

COBIT: An Overview

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What Does COBIT Stand For?

C **Control**
OB **OB**jectives
I for **I**nformation
T and Related **T**echnology

Scope and Objectives

- * Generally Applicable and Accepted Standard for Good Practice for Information and Information Technology (IT) Control
- * For Application to Enterprise-Wide IT
- * Starting from a Framework for Control in IT
- * Based on the IT Governance Institute's Control Objectives
- * Management Oriented
- * Aligned with De Jure and De Facto Standards and Regulations
- * Based on Critical Review of Tasks and Activities Regarding Business Re-Engineering

Standards and Regulations

- * Technical standards from ISO, EDIFACT, etc.
- * Codes of Conduct issued by Council of Europe, OECD, ISACA, etc.
- * Qualification criteria for IT systems and processes: ITSEC, TCSEC, ISO 9000, SPICE, TickIT, Common Criteria, etc.
- Professional standards in internal control and auditing: COSO report, CICA, IFAC, IIA, AICPA, GAO, PCIE, ISACA standards, etc.
- * Industry practices and requirements from industry forums (BS 7799, ESF, I4) and government-sponsored platforms (IBAG, NIST, DTI), etc.
- * Emerging industry specific requirements such as from banking, electronic commerce and IT manufacturing

COBIT *FRAMEWORK*

Audience -- *Management*:

To Help Them Balance Risk and Control Investment
in an Often Unpredictable IT Environment

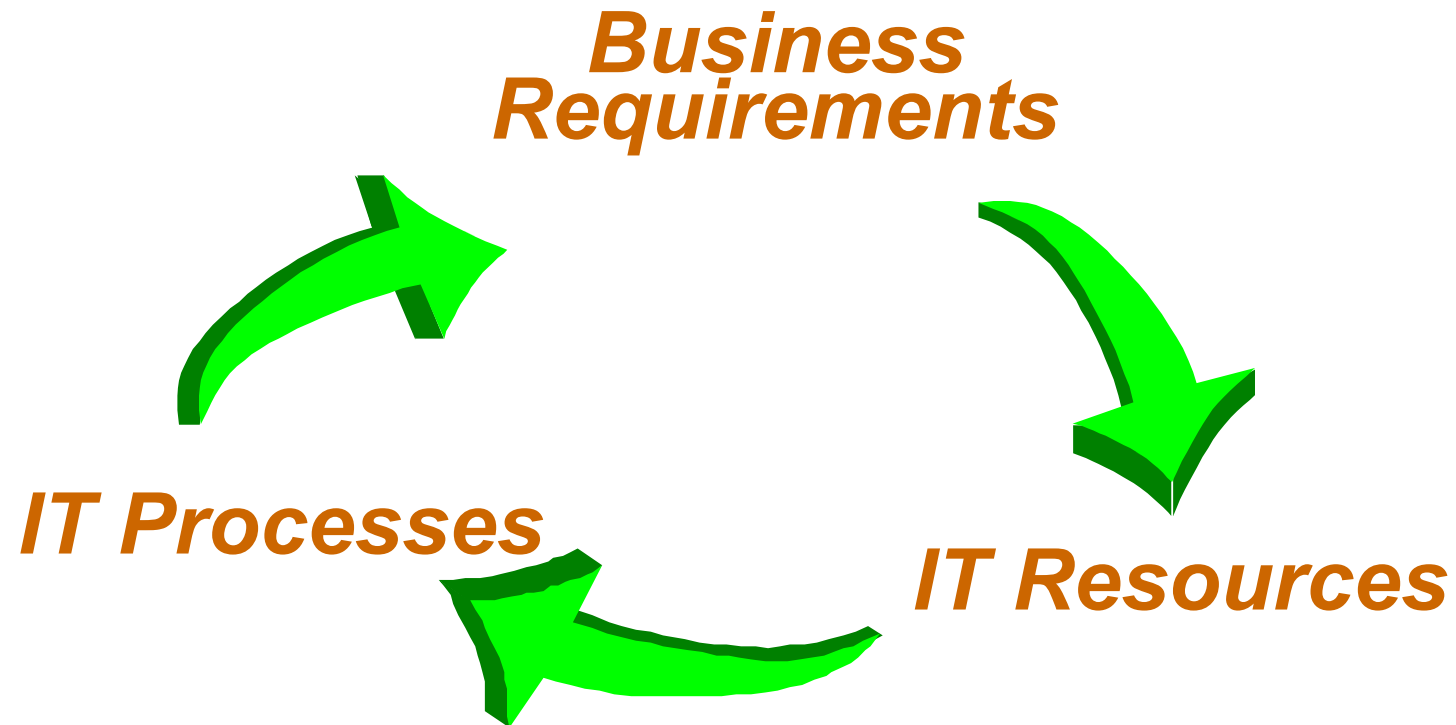
Audience -- *Users*:

To Obtain Assurance on Security and Controls of
IT Services Provided by Internal and Third Parties

Audience -- *Auditors*:

To Substantiate Their Opinions and/or Provide
Advice to Management on Internal Controls

The Framework's Principles



Business Requirements = Information Criteria

Quality Requirements

Quality

Cost

Delivery

Fiduciary Requirements (COSO Report)

Effectiveness and Efficiency of Operations

Reliability of Information

Compliance with Laws and Regulations

Security Requirements

Confidentiality

Integrity

Availability

Business Requirements = Information Criteria

effectiveness - deals with information being relevant and pertinent to the business process as well as being delivered in a timely, correct, consistent and usable manner.

efficiency - concerns the provision of information through the optimal (most productive and economical) usage of resources.

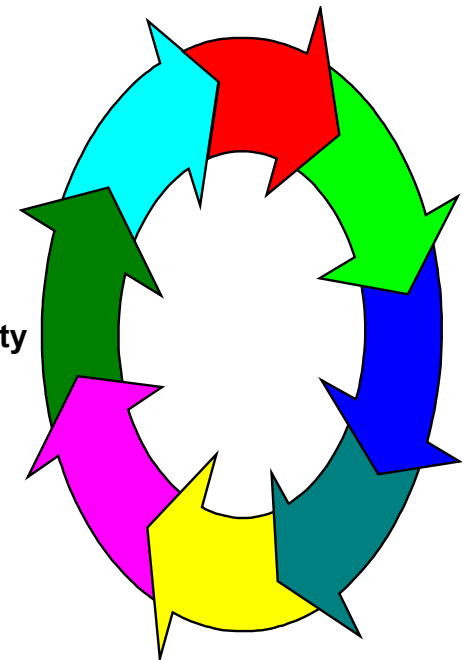
confidentiality - concerns protection of sensitive information from unauthorized disclosure.

integrity - relates to the accuracy and completeness of information as well as to its validity in accordance with the business' set of values and expectations.

availability - relates to information being available when required by the business process, and hence also concerns the safeguarding of resources.

compliance - deals with complying with those laws, regulations and contractual arrangements to which the business process is subject; i.e., externally imposed business criteria.

reliability of information - relates to systems providing management with appropriate information for it to use in operating the entity, in providing financial reporting to users of the financial information, and in providing information to report to regulatory bodies with regard to compliance with laws and regulations.



Information Technology Resources

Data

Data objects in their widest sense, i.e., external and internal, structured and non-structured, graphics, sound, etc.

Application Systems

Application systems is understood to be the sum of manual and programmed procedures.

Technology

Technology covers hardware, operating systems, database management systems, networking, multimedia, etc.

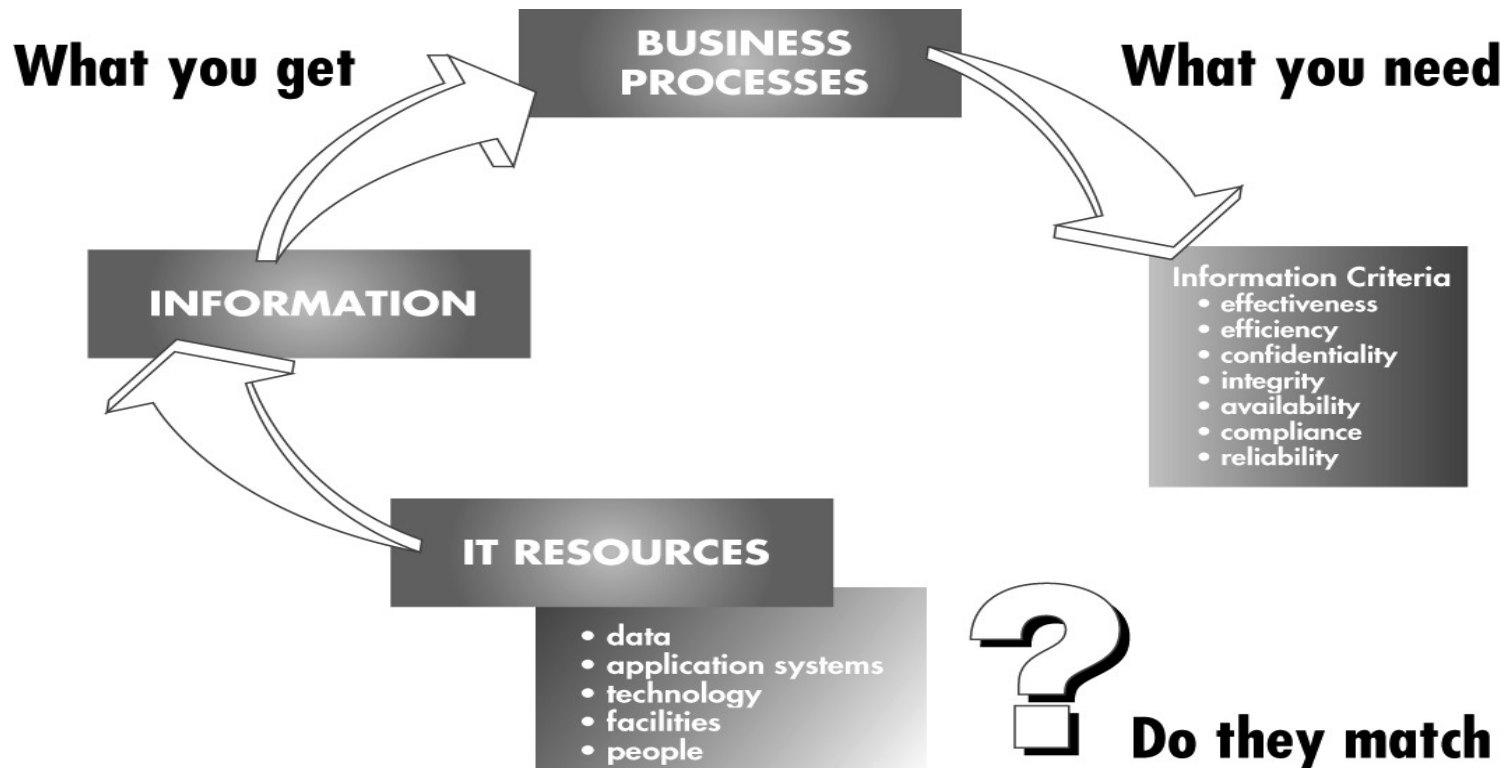
Facilities

Resources to house and support information systems.

People

Staff skills, awareness and productivity to plan, organise, acquire, deliver, support and monitor information systems and services.

The Framework's Principles



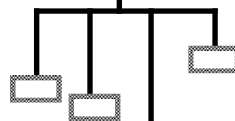
IT Domains & Processes

Domains



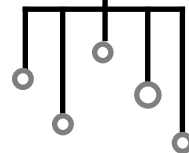
Natural grouping of processes, often matching an organisational domain of responsibility.

Processes



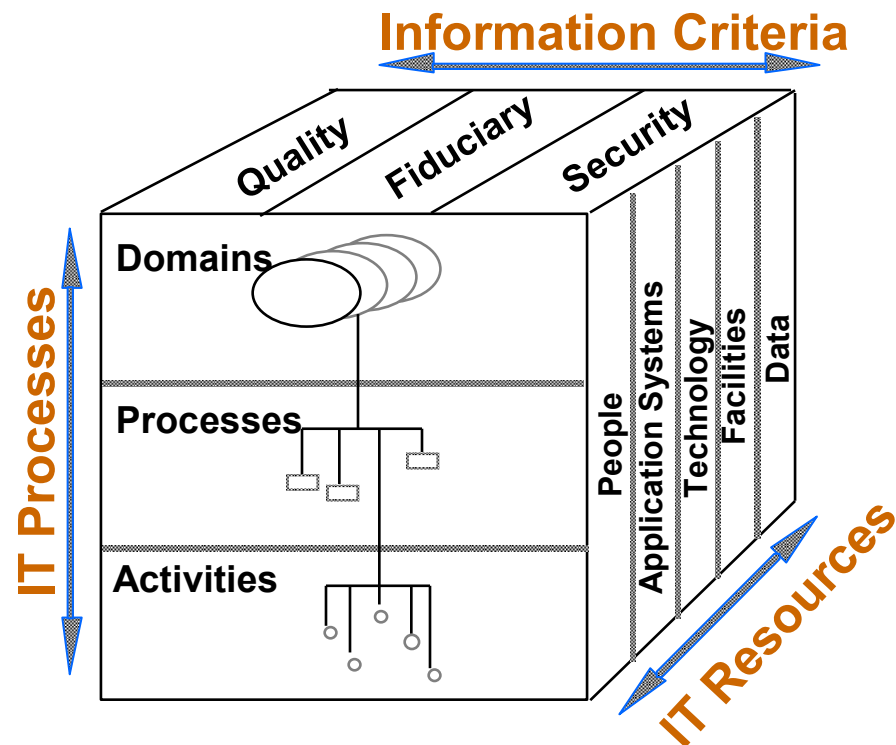
A series of joined activities with natural (control) breaks.

Activities



Actions needed to achieve a measurable result. Activities have a life-cycle whereas tasks are discreet.

COBIT Cube



CONTROL OBJECTIVES

The DOMAINS

- * Planning & Organisation**
- * Acquisition & Implementation**
- * Delivery & Support**
- * Monitoring**

Planning & Organisation

- * Strategy and tactics for IT contribution
- * Meeting business objectives
- * Appropriately planned, communicated and managed
- * Proper organisation and technological infrastructure

Acquisition & Implementation

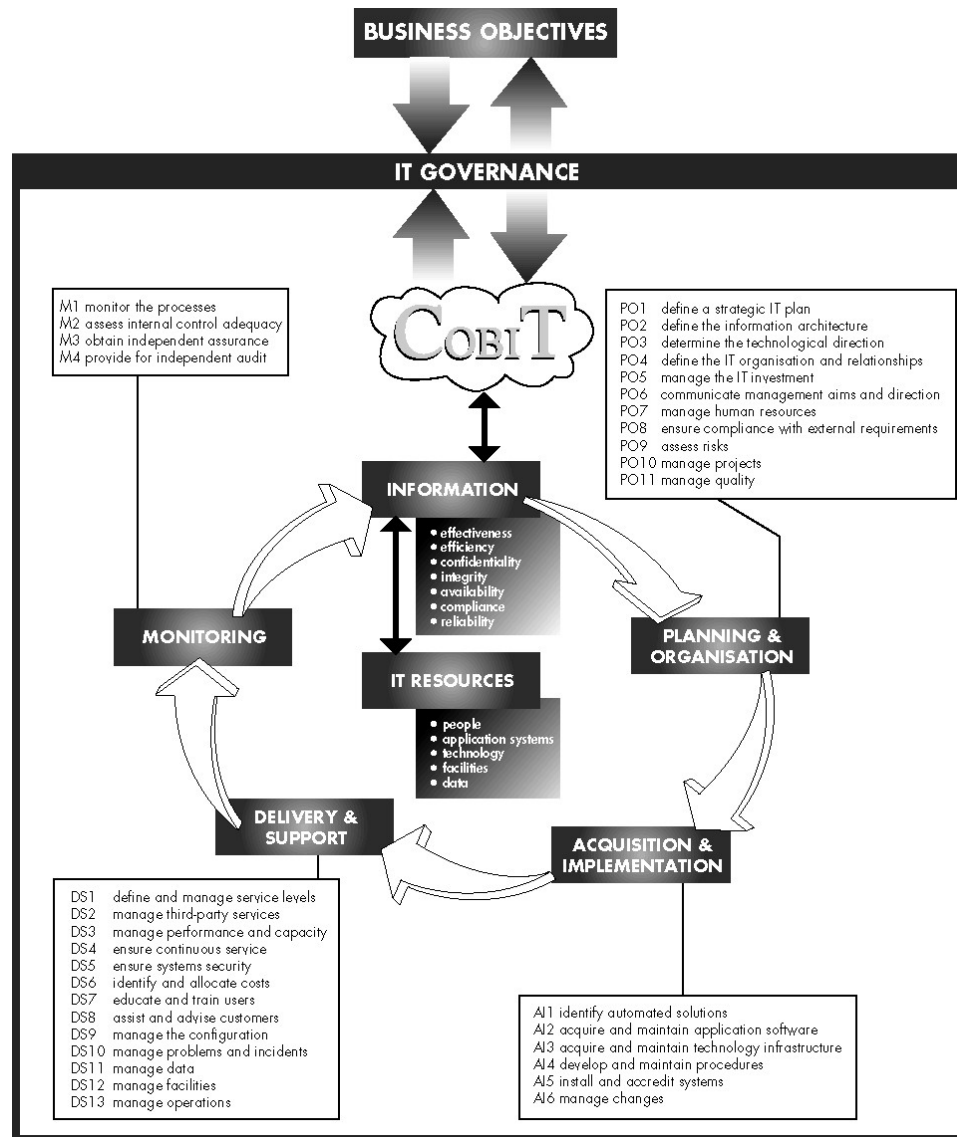
- * Realization of IT strategy
- * Solutions identified, developed, or acquired and implemented
- * Solutions integrated into business process
- * Change and maintenance of systems

Delivery & Support

- * Actual delivery of required services
- * Actual operations through security, including training
- * Establishment of support processes
- * Actual processing of data by applications

Monitoring

- * Regular assessment of all IT processes
- * Compliance with and quality of controls



COBIT's Golden Rule

In order to provide the information that the organisation needs to achieve its objectives, IT resources need to be managed by a set of naturally grouped processes.

IT Processes

Planning and Organisation

- PO 1 Define a Strategic IT Plan
- PO 2 Define the Information Architecture
- PO 3 Determine Technological Direction
- PO 4 Define the IT Organisation and Relationships
- PO 5 Manage the IT Investment
- PO 6 Communicate Management Aims and Direction
- PO 7 Manage Human Resources
- PO 8 Ensure Compliance with External Requirements
- PO 9 Assess Risks
- PO 10 Manage Projects
- PO 11 Manage Quality

DEFINE A STRATEGIC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN

PO 1

1.1 IT as Part of the Organisation's Long- and Short-Range Plan

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

Senior management is responsible for developing and implementing long- and short-range plans that fulfill the organisation's mission and goals. In this respect, senior management should ensure that IT issues as well as opportunities are adequately assessed and reflected in the organisation's long- and short-range plans. IT long- and short-range plans should be developed to help ensure that the use of IT is aligned with the mission and business strategies of the organisation.

1.2 IT Long-Range Plan

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

IT management and business process owners are responsible for regularly developing IT long-range plans supporting the achievement of the organisation's overall missions and goals. The planning approach should include mechanisms to solicit input from relevant internal and external stakeholders impacted by the IT strategic plans. Accordingly, management should implement a long-range planning process, adopt a structured approach and set up a standard plan structure.

1.3 IT Long-Range Planning - Approach and Structure

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

IT management and business process owners should establish and apply a structured approach regarding the long-range planning process. This should result in a high-quality plan which covers the basic questions of what, who, how, when and why. The IT planning process should take into account risk assessment results, including business, environmental, technology and human resources risks. Aspects which need to be taken into account and adequately addressed during the planning process include the organisational model and changes to it, geographical distribution, technological evolution, costs, legal and regulatory requirements, requirements of third-parties or the market, planning horizon, business process re-engineering, staffing, in- or out-sourcing, data, application systems and technology architectures. Benefits of the choices made should be clearly identified. The IT long- and short-range plans should incorporate performance indicators and targets. The plan itself should also refer to other plans such as the organisation quality plan and the information risk management plan.

1.4 IT Long-Range Plan Changes

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

IT management and business process owners should ensure a process is in place to modify the IT long-range plan in a timely and accurate manner to accommodate changes to the organisation's long-range plan and changes in IT conditions. Management should establish a policy requiring that IT long- and short-range plans are developed and maintained.

1.5 Short-Range Planning for the IT Function

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

IT management and business process owners should ensure that the IT long-range plan is regularly translated into IT short-range plans. Such short-range plans should ensure that appropriate IT function resources are allocated on a basis consistent with the IT long-range plan. The short-range plans should be reassessed periodically and amended as necessary in response to changing business and IT conditions. The timely performance of feasibility studies should ensure that the execution of the short-range plans is adequately initiated.

1.6 Communication of IT Plans

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

Management should ensure that IT long- and short-range plans are communicated to business process owners and other relevant parties across the organisation.

1.7 Monitoring and Evaluating of IT Plans

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

Management should establish processes to capture and report feedback from business process owners and users regarding the quality and usefulness of long- and short-range plans. The feed-back obtained should be evaluated and considered in future IT planning.

1.8 Assessment of Existing Systems

CONTROL OBJECTIVE

Prior to developing or changing the strategic, or long-range IT plan, IT management should assess the existing information systems in terms of degree of business automation, functionality, stability, complexity, costs, strengths and weaknesses, in order to determine the degree to which the existing systems support the organisation's business requirements.

IT Processes

Acquisition and Implementation

- AI 1 Identify Automated Solutions
- AI 2 Acquire and Maintain Application Software
- AI 3 Acquire and Maintain Technology Infrastructure
- AI 4 Develop and Maintain Procedures
- AI 5 Install and Accredite Systems
- AI 6 Manage Changes

IT Processes

Delivery and Support

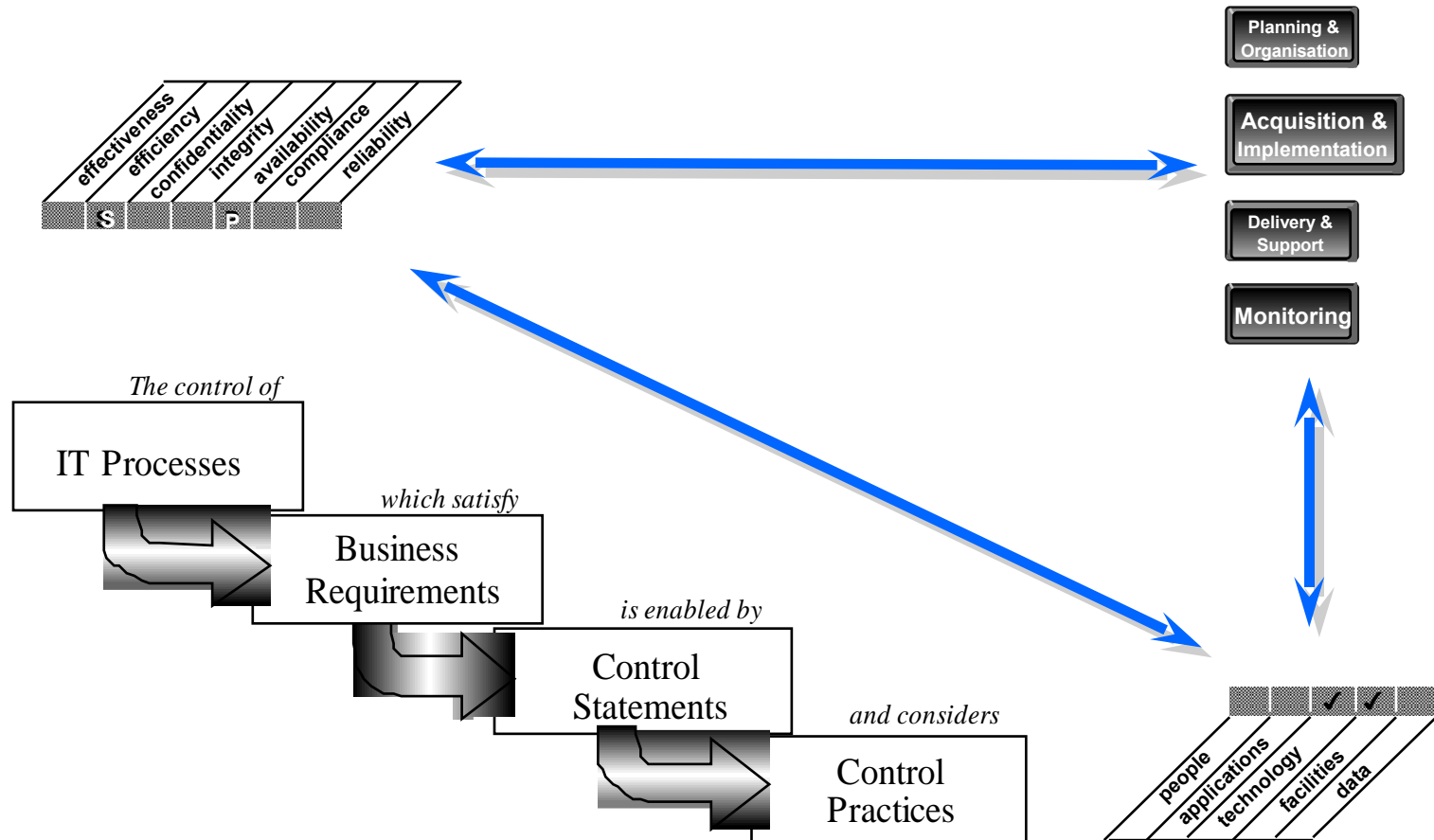
- DS 1 Define and Manage Service Levels
- DS 2 Manage Third-Party Services
- DS 3 Manage Performance and Capacity
- DS 4 Ensure Continuous Service
- DS 5 Ensure Systems Security
- DS 6 Identify and Allocate Costs
- DS 7 Educate and Train Users
- DS 8 Assist and Advise Customers
- DS 9 Manage the Configuration
- DS 10 Manage Problems and Incidents
- DS 11 Manage Data
- DS 12 Manage Facilities
- DS 13 Manage Operations

IT Processes

Monitoring

- M 1 Monitor the Processes
- M 2 Assess Internal Control Adequacy
- M 3 Obtain Independent Assurance
- M 4 Provide for Independent Audit

COBIT's Waterfall and Navigation Aids



AUDIT GUIDELINES

The objectives of auditing are to:

- * *provide management with reasonable assurance that control objectives are being met;*
- * *where there are significant control weaknesses, to substantiate the resulting risks; and*
- * *advise management on corrective actions.*

AUDIT GUIDELINES

The process is audited by:

Obtaining an understanding of business requirements, related risks, and relevant control measures

Evaluating the appropriateness of stated controls

Assessing compliance by testing whether the stated controls are working as prescribed, consistently and continuously

Substantiating the risk of the control objectives not being met by using analytical techniques and/or consulting alternative sources.

GENERIC AUDIT GUIDELINE

OBTAINING AN UNDERSTANDING

The audit steps to be performed to document the activities underlying the control objectives as well as to identify the stated control measures/procedures in place.

Interview appropriate management and staff to gain an understanding of:

- * Business requirements and associated risks
- * Organisation structure
- * Roles and responsibilities
- * Policies and procedures
- * Laws and regulations
- * Control measures in place
- * Management reporting (status, performance, action items)

Document the process-related IT resources particularly affected by the process under review. Confirm the understanding of the process under review, the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of the process, and the control implications (e.g., by a process walk through).

GENERIC AUDIT GUIDELINE

EVALUATING THE CONTROLS

The audit steps to be performed in assessing the effectiveness of control measures in place or the degree to which the control objective is achieved. Basically deciding what, whether and how to test.

Evaluate the appropriateness of control measures for the process under review by considering identified criteria and industry standard practices, the Critical Success Factors (CSF) of the control measures and applying professional judgment.

- Documented processes exist
- Appropriate deliverables exist
- Responsibility and accountability are clear and effective
- Compensating controls exist, where necessary

Conclude the degree to which the control objective is met.

GENERIC AUDIT GUIDELINE

ASSESSING COMPLIANCE

The audit steps to be performed to ensure that the control measures established are working as prescribed, consistently and continuously, and to conclude on the appropriateness of the control environment.

Obtain direct or indirect evidence for selected items/periods to ensure that the procedures have been complied with for the period under review using both direct and indirect evidence.

Perform a limited review of the adequacy of the process deliverables.

Determine the level of substantive testing and additional work needed to provide assurance that the IT process is adequate.

GENERIC AUDIT GUIDELINE

SUBSTANTIATING THE RISK

The audit steps to be performed to substantiate the risk of the control objective not being met by using analytical techniques and/or consulting alternative sources. The objective is to support the opinion and to “shock” management into action. Auditors have to be creative in finding and presenting this often sensitive and confidential information.

Document the control weaknesses and resulting threats and vulnerabilities.

Identify and document the actual and potential impact (e.g., through root-cause analysis).

Provide comparative information (e.g., through benchmarks).

PO 1 DEFINE A STRATEGIC IT PLAN

CONTROL OBJECTIVES

- 1 IT as Part of the Organisation's Long- and Short-Range Plan
- 2 IT Long-Range Plan
- 3 IT Long-Range Planning - Approach and Structure
- 4 IT Long-Range Plan Changes
- 5 Short-Range Planning for the IT Function
- 9 Communication of IT Plans
- 10 Monitoring and Evaluating of IT Plans
- 11 Assessment of Existing Systems

BOTH HIGH-LEVEL AND DETAILED CONTROL OBJECTIVES ARE AUDITED BY:

Obtaining an understanding by:

Interviewing:

Chief Executive Officer
Chief Operations Officer
Chief Financial Officer
Chief Information Officer
IT planning/steering committee members
IT senior management and human services staff

Obtaining:

Policies and procedures relating to the planning process

Senior management steering roles and responsibilities

Organisation objectives and long- and short-range plans

IT objectives and long- and short-range plans

Status reports and minutes of planning/steering committee meetings

Evaluating the controls by:

Considering whether:

IT function or business enterprise policies and procedures address a structured planning approach

A methodology is in place to formulate and modify the plans and at a minimum, they cover:

- organisation mission and goals
- IT initiatives to support organisation mission and goals
- opportunities for information technology initiatives
- feasibility studies of IT initiatives
- risk assessments of IT initiatives
- optimal investment of current and future IT investments
- re-engineering of IT initiatives to reflect changes in the organisation's mission and goals
- evaluation of alternative strategies for data applications, technology and organisation

Considering whether, *(continued)*

Organisational changes, technology evolution, regulatory requirements, business process re-engineering, staffing, in- and out-sourcing, etc. are taken into account and adequately addressed in the planning process

Long- and short-range IT plans exist, are current, adequately address overall enterprise, its mission, and key business functions

IT projects are supported by the appropriate documentation as identified in the information technology planning methodology

Checkpoints exist to ensure that IT objectives and long- and short-range plans continue to meet organisational objectives and long- and short-range plans

Review and sign-off occurs by process owners and senior management of IT plans

The IT plan assesses the existing information systems in terms of degree of business automation, stability, functionality, complexity, costs, strengths and weaknesses.

Assessing the compliance by: Testing that:

Minutes from IT planning/steering committee meetings reflect the planning process

Planning methodology deliverables exist and are as prescribed

Relevant IT initiatives are in the long- and short-range plans (i.e., hardware changes, capacity planning, information architecture, new system development or procurement, disaster recovery planning, installation of new processing platforms, etc.)

IT initiatives support long- and short-range plans and consider requirements for research, training, staffing, facilities, hardware and software

Assessing the compliance by: Testing that: (continued)

Technical implications of IT initiatives have been identified
Consideration has been given to optimising current and future IT investments

IT long- and short-range plans are consistent with the organisation's long- and short-range plans and organisation requirements

Plans have been changed to reflect changing conditions

IT long-range plans are periodically translated into short-range plans

Tasks exist to implement the plans

Substantiating the risk of control objectives not being met by:

Performing:

Benchmarking of strategic IT plans against similar organisations or appropriate international standards/recognised industry best practices

Detailed review of IT plans to ensure that IT initiatives reflect the organisation's mission and goals

Detailed review of the IT plans to determine if known areas of weakness within the organisation are being identified for improvement as part of the IT solutions contained in the plans

Identifying:

- IT failures to meet the organisation's missions and goals
- IT failures to match short-range plans with long-range plans
- IT projects failures to meet short-range plans
- IT failures to meet cost and time guidelines
- Missed business opportunities
- Missed information technology opportunities

Management Guidelines

- * **Maturity Models**
- * **Critical Success Factors**
- * **Key Performance Indicators**

Management's Questions

How do responsible managers “keep the ship on course”?

DASHBOARDS



Indicators?

How to achieve results that are satisfactory for the largest possible segment of our stakeholders?

SCORECARDS



Measures?

How to timely adapt the organisation to trends and developments in the enterprise's environment?

BENCHMARKING

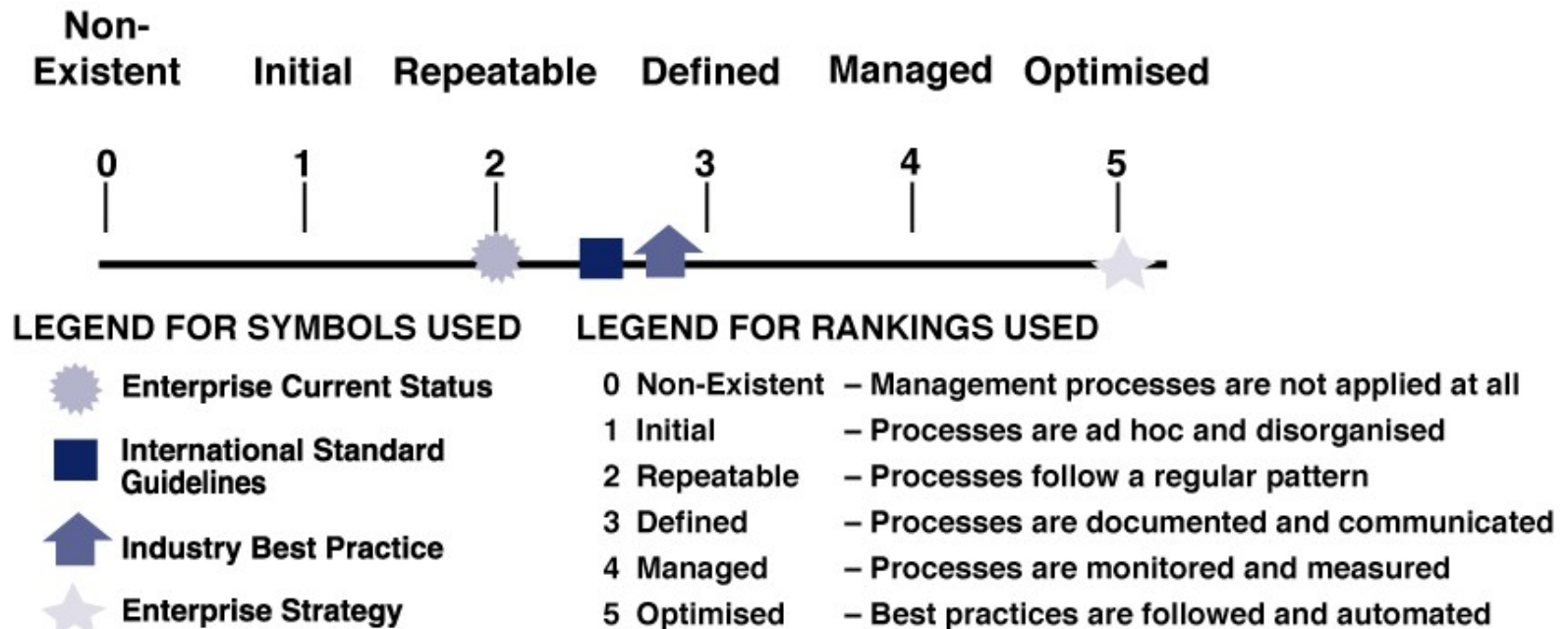


Scales?

Management Guidelines

- **Generic and action oriented**
- **For the purpose of**
 - IT Control profiling – **what is important?**
 - Awareness – **where is the risk?**
 - Benchmarking - **what do others do?**
- **Supporting decision making and follow-up**
 - **Key performance indicators of IT Processes**
 - **Critical success factors of controls**
 - **Control implementation choices**

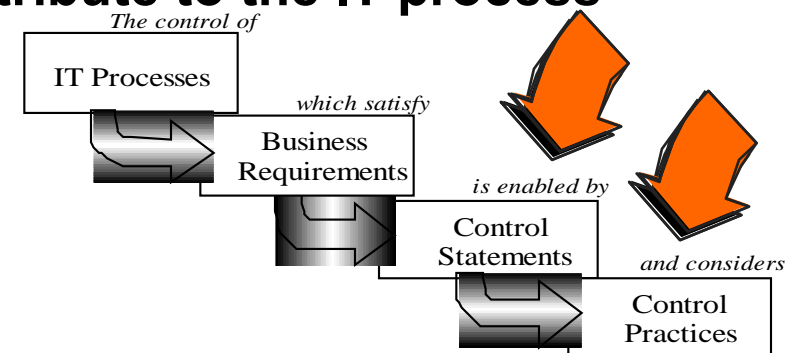
Maturity Models for Self-Assessment



Critical Success Factors

- Management oriented IT control implementation guidance
- Most important things that contribute to the IT process achieving its goal

- Strategically
- Technically
- Organisationally
- Process or Procedure



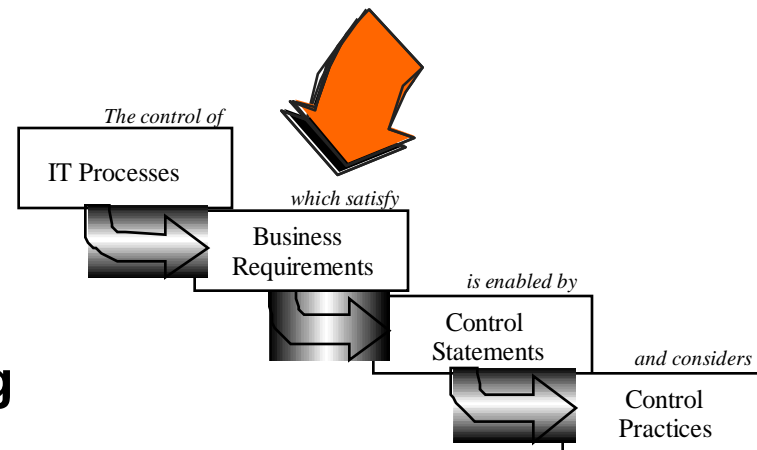
- Control Statement and Considerations of the 'Waterfall'
- Visible and measurable signs of success
- Short, focussed and action oriented
- Leveraging the resources of primary importance in this process

Critical Success Factors

- Represent the most important things to do to increase the probability of success of the process
- Are observable - usually measurable - characteristics of the organisation and process
- Are either strategic, technological, organisational or procedural in nature
- Focus on obtaining, maintaining and leveraging capability and skills
- Are expressed in terms of the process, not necessarily the business

Key Goal Indicators

- **KGI for goal**
measurable indicators
of the process achieving
its goal
- f(Business Requirement of the 'Waterfall')
- Influenced by the primary and secondary information criteria
- A potential source can be found in COBIT's
'Substantiating Risk' section in the Audit Guidelines

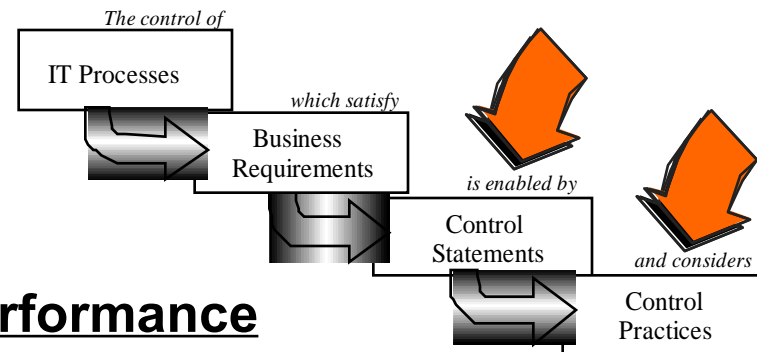


Key Goal Indicators

- Describe the outcome of the process and are therefore ‘lag’ indicators, i.e., measurable after the fact
- Are indicators of the success of the process, but may be expressed as well in terms of the business contribution, if that contribution is specific to that IT process
- Focus on the customer and financial dimensions of the balanced business scorecard
- Represent the process goal, i.e., a measure of “what”, a target to achieve
- May describe a measure of the impact of not reaching the process goal
- Are IT oriented, but business driven
- Are expressed in precise measurable terms, wherever possible
- Focus on those information criteria that have been identified to be of most importance for this process

Key Performance Indicators

- **KPI for performance**
measurable indicators of performance
of the enabling factors
- **f(Control Statement and Considerations in 'Waterfall')**
- **How well they leverage/manage the resources needed**



Key Performance Indicators

- Are a measure of “how well” the process is performing
- Predict the probability of success or failure in the future, i.e., is a ‘LEAD’ indicator
- Are process oriented, but IT driven
- Focus on the process and learning dimensions of the balanced scorecard
- Are expressed in precise, measurable terms
- Help in improving the IT process

Why Should an Organisation Adopt COBIT?

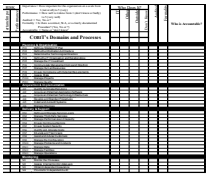
- ◆ Attention on Corporate Governance
- ◆ Management Accountability for Resources
- ◆ Specific Need for Control of IT Resources
- ◆ Business Oriented Solutions
- ◆ Framework for Risk Assessment
- ◆ Authoritative Basis
- ◆ Self-assessment, Performance Measurement and Benchmarking Capabilities

COBIT Management Awareness Diagnostic Tools

One of the most challenging tasks will be getting top management's attention. Two tools for getting management's attention and raising management's awareness are:

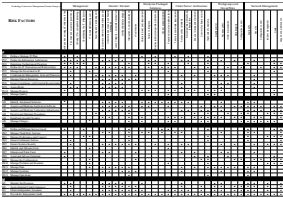
- ◆ IT Governance Self-Assessment
- ◆ Management's IT Concerns Diagnostic

IT Governance Self-Assessment



The image shows a small, low-resolution thumbnail of a COBIT IT Governance Self-Assessment template. It is a complex table with multiple columns and rows. The columns likely represent different COBIT domains (e.g., Plan, Do, Check, Act) and specific control objectives. The rows represent individual assessment items or processes. The table is filled with text, which is illegible due to the low resolution.

Management's IT Concerns Diagnostic



A thumbnail image of a COBIT Management's IT Concerns Diagnostic matrix. The matrix is a grid with 10 columns and 10 rows. The columns are labeled with COBIT domains: Plan, Measure, Monitor, Improve, and Realize. The rows are labeled with IT concerns: IT Strategy, IT Governance, IT Infrastructure, IT Applications, IT Security, IT Risk, IT Compliance, IT Performance, IT Innovation, and IT Sustainability. Each cell in the matrix contains a small icon representing a specific concern or objective.

How To Implement COBIT in an Organisation

- ◆ Top Down Approach
- ◆ Audit Committee Approach
- ◆ Audit and IT Management Consensus Approach
- ◆ Regulation/Legislation

Introduction Within an Organisation

- ◆ One-hour *Orientation* Session to Management
- ◆ More Extensive Training for Hands-on Users
- ◆ Implementation Action Plan
- ◆ Implementation Kick-off Memorandum
- ◆ Roll-out
- ◆ Monitor/Report on Progress

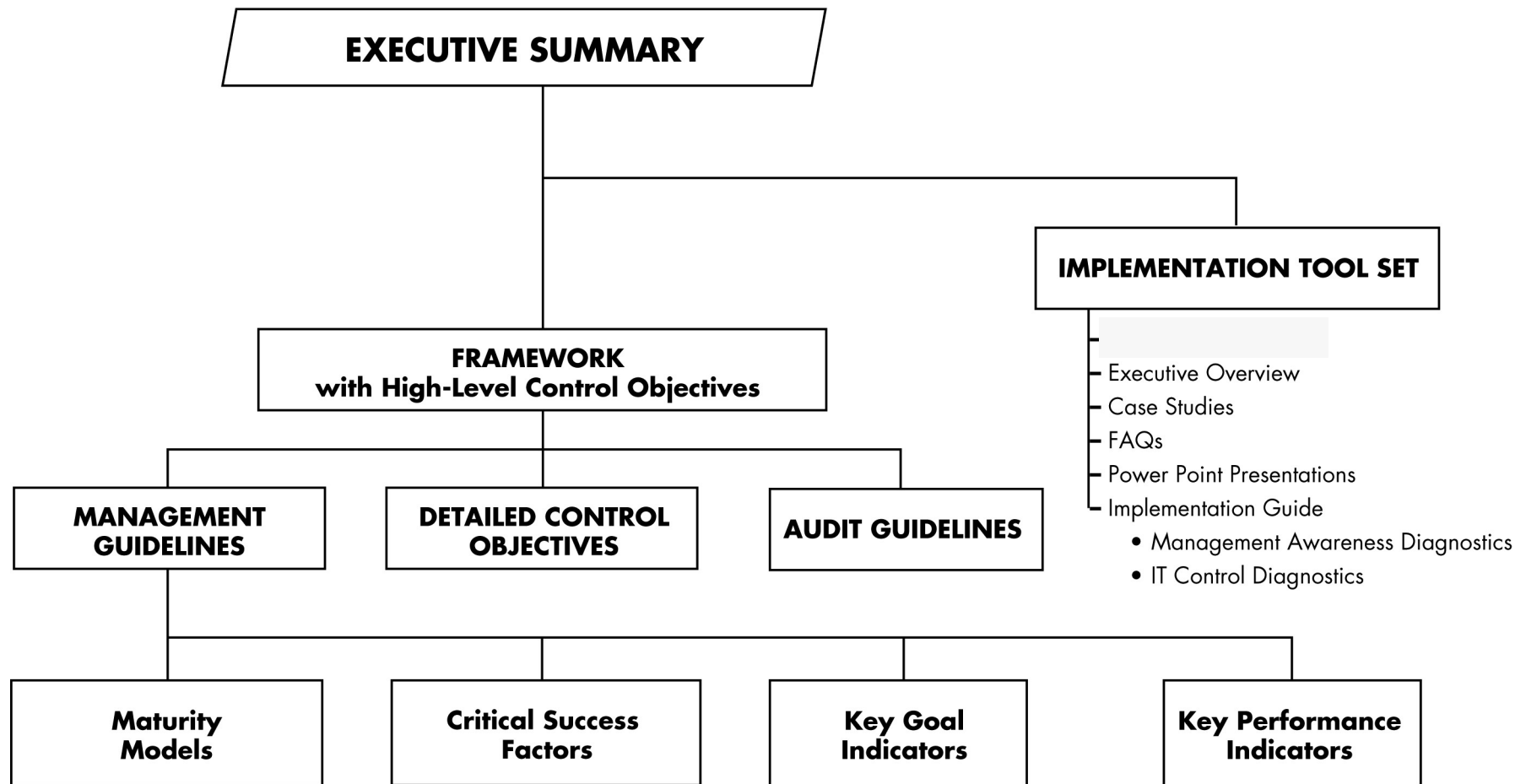
Risk Assessment and Audit Planning Using COBIT

- ◆ Prior Audit Work Form
- ◆ Entity Short Form
- ◆ Entity Long Form
- ◆ Risk Assessment Form
- ◆ Responsible Party Form
- ◆ Contract Service/Service Level Agreement Form

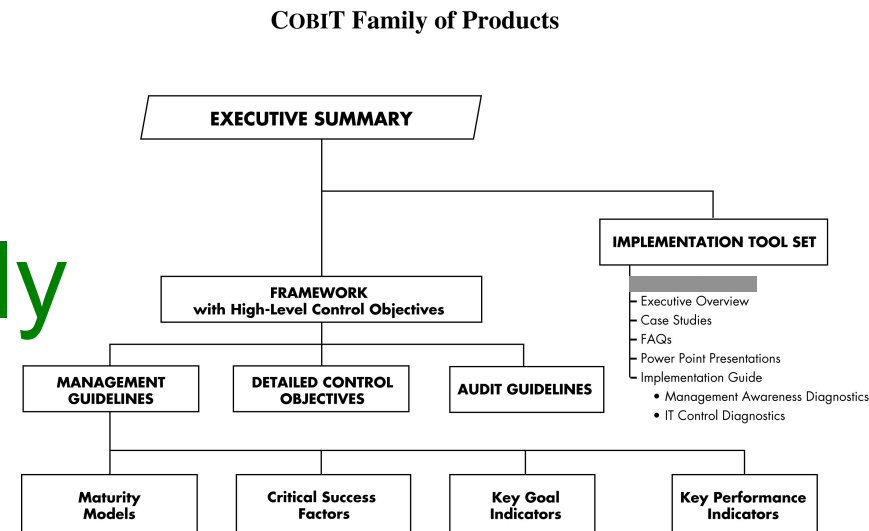
COBIT

a living standard

COBIT Family of Products



COBIT Product Family



Six Major Elements

- COBIT as an **open standard** for increased world-wide adoption, consisting of the **Executive Summary, Framework, Detailed Control Objectives, Management Guidelines and Implementation Tool Set**
- **Audit Guidelines** : how to audit against the standard

COBIT

Questions and Answers

COBIT

For additional information -

www.isaca.org

www.itgi.org

the end