline provides a brief overview of the purpose, benefits, problems, tools, processes and procedures related to the implementation an ITIL compliant process for managing changes to applications and information systems in live production environments.

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Quick Guide:
ITIL Compliant Change Management Implementation

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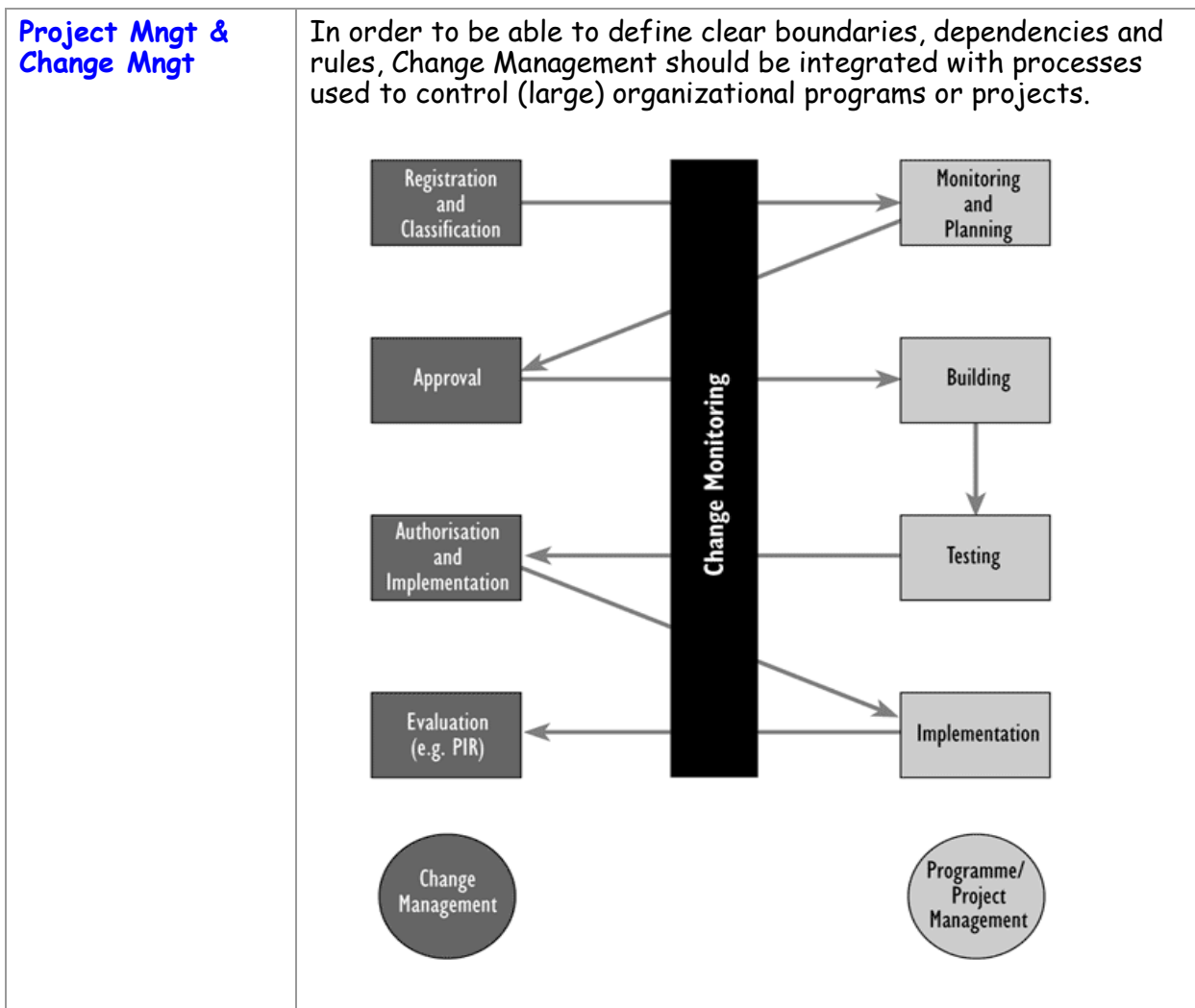
1. Introduction

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| <p>Purpose</p> | <p>The purpose of this guide is to provide a brief overview on how to establish ITIL compliant Change Management processes and includes the procedures, tools and dependencies that need to be included in the planning for implementing and using these processes. The guide also describes the anticipated problems with implementing the processes and the benefits that can be achieved when following the processes.</p> |
| <p>Intended Audience</p> | <p>The intended audience of this guide is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT Managers; • Release Managers; • Helpdesk & support teams; • Application development & implementation teams; • Application test teams. |
| <p>Background</p> | <p>Changes to operational applications normally arise as a result of Problems, but Changes may also come from proactively seeking business benefits such as reducing costs or improving services.</p> <p>The goal of the Change Management process is to ensure that standardized methods and procedures are used for efficient and prompt handling of all Change Requests, in order to minimize the impact of Change-related Incidents on service quality, and consequently to improve the day-to-day operations of an organization.</p> <p>Making an appropriate response to a Change request entails a considered approach to assessment of risk and business continuity, Change impact, resource requirements and Change approval. This considered approach is essential to maintain a proper balance between the need for Change against the impact of the Change.</p> <p>It is particularly important that Change Management processes have high visibility and open channels of communication in order to promote smooth transitions when Changes take place.</p> |

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2. Relationship with Other Processes

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| Relationship | <p>Change Management has a strong relationship with Configuration Management and also to a lesser extent with Release Management and should not be implemented without these other two processes in place.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended to develop these 3 management processes in conjunction with each other and implemented at the same time.</p> |
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| <p>Application Areas</p> | <p>Change Management is responsible for managing Change processes involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware; • Communications equipment and software; • System / Operating software • Applications software in production • All documentation and procedures associated with the running, support and maintenance of production systems. <p>This means that changes to any components that are under the control of an applications development project do not come under Change Management but would be subject to project Change Control procedures.</p> <p>The Change Management team will, however, be expected to liaise closely with project managers to ensure smooth implementation and consistency within the changing management environments.</p> |
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3. Benefits & Possible Problems

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| <p>Benefits</p> | <p>Benefits of proper implemented Change Management are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better alignment of IT services to business requirements; • Increased visibility and communication of Changes; • Improved risk assessment; • A reduced adverse impact of Changes on the quality of services; • Better assessment of the cost of proposed Changes before they are incurred; • Fewer Changes that have to be backed-out, along with an increased ability to do this more easily when necessary; • Improved Problem and Availability Management through the use of valuable management information relating to changes accumulated through the Change Management process; • Increased productivity of key personnel through less need for diversion from planned duties to implement urgent Changes or back-out erroneous Changes; • Greater ability to absorb a large volume of Changes • An enhanced business perception of IT through an improved quality of service and a professional approach. |
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| <p>Possible Problems</p> | <p>The Change Management implementation should be appropriate to the size of the organization; an over-bureaucratic process can diminish the effectiveness.</p> <p>There may be cultural difficulties in getting stakeholders to accept that a single Change Management system should be used for all aspects of an information infrastructure. It may require education to convince everyone that all components of an infrastructure can, and very often do, impact heavily upon each other, and that Changes to individual CIs (Configuration Items making up the infrastructure) require coordination.</p> <p>Attempts may be made to implement Changes without reference to the Change Management process. Measures should be introduced to prevent and detect such illicit (ITIL's wording) changes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting regular independent audits to check that Change Management staff, other Service Management staff and Users are adhering to the Change Management procedures; • Instituting management controls over the activities of in-house and contractors' support staff, and engineers; • Implementing Configuration Management control of all CIs and versions; • Detecting User access to equipment or software that is unknown to the Configuration Management system via the Service Desk; • Training new and existing staff in IT Service Management. <p>It may be difficult to ensure that contractors' representatives, such as hardware engineers, adhere to the Change Management procedures. It is recommended that contracts with suppliers should, where possible, include the need for such compliance.</p> |
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4. Change Management Scope

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| <p>Procedures</p> | <p>The ITIL guideline indicates that within the Change Management process there are procedures needed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting and documenting requests for change (RFC); • Decision making by a Change Advisory Board (CAB); |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change implementation; • Change rollback; • Post Implementation Review. |
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| <p>Scope</p> | <p>Change Management processes and procedures should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard start-to-end change workflow diagrams, process descriptions & procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small changes; ○ Medium changes; ○ Massive changes; ○ Mega changes; • RFC-form template; • Structure, responsibilities and tasks of the CAB; • Change metrics and measure; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of issues that become defects that become changes; ○ Underlying causes of issues becoming changes; ○ Trends in issues becoming changes; ○ Impact of changes; ○ Speed and effectiveness with which IT responds to RFC's; ○ Link measures to business goals, costs, service availability and reliability; • Forward schedule of changes (FSC), which contains details of all changes approved for implementation and their proposed implementation dates; • Projected service availability (PSA), which contains details of changes to agreed Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and the service availability because of the currently planned FSC; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FSC and PSA documents should be agreed with the relevant stakeholders within the business, with Support and with ICT. Once agreed, ICT should communicate any planned additional downtime to the User community at large, using the most effective methods available; • If outsourcing IT services document and agree with the service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who is responsible for managing day-to-day changes arising from RFC's, from whatever sources; ○ What control does ICT have over the service provider so not being made to pay for unreasonable Changes; |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How does ICT know that Changes are not approved piecemeal, with a consequent impact on service and service cost; ○ Who is responsible for ensuring that major business changes are properly costed, approved, planned, controlled and implemented; ○ Who is responsible for the integrity of systems and services following Changes; ○ Has security of systems been properly considered? ○ Who should sit on the CAB; ● Critical outage plan. |
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| Change Activities | <p>Change Management processes and procedures should include the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Change logging & filtering; ● Allocation of priorities; ● Change categorization; ● CAB meetings; ● Impact & resource assessment; ● Change approval; ● Change scheduling; ● Change building, testing & implementation (coordination of); ● Urgent changes; ● Urgent change building, testing & implementation; ● Change review; ● Change management process review; ● Define roles & responsibilities; ● Establish a CAB. |
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5. Management Reporting

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| Metrics | <p>Regular summaries of Changes should be provided to management and clients. Different management levels are likely to require different levels of information, ranging from the Support Manager, who may require a detailed weekly report, to senior management that are likely only to require a quarterly management summary.</p> |
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| | <p>Consider including the following facts and statistics in management reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of Changes implemented in the period, in total and by CI (Configuration Item), configuration type, service, etc.; • a breakdown of the reasons for Change (User requests, enhancements, business requirements, service call/Incident/Problem fixes, procedures/training improvement, etc); • the number of Changes successful implemented; • the number of Changes backed-out, together with the reasons (e.g. incorrect assessment, bad build); • the number of Incidents traced to Changes (broken down into problem-severity levels) and the reasons (e.g. incorrect assessment, bad build); • the number of RFC's (and any trends in origination); • the number of implemented Changes reviewed, and the size of review backlogs (broken down over time); • high incidences of RFCs/PRs relating to one CI (these are worthy of special attention), giving the reasons (e.g. volatile User requirement, fragile component, bad build); • figures from previous periods (last period, last year) for comparison; • the number of RFC's rejected; • the proportion of implemented Changes that are not successful (in total and broken down by CI); • Change backlogs, broken down by CI and by stage in the Change Management process. <p>Consideration needs to be given, in consultation with the stakeholders, to the manner in which the management information is presented. In many cases, percentages, and graphical or pictorial representations, are more meaningful than bare numerical data.</p> |
| <p>Auditing</p> | <p>At regular intervals auditing for compliance with the Change Management processes should be conducted and an audit should include an examination of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Randomly selected RFC's - normal, urgent and standard changes; • Change records; • CAM minutes; • FSC; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFCs and implemented changes. <p>Checks must be made to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All RFC's have been correctly logged, assessed and actioned; • FSC have been adhered to, or good documented reasons for not doing this; • All items raised at CAB meetings have been followed up and resolved; • All change reviews have been carried out on time; • All documentation is accurate, up-to-date and complete. |
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6. Further Information

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| ITIL Information | <p>For more comprehensive information on ITIL Change Management:</p> <p>See the ITIL website: www.itil-officialsite.com See the best practices website: www.best-management-practice.com</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Contact Advalue Management Services info@advalueservices.com www.advalueservices.com</p> |
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