2.4 SERVICE TRANSITION FUNDAMENTALS

2.4.1 Purpose, goals, and objectives

The purpose of Service Transition is to:

- Plan and manage the capacity and resources required to package, build, test and deploy a release into production and establish the service specified in the customer and stakeholder requirements
- Provide a consistent and rigorous framework for evaluating the service capability and risk profile before a new or changed service is released or deployed
- Establish and maintain the integrity of all identified service assets and configurations as they evolve through the Service Transition stage
- Provide good-quality knowledge and information so that change, Release and Deployment Management can expedite effective decisions about promoting a release through the test environments and into production
- Provide efficient repeatable build and installation mechanisms that can be used to deploy releases to the test and production environments and be rebuilt if required to restore service
- Ensure that the service can be managed, operated and supported in accordance with the requirements and constraints specified within the Service Design.

The goals of Service Transition are to:

- Set customer expectations on how the performance and use of the new or changed service can be used to enable business change

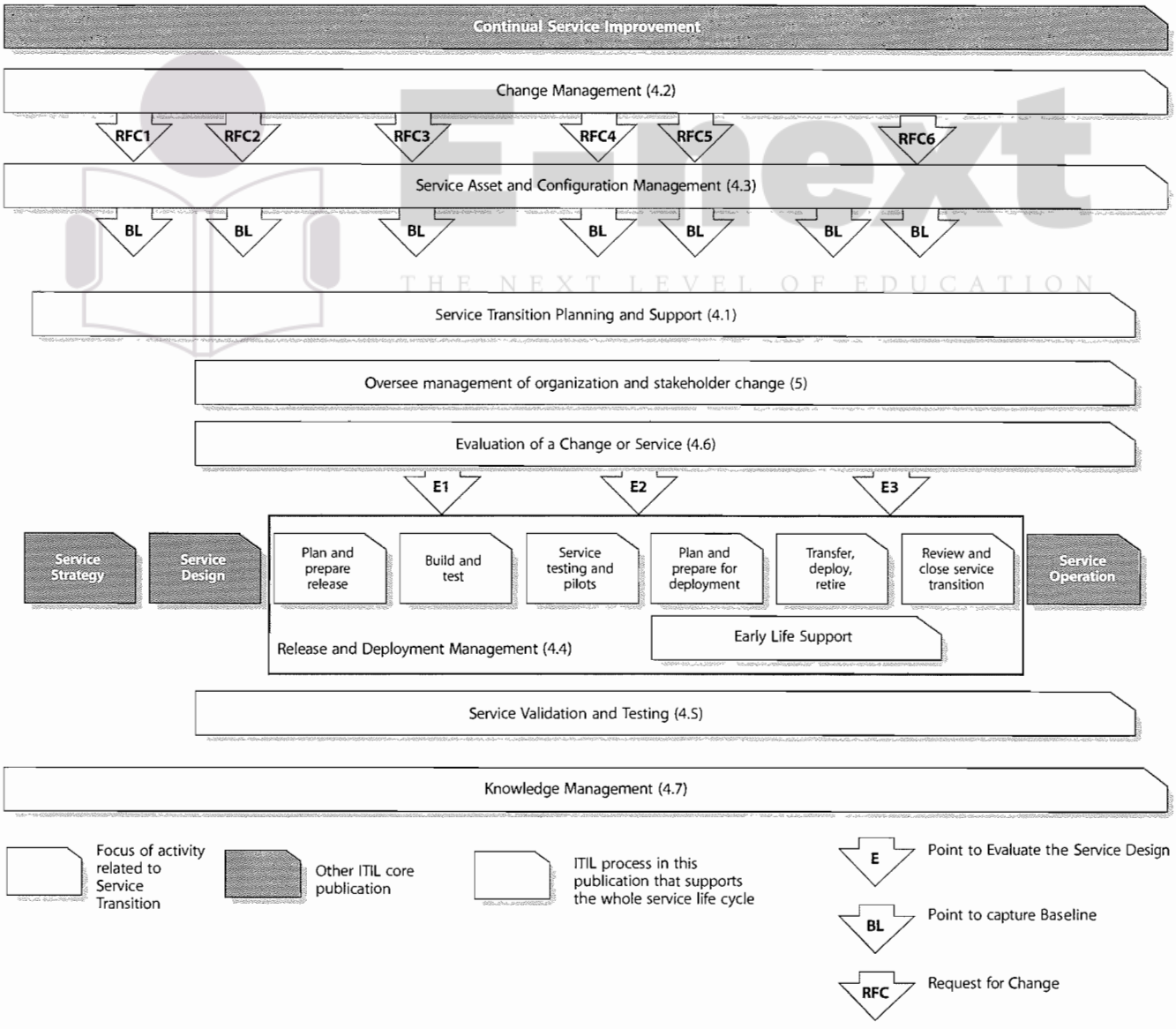

Figure 2.3 The scope of Service Transition

- Enable the business change project or customer to integrate a release into their business processes and services
- Reduce variations in the predicted and actual performance of the transitioned services
- Reduce the known errors and minimize the risks from transitioning the new or changed services into production
- Ensure that the service can be used in accordance with the requirements and constraints specified within the service requirements.

The objectives are to:

- Plan and manage the resources to establish successfully a new or changed service into production within the predicted cost, quality and time estimates
- Ensure there is minimal unpredicted impact on the production services, operations and support organization
- Increase the customer, user and Service Management staff satisfaction with the Service Transition practices including deployment of the new or changed service, communications, release documentation, training and knowledge transfer
- Increase proper use of the services and underlying applications and technology solutions
- Provide clear and comprehensive plans that enable the customer and business change projects to align their activities with the Service Transition plans.

2.4.2 Scope

The scope of Service Transition includes the management and coordination of the processes, systems and functions to package, build, test and deploy a release into production and establish the service specified in the customer and stakeholder requirements.

The scope of the Service Transition lifecycle stage is shown in Figure 2.3. Service Transition activities are shown in the white boxes. The black boxes represent activities in the other ITIL core publications.

There may be situations when some activities do not apply to a particular transition. For example the transfer of a set of services from one organization to another may not involve release planning, build, test and acceptance.

The following lifecycle processes in this publication support all lifecycle stages:

- Change Management
- Service Asset and Configuration Management
- Knowledge Management.

Service Transition uses all the processes described in the other ITIL publications as it is responsible for testing these processes, either as part of a new or changed service or as part of testing changes to the Service Management processes. Service level management is important to ensure that customer expectations are managed during Service Transition. Incident and problem management are important for handling incidents and problems during testing, pilot and deployment activities.

The following activities are excluded from the scope of Service Transition best practices:

- Minor modifications to the production services and environment, e.g. replacement of a failed PC or printer, installation of standard software on a PC or server, or a new user
- Ongoing Continual Service Improvements that do not significantly impact the services or service provider's capability to deliver the services, e.g. request fulfilment activities driven from Service Operations.

2.4.3 Value to business

Effective Service Transition can significantly improve a service provider's ability to handle high volumes of change and releases across its customer base. It enables the service provider to:

- Align the new or changed service with the customer's business requirements and business operations
- Ensure that customers and users can use the new or changed service in a way that maximizes value to the business operations.

Specifically, Service Transition adds value to the business by improving:

- The ability to adapt quickly to new requirements and market developments ('competitive edge')
- Transition management of mergers, de-mergers, acquisitions and transfer of services
- The success rate of changes and releases for the business
- The predictions of service levels and warranties for new and changed services
- Confidence in the degree of compliance with business and governance requirements during change
- The variation of actual against estimated and approved resource plans and budgets
- The productivity of business and customer staff because of better planning and use of new and changed services

- Timely cancellation or changes to maintenance contracts for hardware and software when components are disposed or de-commissioned
- Understanding of the level of risk during and after change, e.g. service outage, disruption and re-work.

2.4.4 Optimizing Service Transition performance

Service Transition, in order to be effective and efficient, must focus on delivering what the business requires as a priority and doing so within financial and other resource constraints.

2.4.4.1 Measurements for alignment with the business and IT plans

The Service Transition lifecycle stage and release plans need to be aligned with the business, Service Management and IT strategies and plans.

Typical measures that can be used in measuring this alignment are:

- Increased percentage of Service Transition plans that are aligned with the business, IT, Service Management strategies and plans
- Percentage of customer and stakeholder organizations or units that have a clear understanding of the Service Transition practice and its capabilities
- Percentage of service lifecycle budget allocated to Service Transition activities
- Index of quality of the plans including adherence to structured approach, compliance with the plan templates and completeness of the plans
- Percentage of planning meetings where stakeholders have participated
- Percentage of Service Transition plans that are aligned with the Service Transition policy
- Percentage of strategic and tactical projects that adopt the Service Transition service practices
- Percentage of release planning documents that are quality assured by the Service Transition function or role.

2.4.4.2 Measurements for Service Transition

Measuring and monitoring the performance of the Service Transition lifecycle stage should focus on the delivery of the new or changed service against the predicted levels of warranty, service level, resources and constraints within the Service Design or release package. Measurements should therefore be aligned with the measures for Service Design, and may include the variation in predicted vs actual measures for:

- Resources utilization against capacity
- Capabilities
- Warranties
- Service levels
- Cost against approved budget
- Time
- Quality of service, e.g. satisfaction rating or service levels met, breached and near misses
- Value
- Errors and incidents
- Risks.

Examples of other measures to optimize the performance of Service Transition are:

- Cost of testing and evaluation vs cost of live incidents
- Delays caused by Service Transition, e.g. lack of Service Transition resources
- Operational problems that could have been identified by the Service Transition processes
- Stakeholder satisfaction with the transition stage
- Cost savings by targeted testing of changes to the Service Design
- Reduction in urgent or late changes and releases – reducing unplanned work
- Reduced cost of transitioning services and releases – by type
- Increased productivity of staff
- Increased re-use and sharing of service assets and Service Transition process assets
- More motivated staff and improved job satisfaction
- Improved communications and inter-team working (IT, customer, users and suppliers)
- Enhanced performance of Service Transition processes.

2.4.5 Interfaces to other service lifecycle stages

Service Transition 'sits between' Service Design and Service Operations in the service lifecycle and the major day-to-day interfaces are with those stages. However, there is interface with all of the other service lifecycle stages, delineated by inputs and outputs that flow between them.

2.4.5.1 Inputs to Service Transition

Inputs from Service Strategy influence the overall approach, structures and constraints that apply to Service Transitions and include:

- Service Portfolio
- Customer portfolio
- Contract portfolio
- Service Lifecycle model
- Policies
- Strategies
- Constraints
- Architectures
- Service Transition requirements
- Service Management Plan (as required by ISO/IEC 20000).

Service Design is the principal source of the triggers that initiate work elements within the Service Transition lifecycle stage, i.e. they input the Service Design packages that need to be transitioned. The Service Design package includes:

- Service definition
- Service structure (including core and supporting services)
- Financial/economic/cost model (with Total Cost of Ownership/Total Cost of Utilization)
- Capacity/resource model – combined with performance and availability
- Service Management integrated process model (as in ISO/IEC 20000)
- Service Operations model (includes support resources, escalation procedures and critical situation handling procedures)
- Design and interface specifications
- Release design
- Deployment plan
- Acceptance Criteria – at all levels at which testing and acceptance have been foreseen
- Requests for Change (RFCs) to instigate required changes to the environment within which the service functions or will function.

The key input, in terms of initiating action, which would normally be channelled through Service Design is the authorization to start Service Transition (e.g. RFC). However this authorization may come directly from the business customers, through a strategy change or from audit or Continual Service Improvement (CSI).

Continual Service Improvement will deliver inputs in terms of suggested improvements to transition policy, practices and processes, based on audit and other improvement exercises, possibly in liaison with customer and other stakeholders via techniques such as a stakeholder survey.

Service Operation will provide input to testing and especially to service acceptance in terms of establishing whether operations requirements have been met before handover can be made.

2.4.5.2 Outputs from Service Transition

The clearest set of outputs from Service Transition are to Service Operations and the customer and user community to whom services are delivered following successful Service Transition. These outputs include:

- Approved service release package and associated deployment packages
- Updated Service package or service bundle that defines the end-to-end service(s) offered to customers
- Updated Service Portfolio and service catalogue
- Updated contract portfolio
- Documentation for a transferred or decommissioned service.

Outputs to Continual Service Improvement will comprise suggestions and observations on changes required to improve processes, especially those within Service Design and Service Transition, but possibly also within Service Strategy and in business processes and relationship management.

2.4.6 Processes within Service Transition

There are two types of significant Service Management process that are described in this publication as indicated below.

2.4.6.1 Processes that support the service lifecycle

The first group are whole service lifecycle processes that are critical during the transition stage but influence and support all lifecycle stages. These comprise:

- Change Management
- Service Asset and Configuration Management
- Knowledge Management.

2.4.6.2 Processes within Service Transition

The following processes are strongly focused within the Service Transition stage:

- Transition Planning and Support
- Release and Deployment Management
- Service Testing and Validation
- Evaluation.