

# ITIL 4 in 10 minutes

A quickstart guide to the latest ITSM framework  
for optimal IT service operations

## You want to learn more about ITIL 4

You could start with the 212 pages of the ITIL Foundation: ITIL 4 Edition book. Or, if you have more exciting plans for the weekend, read this ebook to get a quick appreciation of ITIL 4, the latest version of the most popular global IT service management (ITSM) best practice framework. See how ITIL 4 can help your services and operations teams to deliver technology to the organization.



## Did you know?

ITIL hasn't officially been referred to as the "IT Infrastructure Library" since the publication of ITIL v3 in 2007; however, you'll probably still see this obsolete term in use.

## So, what is ITIL 4?

This might hurt your head for a moment, but it does get easier.

**ITIL is defined by the ITIL 4 Foundation book as:**

"Best-practice guidance for IT service management."

**That begs the question, what is IT service management (ITSM)?**

**The ITIL 4 Glossary defines ITSM broadly as:**

"A set of specialized organizational capabilities for enabling value for customers in the form of services."

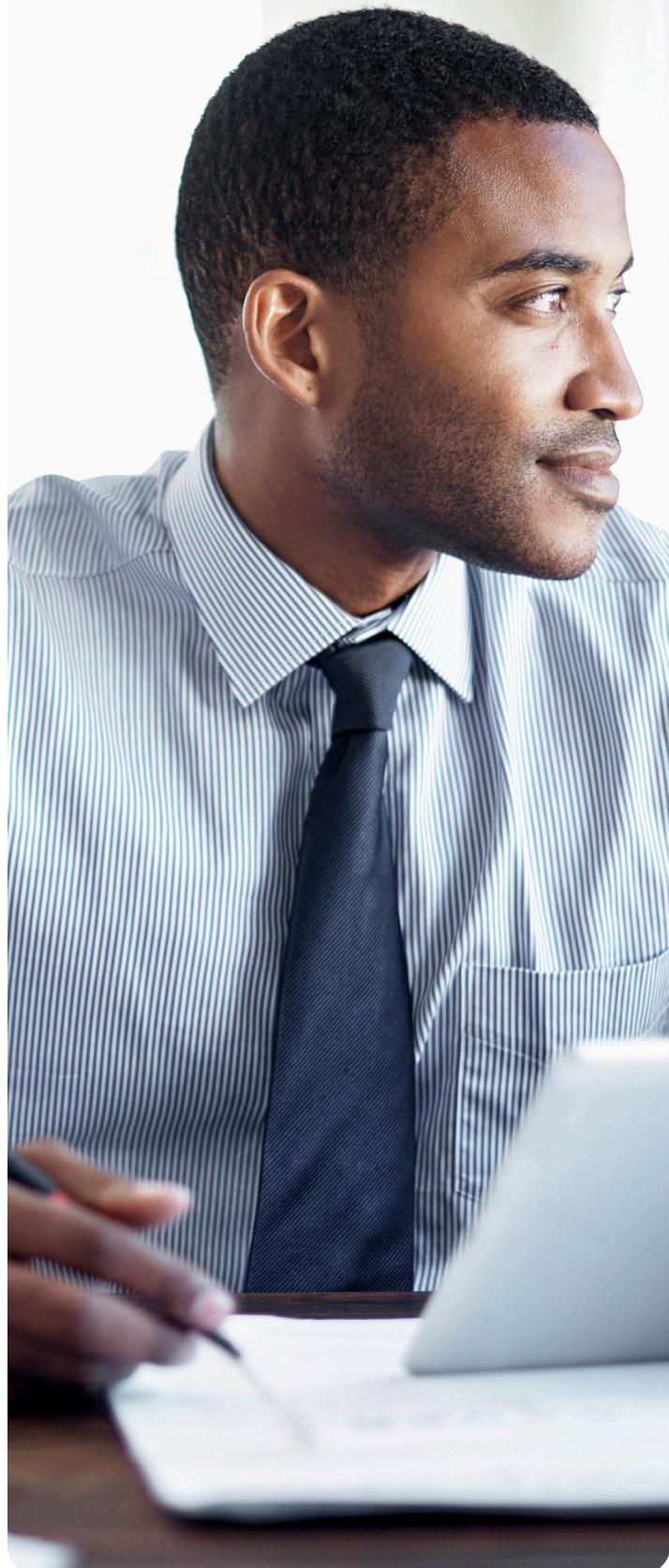
**And a service is defined as:**

"A means of enabling value co-creation by facilitating outcomes that customers want to achieve, without the customer having to manage specific costs and risks."

We did warn you about the head-hurting thing.

**The plain-English translation:**

Hopefully, the following helps—you can think of ITSM as: "Improving business performance and outcomes through better IT delivery and support practices" with ITIL proven best practice guidance on how to do that.



## How does ITIL work?

Between 2007 and 2018, ITIL v3 involved something called “the service lifecycle,” which was comprised of 26 ITSM processes and four functions. The processes were grouped across five areas:

- Service strategy
- Service design
- Service transition
- Service operation
- Continual service improvement (CSI)

ITIL v3 (2011 Edition) has now been superseded by ITIL 4 and its new approach to service management. Yet, it’s worth noting these older terms as they’ll no doubt come up in other helpful ITIL content you might access.

**There are other differences between ITIL v3 and ITIL 4, with the key changes including:**

- ITIL 4 focuses on service management, not just ITSM, and on the co-creation of value
- There’s now an ITIL service value system and service value chain
- The ITIL v3 processes are now ITIL 4 management practices

The latter two bullets are covered in the following section.



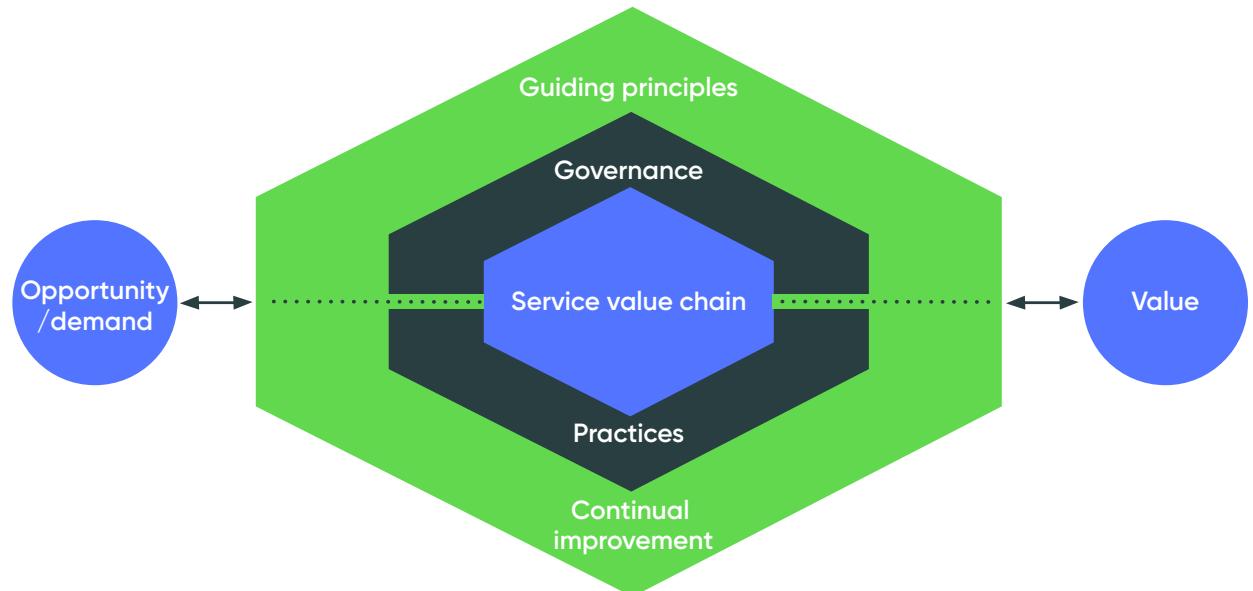
## The ITIL service value system

Understanding how ITIL 4 fits together starts with the service value system—this is the means for turning demand and opportunities into stakeholder value. Or, as the ITIL Foundation book explains it,

"The ITIL service value system describes how all the components and activities of the organization work together as a system to enable value creation."

### The ITIL service value system comprises five elements:

- 1 The service value chain
- 2 Management practices
- 3 Governance
- 4 Guiding principles
- 5 Continual improvement (no longer continual service improvement)



Source: AXELOS, "ITIL Foundation: ITIL 4 Edition" (2019)



# Quick tip

The aforementioned ITIL v3 service lifecycle can be replicated in the ITIL 4 service value chain as follows:

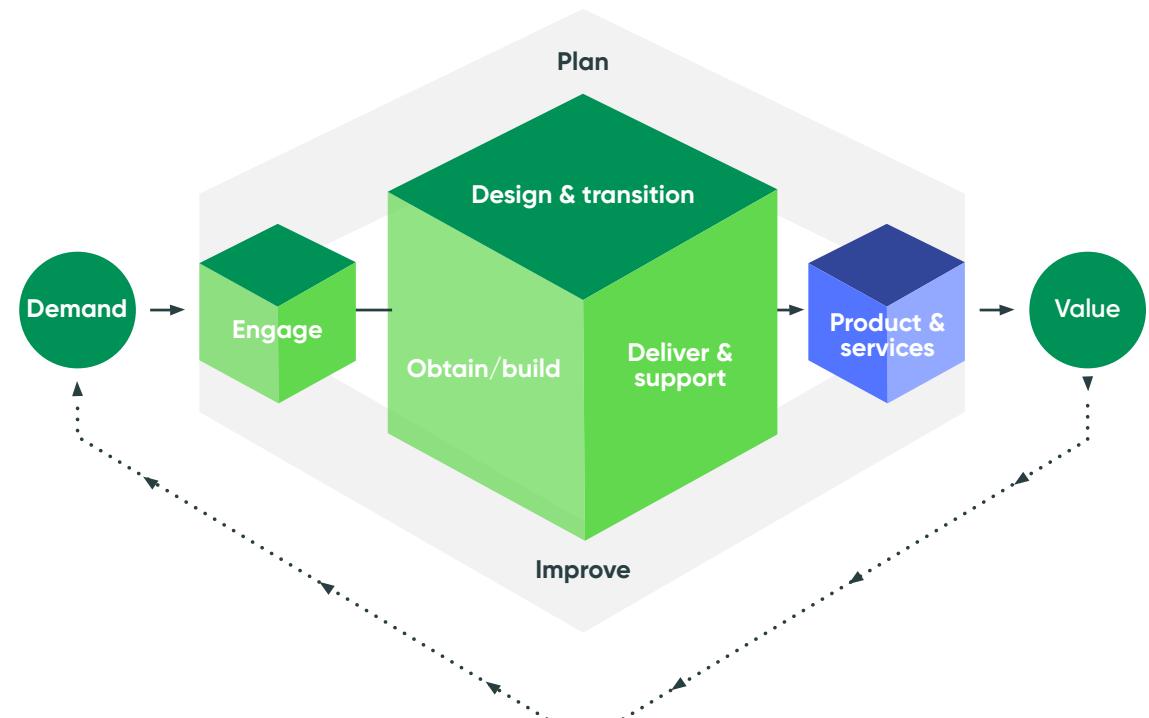
**Engage – Plan – Design and transition – Obtain/build – Design and transition – Deliver and support – Improve**

According to the ITIL Foundation book, the service value chain, at the heart of the service value system, is “an operating model which outlines the key activities required to respond to demand

and facilitate value realization through the creation and management of products and services.” These key activities are shown in the next diagram.

## The six activities with the ITIL service value chain are:

- 1 **Plan**—to ensure a shared understanding of what your service-provider organization needs to achieve, plus how
- 2 **Engage**—the engagement with stakeholders to achieve an understanding of their needs and to ensure that these needs are being met
- 3 **Design and transition**—the creation of new/changed services that meet stakeholder expectations across quality, cost, and time to market
- 4 **Obtain/build**—the creation of service components, also ensuring that they’re available when and where they’re needed and that agreed specifications are met
- 5 **Deliver and support**—to ensure that services are delivered and supported according to agreed-upon stakeholder specifications and expectations
- 6 **Improve**—to ensure the continual improvement of products, services, and practices



Source: AXELOS, “ITIL Foundation: ITIL 4 Edition” (2019)



## Quick tips

- ITIL is merely guidance and not an industry standard. It's intended for organizations to take and use as needed via an adopt-and-adapt approach.
- While the ITIL 4 practices to the right and other ones might appear new, your organization will likely be following some of the best practices already (even if improvements can be made to the status quo).

## ITIL 4 practices

The ITIL 4 Foundation book defines a management practice as "...a set of organizational resources designed for performing work or accomplishing an objective. The origins of the practices are as follows:

- **General management practices** have been adopted and adapted for service management from general business management domains.
- **Service management practices** have been developed in service management and ITSM industries.
- **Technical management practices** have been adapted from technology management domains for service and operations management purposes by expanding or shifting their focus from technology solutions to IT services."

The full set of 34 ITIL 4 management practices are listed in the table on the next page.

## The full set of 34 ITIL 4 management practices

While previous versions of ITIL focused on IT services, ITIL 4 expands IT management practices to include culture, technology and data management. New practices on the list below include: Monitoring and event management (ITOM); IT asset management; Release management (ITOM); Service configuration management(CIs); Infrastructure and platform management (ITOM; Software deployment and management (ITOM). Learn more in this [article](#).

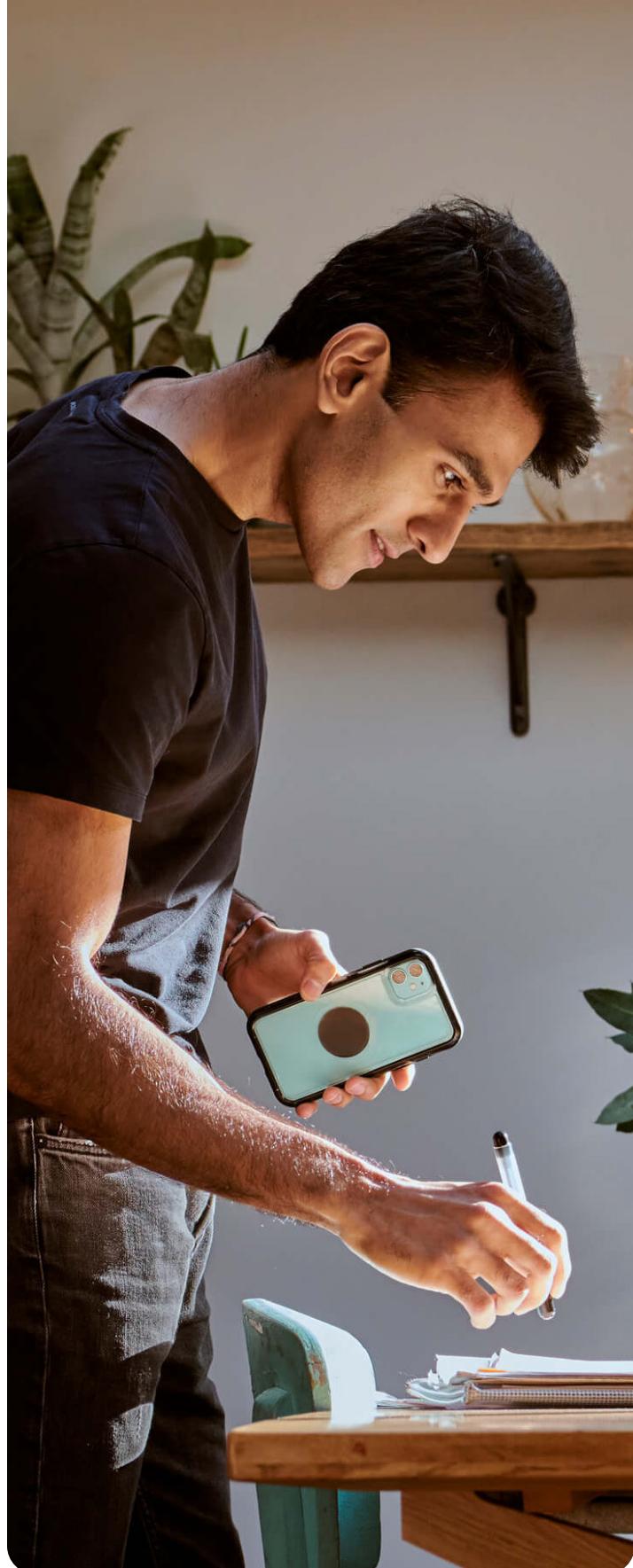
General management practices	Service management practices	Technical management practices
Architecture management	Availability management	Deployment management
Continual improvement	Business analysis	Infrastructure and platform management
Information security management	Capacity and performance management	Software development and management
Knowledge management	Change control	
Measurement and reporting	Incident management	
Organizational change management	IT asset management	
Portfolio management	Monitoring and event management	
Project management	Problem management	
Relationship management	Release management	
Risk management	Service catalog management	
Service financial management	Service configuration management	
Strategy management	Service continuity management	
Supplier management	Service design	
Workforce and talent management	Service desk	
	Service level management	
	Service request management	
	Service validation and testing	

Some of the most commonly adopted ITIL v3 processes, now ITIL 4 practices, are explained in the next section.

## Commonly adopted ITIL management practices

The following table is based on ITIL v3 process adoption levels. All practice purpose descriptions are taken from the ITIL 4 Foundation book.

Management practice	Purpose
Availability management	To ensure that services deliver agreed levels of availability to meet the needs of customers and users
Capacity and performance management	To ensure that services achieve agreed-upon and expected performance, satisfying current and future demand in a cost-effective way
Change control	To maximize the number of successful changes by ensuring that risks have been properly assessed through managing the change schedule
Continual improvement	To align practices and services with changing business needs through the ongoing improvement of products, services, and practices
Deployment management	To move new or changed hardware, software, documentation, processes, or any other component to live environments
Incident management	To minimize the negative impact of incidents by restoring normal service operation as quickly as possible
Knowledge management	To maintain and improve the effective, efficient, and convenient use of information and knowledge across the organization
Monitoring and event management	To systematically observe services and service components as well as record and report selected changes of state identified as events
Portfolio management	To ensure that the organization has the right mix of programs, projects, products, and services to execute the organization's strategy
Problem management	To reduce the likelihood and impact of incidents by identifying causes of incidents as well as managing workarounds and known errors
Release management	To make new and changed services and features available for use
Service catalog management	To provide a single source of consistent information on all services and service offerings and to ensure that it is available to the relevant audience
Service configuration management	To ensure that accurate and reliable information about the configuration of services, and the configuration items that support them, is available
Service desk	To capture demand for incident resolution and service requests. It should also be the entry point and single point of contact for users
Service financial management	To support the organization's strategies and plans for service management by ensuring that financial resources and investments are used effectively
Service level management	To set clear business-based targets for service levels and to ensure that delivery of services is properly monitored and managed against them
Service request management	To support the agreed quality of a service by handling all pre-defined, user-initiated service requests in an effective and user-friendly manner



## About ServiceNow ITSM

Corporate IT organizations in pursuit of best practice IT automation look to frameworks like ITIL for guidance on improving business performance and outcomes through better IT delivery and support practices. ServiceNow ITSM delivers on that promise while increasing IT productivity and achieving new insights by consolidating fragmented IT tools to the most innovative ITSM solution.

## About technology service operations

For technology-driven organizations, providing dynamic digital services for hybrid workforces has become mission-critical. Burdened with legacy tools, talent shortages, and disparate data silos, IT is overwhelmed and struggles to support organization-wide innovation.

As an industry leader, ServiceNow offers a solution to unlock development and innovation by automating and optimizing technology service operations on a single cloud platform. In synchronizing IT services and operations, teams gain complete visibility to best deliver modern, cost-effective services—across hybrid and multi-cloud environments. Teams can also scale with AI to resolve common employee requests and predict, then remediate issues to keep digital services running 24/7, all resulting in the ability to govern and deliver extraordinary technology experiences with high productivity.



## Next steps

Are you ready to help your organization to adopt ITIL for improved IT service delivery, IT operations, and outcomes? ITIL best practices have already improved IT service delivery, support capabilities, and issue resolution for tens of thousands of companies worldwide. Imagine the host of improvement opportunities waiting to happen in your IT organization.

## Learn more

[A practical approach to ITIL 4 adoption](#)

[Journey to modernizing IT services](#)

[Why stellar IT services start with automated infrastructure visibility](#)

[Deliver more reliable digital services by knowing what supports them](#)

### About ServiceNow

ServiceNow (NYSE: NOW) makes the world work better for everyone. Our cloud-based platform and solutions help to digitize and unify organizations so that they can find smarter, faster, better ways to make work flow. So employees and customers can be more connected, more innovative, and more agile. And we can all create the future we imagine. The world works with ServiceNow®. For more information, visit: [www.servicenow.com](http://www.servicenow.com).