ITIL®

Everything you wanted
to know about ITIL® in
one thousand words!

AXELOS
GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE

1. What is ITIL®?

ITIL is the most widely accepted approach to IT service management in the world. Organizations use its proven best practices to run their business from strategy to daily reality. Millions of IT professionals successfully drive their career thanks to the ITIL certification scheme. ITIL offers common concepts and vocabulary, aligned with international standards, to ease collaboration in a multicultural and interconnected environment. ITIL turns the challenges of the digital age into competitive edge.

2. The evolution of ITIL

ITIL V1 was initially developed in the 1980s as a library of several books, with each one describing a process. Over the next decade, it was used mainly by British Government agencies. At the turn of the century, ITIL V2 became the cornerstone for service management, with two core publications covering ten processes and the service desk. The natural progression of best practices and the need to streamline and improve the value for money of IT services led to the creation of ITIL V3. Two editions were released, one in 2007 and another in 2011. These provided ways to manage the end-to-end lifecycle of services with 26 processes, supported by four organizational functions and aligned with ISO 20000 standards. This was followed in 2016 by the publication of *ITIL Practitioner*, which introduced guiding principles to facilitate the adoption of ITIL. The latest iteration of the framework is ITIL 4. Launched in 2019, ITIL 4 has evolved from the previous version by re-shaping much of the established ITSM practices in the wider context of customer experience, value streams and digital transformation, as well as embracing new ways of working, such as Lean, Agile, and DevOps.

3. ITIL V3

The 2007 edition of ITIL V3 improved some V2 processes, and created several new ones. New functions were introduced to manage applications, infrastructure, and operations. The 2011 edition further improved the consistency and readability of ITIL, and introduced the business relationship management process to promote good relations with customers.

The ITIL V3 service lifecycle covers the four key stages of a service:

- Service strategy defines the policies and objectives relating to the value of the service for the business, securing a return on investment through practical decision-making and the planning of required assets.
- According to the strategy employed, service design then handles the creation of services, and their evolution or withdrawal, ensuring the consideration of all aspects, and the views of all stakeholders, to achieve a smooth build and efficient operations.
- Service transition provides the planning and management that is necessary to bring designed services into production. It ensures the quality of the service, and stakeholder satisfaction during implementation.
- Following transition, service operation carries out recurring activities that support day-to-day business.

Finally, continual service improvement surrounds each of these stages to guide implementation and create a movement for a sustainable increase in efficiency and customer satisfaction.

More than 30 years after it first appeared, ITIL is fundamental to IT enabled service delivery, continuing to evolve and provide value to its community. The 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' has resulted in unprecedented change to IT and digital services, and ITIL continues to evolve to reflect this change. ITIL 4 expands on previous versions of ITIL, and through its framework, helps organizations to connect and align different challenges that are relevant not only to ITSM professionals, but also to a wider range of professionals working in the digital world.

4. A modular architecture

ITIL has always been an extensive framework, with two books for V2 and five for V3. The rapid revolutions that continue to transform the IT sector have made it necessary for the structure of the framework to evolve. Consequently, ITIL 4 is modular, with a Foundation book providing the key concepts of the framework, and supplementary publications expanding on these concepts and reflecting the evolution of technology and its impact on organisations. Through this new approach, ITIL 4 is helping individuals and organizations continually improve.

5. The service value system

ITIL 4 introduces the service value system (SVS). The SVS represents how different components and activities can work together, in any type of organization, to facilitate value creation through IT-enabled services.

Guiding principles

Governance

Service value chain

Opportunity/ demand

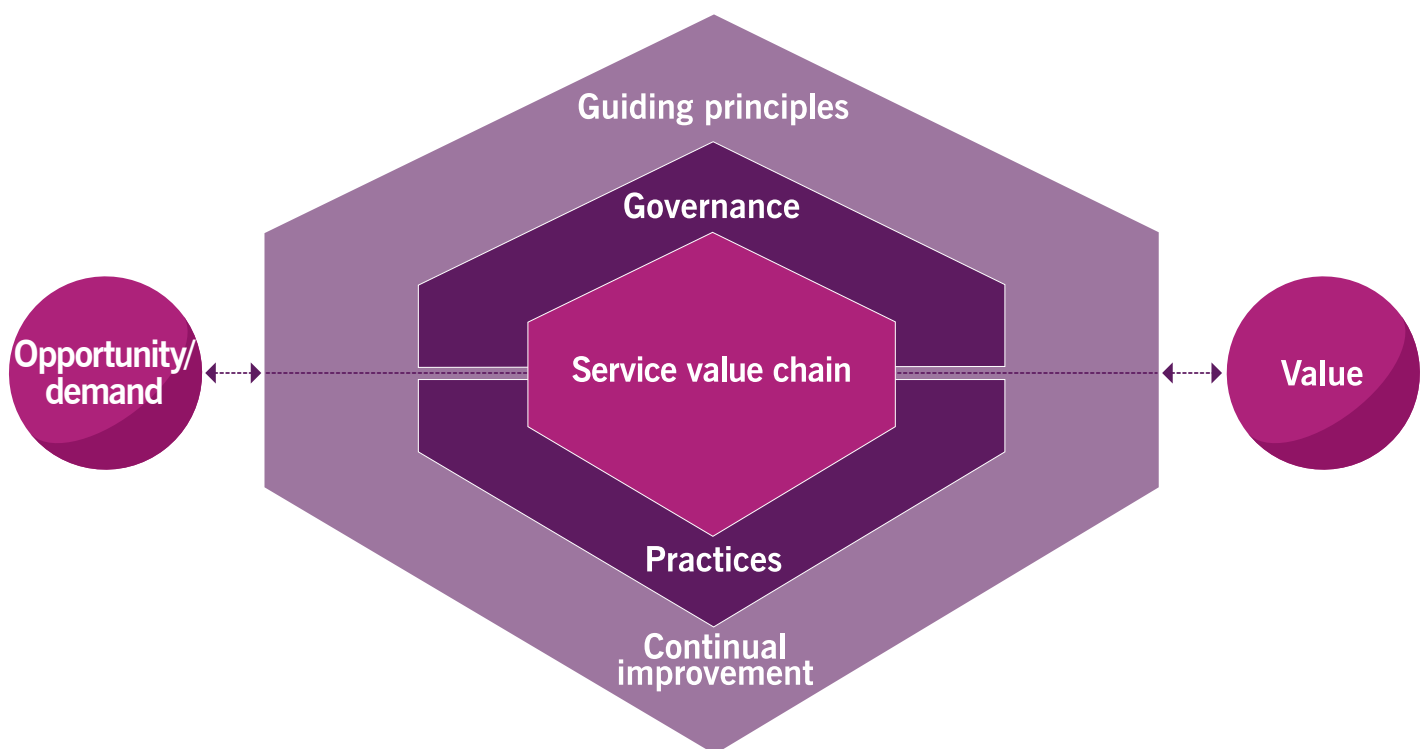**Value**

Practices

Continual improvement

Figure 1 The service value system

The SVS consists of a number of different components. New opportunities as well as stakeholder demand for existing services are key inputs to determine what needs to be accomplished to create value. The service value chain is the combination of interconnected activities provides the operating model for the creation, delivery, and continual improvement of services. The value chain offers a number of variants of these combinations known as value streams. The flow of the v3 service lifecycle is one such stream.

Running effective services requires more than just processes. To address this, ITIL 4 goes beyond processes with practices. These bring together capabilities needed by integrating four key dimensions:

- Organizations and people
- Information and technology

- Partners and suppliers
- Value streams and processes

The SVS also incorporates continual improvement, a recurring activity performed from an operational to a strategic level, which ensures that the organization continually meets stakeholders' expectations with ever greater effectiveness and efficiency.

The SVS is supported by the ITIL guiding principles, which are universal recommendations on how to work. These support decisions and actions and ensure a shared understanding and common approach to service management across the organization, creating the foundation for an organization's culture and behaviour.

Finally, governance enables a strong, unified direction for all service value chains within the organization. The SVS breaks down silos, and is a powerful tool to develop organizational agility and resilience in response to ever-changing internal and external conditions.

6. From processes to practices

ITIL V3 processes and functions have now been broadened in scope as practices. There are 34 practices in total, split across general management practices, service management practices, and technical management practices. Several of these practices have been newly created for ITIL 4, and help with the management of architecture, organizational changes, projects, workforce and talent, relationships with stakeholders, risks, business analysis, and IT assets.

7. Ready for the digital age

The latest iteration of ITIL is a natural evolution of the framework, which responds to the fast pace of technological change that organizations are now experiencing. ITIL 4 allows practitioners to progress their existing expertise in ITIL and capitalise on the opportunities that are arising from technological advances. With mobile devices, artificial intelligence, robotics, autonomous vehicles, Internet of Things, 3D printing and much more, IT services are everywhere. ITIL 4 supports practitioners in carrying out best practice with these services and gives them the tools to take part in this global digital transformation.

8. The new certification scheme

ITIL Foundation, the first part of ITIL 4, is available from February 2019, and is core to the new certification scheme. This module is a pre-requisite for the higher levels, still to be released, that split into two streams. The first stream, which gives the ITIL Managing Professional (MP) certification, includes three 'ITIL Specialist' modules, as well as the ITIL strategist module 'Direct, plan and improve'. The second stream is the ITIL Strategic Leader (SL) certification, which also includes 'Direct, plan and improve', as well as the 'ITIL Leader' module, 'Digital and IT strategy'. The highest level that can be achieved is that of ITIL Master, which is awarded upon completion of both the ITIL MP and SL certifications, with proven experience and a deep knowledge of ITIL.

It is recommended that ITIL V3 certified professionals take the ITIL 4 Foundation exam. Certified ITIL V3 Experts, and candidates with at least 17 ITIL V3 credits can take the ITIL Managing Professional Transition module which will grant them the ITIL MP certification. For this reason, we encourage professionals to continue their V3 journey with ITIL Practitioner and Intermediate certifications throughout 2019 to continue to build their ITIL skillset and enable an easy transition to ITIL 4.
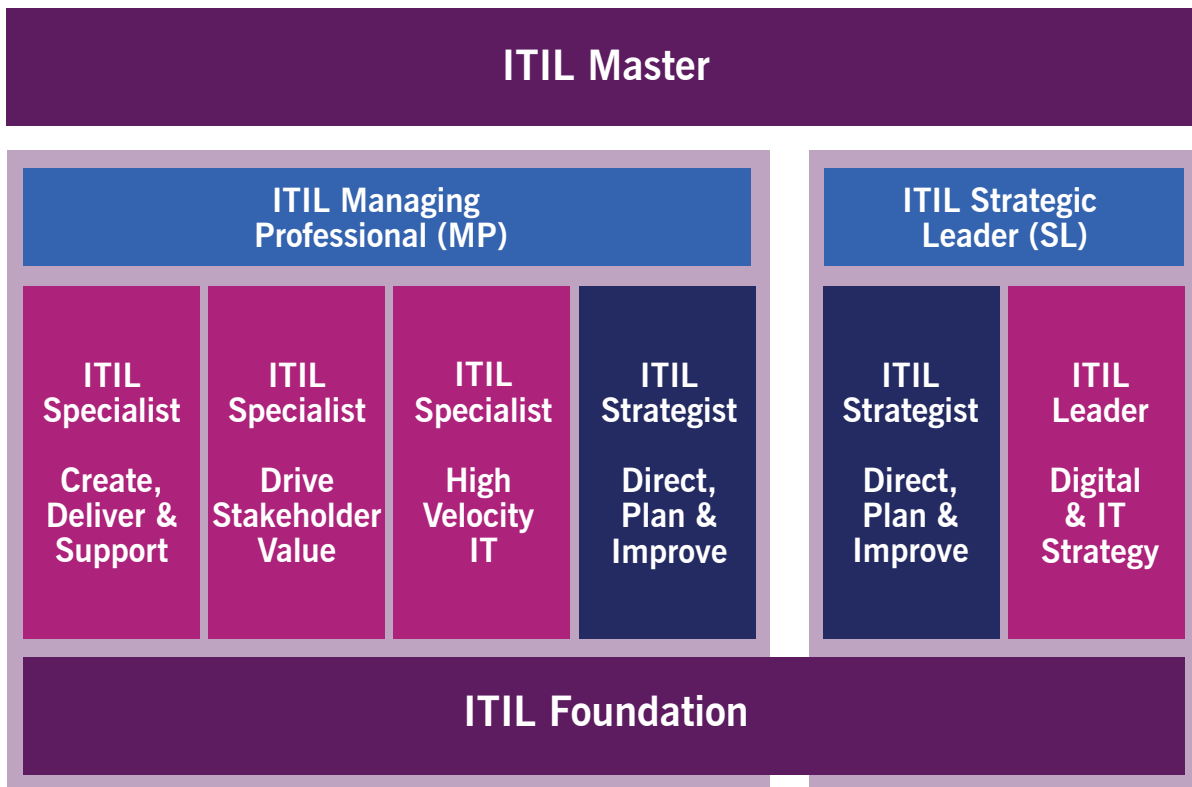

Figure 2 ITIL 4 Certification scheme

9. About the author

A French ITAM and SAM pioneer, Stéphane JORET held a variety of IT jobs between 1990 and 2005. He discovered ITIL in 2005 and decided to become an ITSM consultant, like a musician who stops playing instruments to conduct the orchestra. Since 2009 he has been an ITIL trainer and is the only contributor to ITIL 4 Foundation in France. An expert in his field, Stéphane is well known for his pragmatism and attention to the human factor. He considers enthusiasm a powerful driver to achieve transformations in a complex world."

10. About AXELOS

AXELOS is a joint venture company co-owned by the UK Government's Cabinet Office and Capita plc.

It is responsible for developing, enhancing, and promoting a number of best practice methodologies used globally by professionals working primarily in project, programme and portfolio management, IT service management and cyber resilience.

The methodologies, including ITIL®, PRINCE2®, PRINCE2 Agile®, MSP®, RESILIA®, and its newest addition AgileSHIFT® are adopted in more than 150 countries to improve employees' skills, knowledge, and competence in order to make both individuals and organisations work more effectively.

In addition to globally recognized qualifications, AXELOS equips professionals with a wide range of content, templates and toolkits through the CPD aligned My AXELOS and our online community of practitioners and experts.

Visit www.AXELOS.com for the latest news about how AXELOS is 'Making organizations more effective' and registration details to join AXELOS' online community. If you have specific queries, requests or would like to be added to the AXELOS mailing list please contact Ask@AXELOS.com.

11. Trade marks and statements