Official (Closed) and Non-Sensitive

IT2661

IT Services & Risk Management



**Practical 05**

**Incident and Problem Management**

# Reflection

**Overarching Question**: Describe the difference between Incident Management and Problem Management Practices. Additionally, evaluate the feasibility of an organization adopting only Incident Management (without Problem Management) and still sustaining its operations. State the possible benefits and pitfalls of solely implementing Incident Management in an organization. You may also draw insights from the case study discussion but refrain from copying answers provided.

Incident Management:

The main objective of Incident Management is to minimize the impact of unforeseen adverse situations and to restore operations of a business back to normal levels as soon as possible. This practice is implemented when the affected user(s) wants the service to be running normally quickly, and to do so it typically involves workarounds, temporary solutions. For example, during the incident of DBS Bank’s service crashing, affecting many users, it could be described as a Major Incident and emergency measures were implemented to restore services as soon as possible after being notified by users and tools that the system was down.

Problem Management:

The main objective of Problem Management, however, is to eliminate recurring incidents that has an unknown cause. To investigate and diagnose the root cause of such incidents, implement a permanent solution, and update the KEDB as a Known Error. Referencing the DBS Bank incident, Problem Management would be implemented after services are restored to determine its root cause, fix it permanently, and decide if change is needed before updating the KEDB. In this case, a fault in the cooling system was discovered and components were likely replaced. Hence, change was also implemented.

Scenario: Organization adopting only Incident Management

An organization adopting only Incident Management would not be feasible in the long term as while it can handle incidents that come with workarounds in the short term, long term and unknown problems would begin to pile up without proper resolution. The unnecessary growth of problems could turn into a Major Incident, which will have a significant impact on users.

Despite its infeasibility, the sole implementation of Incident Management has its benefits. As previously mentioned, it can come up with many workarounds to issues users face, and due to the principle of the practice, it is assured that affected users would have their services restored as soon as possible upon reporting it.

However, its sole implementation of only workarounds means that no long-term resolution is given to Problems, and not knowing the root cause of problems can cause Major Incidents if left untreated. In this scenario, the lack of Problem Management means that no problem is truly solved, only given a workaround whenever the users complain about.

An example of this would be the booking of Coldplay concert tickets in 2023 by the platform Ticketmaster. The platform has hosted many bookings for various artists for years, and whenever a large enough artist has tickets sold on the platform, it’ll crash. This affects users trying to get tickets. There is a lack of Problem Management as while the service is eventually restored for the affected users, it’ll happen again when the next major booking occurs. The issue of handling high volumes is left untreated, the root cause undetermined, and a solution is not created to permanently address the Problem. It is possible that repeated crashes can tarnish a business’s reputation, being seen as an unreliable platform unlike competitors as a result.

Another pitfall is this can lead to a company culture of only implementing Incident Management. By only making workarounds and solving the issue when encountered now, long-term investigations and better understanding how to deal with the problem may not be a priority, or even met with resistance to consider Problem Management. As a result, the organization’s ability to prevent recurring incidents is hindered.

From this, it is important that both Incident, and Problem Management exists within an organization to handle the variety of issues they will encounter.

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