

# ITIL 4 Practice Guide

ITIL® 4  
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## 1. About this document

ITIL® 4 has been created to help organizations meet increasing demands from the current complex digital environment. This reader's manual is designed to help readers understand and use the ITIL 4 practice guides. It provides an overview of their structure, content and key concepts. It also explains how the practice guides support ITIL 4's qualification scheme and associated publications.

The Reader's Manual addresses the changes made to some of the Practice Guides in 2023; where a section of content is only available in the updated practice guides, this will be indicated by footnotes to the section titles.

### **1.1 ITIL® 4 qualification scheme**

The ITIL 4 qualification scheme comprises the following certifications:

- ITIL Foundation
- ITIL Specialist modules:
  - Create, Deliver and Support
  - Drive Stakeholder Value
  - High-velocity IT
- ITIL Strategist: Direct, Plan, and Improve
- ITIL Leader: Digital and IT strategy
- ITIL Practitioner modules:
  - Change enablement
  - Continual improvement
  - Deployment management
  - Incident management
  - Information security management
  - IT asset management
  - Monitoring and event management
  - Problem management
  - Relationship management
  - Release management
  - Service configuration management
  - Service desk
  - Service level management
  - Service request management
  - Supplier management
- Practice-based Specialist modules
  - Monitor, Support and Fulfil
  - Plan, Implement, and Control
  - Collaborate, Assure and Improve

- Extension ITIL Specialist modules
  - Acquiring and Managing Cloud Services
  - Sustainability in Digital and IT
  - Business Relationship Management
  - IT Asset Management.

Designations of ITIL Practice Manager, ITIL Managing professional, ITIL Strategic Leader, and ITIL Master are awarded upon achievement of the qualifying certifications, as shown in Table 1.1 and Figure 1.1.

Table 1.1 ITIL designations and required certifications

Designations	Required certifications and designations
ITIL Practice Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITIL Foundation</li> <li>• ITIL Specialist: Create, Deliver and Support</li> <li>• Any 5 ITIL Practitioner certifications</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Practice-based ITIL Specialist certification.</li> </ul>
ITIL Managing Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITIL Foundation</li> <li>• ITIL Specialist: Create, Deliver and Support</li> <li>• ITIL Specialist: Drive Stakeholder Value</li> <li>• ITIL Specialist: High-velocity IT</li> <li>• ITIL Strategist: Direct, Plan, and Improve.</li> </ul>
ITIL Strategic Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITIL Foundation</li> <li>• ITIL Strategist: Direct, Plan, and Improve</li> <li>• ITIL Leader: Digital and IT Strategy.</li> </ul>
ITIL Master	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITIL Practice manager</li> <li>• ITIL Managing Professional</li> <li>• ITIL Strategic Leader.</li> </ul>

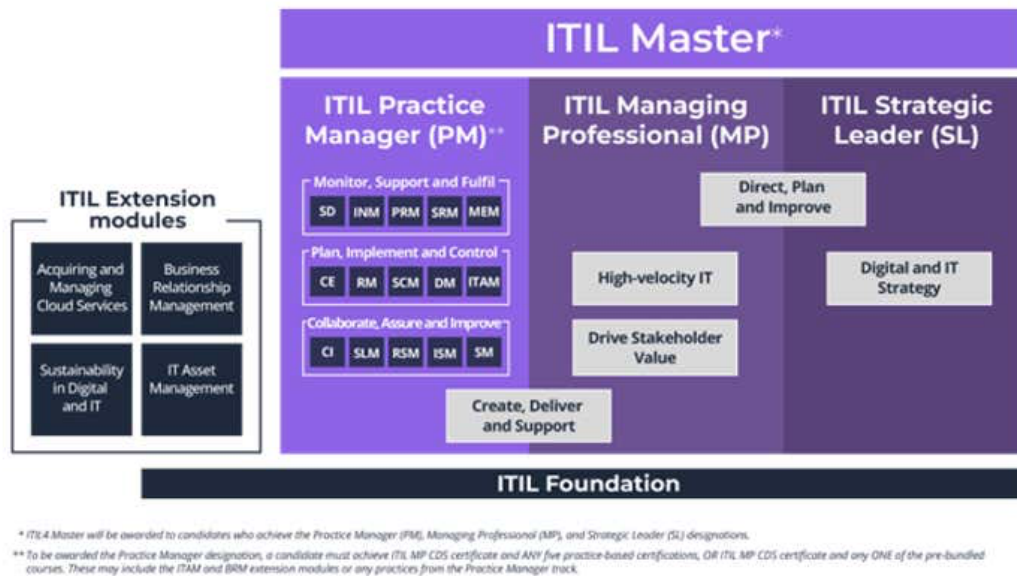


Figure 1.1 The ITIL 4 qualification scheme

## 1.2 The examination syllabuses

The ITIL Specialist, Strategist, and Leader syllabuses are based on content from two sources:

- the respective core publications (of the same name)
- a selection of content from the practice guides.

The ITIL Practitioner and practice-based ITIL Specialist syllabuses are based on the respective practice guides (one practice guide per ITIL Practitioner and five practice guides per Practice-based ITIL Specialist module).

## 1.3 The ITIL 4 Practice Guides

### 1.3.1 ITIL practices

**Definition: Practice**

A set of organizational resources designed for performing work or accomplishing an objective. These resources are grouped into the four dimensions of service management.

Practices are important components of an organization's SVS. They contribute to the service value chain activities and ensure that the organization achieves its goals.

*ITIL Foundation* provides a brief overview of every practice. Details of each practice are provided in the ITIL 4 practice guides. The other ITIL 4 publications describe how the practices can be applied in various contexts.

Each practice guide provides structured information about one ITIL practice. Practice guides may be complemented by supplementary publications such as templates and detailed descriptions of methods and techniques.

## 1.4 A common structure

All ITIL 4 practice guides follow the same structure, featuring these main sections:

- About the practice guide
- General information
  - purpose and description
  - terms and concepts
  - scope
  - practice success factors
  - key metrics
- Value streams and processes
  - how the practice contributes to service value chain activities (*only in 2019-2020 versions of the practice guides*)
  - the processes and activities of the practice
  - how the practice contributes to the organization's service value streams (*only in the practice guides updated in 2023*)
- Organizations and people
  - roles, competencies, and responsibilities
  - organizational structures and teams
- Information and technology
  - information exchange: inputs and outputs
  - automation and tooling
- Partners and suppliers
  - relationships with third parties involved in the practice
  - sourcing considerations
- Capability assessment and development (*only in the practice guides updated in 2023*)
  - introduction to the capability levels
  - capability criteria for the practice assessment
  - capability self-assessment and development
- Recommendations for the practice success (*only in the practice guides updated in 2023*).

The remainder of this reader’s manual explains the key terms used in the practice guides and the assumptions that were made when the guides were designed and written. This information will help readers to navigate and use the practice guides.

It is important to remember that, although each practice guide helps organizations to build a sound foundation in that particular practice, the guidance it contains is not exhaustive; there are always opportunities for further nuance and innovation.

2. General information

The general information section covers the following areas:

- purpose and description
- key terms and concepts
- scope
- practice success factors
- key metrics.

2.1 Practice purpose and description

Each practice begins with a purpose statement. The purpose statement is a brief description of the role that the practice fills in an organization.

The purpose statement explains what may be derived from the practice, although the practical implementation of that practice may differ from what is described in ITIL 4, depending on the needs of the organization. Practices may be combined, split, or only partially implemented.

The purpose statement establishes the scope for the practice guide that follows, and the practice guide will cover all of the elements mentioned in the purpose statement.

The purpose statement is supplemented with additional descriptions of the practice. The purpose and description information align with the information that is presented in the *ITIL Foundation*, although additional detail may be provided in the practice guide. Table 2.1 provides some examples of purpose statements.

Table 2.1 Examples of purpose statements

Practice	Purpose
Incident management	To minimize the negative impact of incidents by restoring normal service operation as quickly as possible.

Problem management	To reduce the likelihood and impact of incidents by identifying actual and potential causes of incidents and by managing workarounds and known errors.
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Service level management	To set clear business-based targets for service levels, and to ensure that delivery of services is properly assessed, monitored, and managed against these targets.
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## 2.2 Terms and concepts

Each practice guide introduces key concepts that are specific to the practice being described, along with key terms and definitions. These terms and concepts are usually:

- specific to the practice
- important for fulfilling the purpose of the practice
- applicable in most scenarios where the practice is applied.

Some examples are provided in Table 2.2

Table 2.2 Examples of terms and concepts

Practice	Key terms and concepts
----------	------------------------

Incident management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incident</li> <li>• incident model</li> <li>• workaround</li> </ul>
---------------------	--

Problem management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• problem</li> <li>• known error</li> </ul>
--------------------	--

Service level management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• service level</li> <li>• service quality</li> <li>• service review</li> </ul>
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Key concepts may differ in their nature and in the structure of their description. Definitions introduced in the *ITIL Foundation* and its associated glossary are not altered but may be amended, with further commentary, in the practice guides. Definitions introduced in the *ITIL 4 Specialist and Strategist* publications also match the definitions provided in the practice guides.

## 2.3 Scope

The scope section provides a list of activities and responsibilities that are included in the practice. It also provides a list of adjacent activities and responsibilities that are not included in the practice, with references to the practices where these activities are described.

The ITIL 4 scoping of the practices should not be treated as definitive. Organizations should adapt these recommendations, based on their scale, structures, competencies, and other factors. ITIL 4 practices may be merged or further split when institutionalized in the organization.

For example, some activities included in the scope of the change enablement practice are:

- planning individual change workflows, activities, and controls
- scheduling and coordinating all ongoing changes
- communicating change plans and progress to relevant stakeholders
- assessing change success, including outputs, outcomes, efficiency, risks, and costs.

Examples of activities that are not included in the change enablement practice are listed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Examples of activities outside the scope of the change enablement practice

Activity	Practice guide
Costs control, financial evaluation of changes	Service financial management
Management of projects	Project management
Management of organizational change	Organizational change management

## 2.4 Practice success factors

Each practice guide includes a number of Practical success factors (PSFs).

Practical success factor

A complex functional component of a practice that is required for the practice to fulfil its purpose.

The word ‘complex’ in the definition does not refer to a high level of complexity. Rather, it indicates that a PSF is more than a task or activity; it includes elements from all four dimensions of service management. A PSF can also be defined as ‘a key sub-practice’. The nature of the activities and resources of PSFs within a practice may differ, but together they ensure that the practice is effective.

Key metrics (section 2.5 of every practice guide) and capability criteria (section 7 of the practice guides updated in 2023) are based on the practice success factors.

Table 2.4 gives some examples of PSFs for various practices.

Table 2.4 Examples of practice success factors

Practice	Practice success factors
----------	--------------------------

Incident management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Detecting incidents early</li><li>• Resolving incidents quickly and efficiently</li><li>• Continually improving the incident management approaches</li></ul>
Problem management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identifying and understanding problems and their impact on services</li><li>• Optimizing problem resolution and mitigation</li></ul>
Service configuration management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring that the organization has relevant configuration information about its products and services</li><li>• Ensuring that the costs of providing configuration information are continually optimized</li></ul>

## 2.5 Key metrics

Organizations need appropriate methods for determining the degree to which a practice is achieving its objectives, or how well the practice (or some part of it) is contributing to the SVS.

Each practice guide provides ways to measure the success of the practice through the use of key metrics.

Metric

A measurement or calculation that is monitored or reported for management and improvement

When using the practice metrics, consider the following points:

- The effectiveness and performance of the ITIL 4 practices should be assessed within the context of the value streams that each practice contributes to. However, the practices' potentials are defined by their design and the quality of the resources, which can be measured and assessed in any context.
- Metrics are insufficient for assessment and decision-making. To be used as an indicator, a metric must have a pre-defined target value and may also have a tolerance. Each organization will define its own target values and tolerances; these cannot be taken from ITIL 4 or any other publication.

ITIL 4 provides sample key metrics (that may be used as indicators) and related measurement suggestions for each ITIL 4 practice. These are not prescriptive and should be adapted to each organization's objectives and practice design.

Table 2.5 provides examples of key metrics for various practices. More details on key metrics can be found in the measurement and reporting practice guide.

Table 2.5 Examples of key metrics

Practice	Key metrics
Incident management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time between incident occurrence and detection</li><li>• User satisfaction with incident handling and resolution</li></ul>

#### Change enablement

- Average time of change realization per change model
- Business impact of change-related incidents
- Stakeholder satisfaction with realization of individual changes

#### Service configuration management

- Stakeholder satisfaction with configuration information
- Stakeholder satisfaction with service configuration management interfaces, procedures, and reports
- Percentage of CMDB data verified over the period

### 3. Value streams and processes

This section covers the following areas:

- the contribution of the practice to service value chain activities
- the processes and activities of the practice.

#### **3.1 Value stream contribution<sup>1</sup>**

Each practice guide which was not updated in 2023 includes details of the practice's contribution to the service value chain, presented as a heatmap. This is based on the overview provided in *ITIL 4 Foundation*.

Although the most common contributions of the practice to the service value chain are described, the list is not exhaustive. The heatmap provided should not be treated as an implementation guideline but should be adapted to the architecture and SVS of each organization.

The practice guides updated in 2023 do not include this section. Instead, they have an extensive section on the practice's contribution to the organization's service value streams (see below).

## 3.2 Processes<sup>2</sup>

Each practice guide includes processes and activities that may be necessary to fulfil the purpose of that practice. Some examples of processes for particular practices are given in Table 3.1.

Process
A set of interrelated or interacting activities that transform inputs into outputs. Processes define the sequence of actions and their dependencies.

Table 3.1 Examples of processes

Practice	Processes
----------	-----------

Incident management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incident handling and resolution</li><li>• Periodic incident review</li></ul>
Problem management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proactive problem identification</li><li>• Reactive problem identification</li><li>• Problem control</li><li>• Error control</li></ul>
Service level management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Management of SLAs</li><li>• Oversight of service levels and service quality</li></ul>

Practice guides also include descriptions of procedures, which outline commonly recognized and recommended ways of performing processes.

The processes and procedures described in the practice guides highlight areas that organizations may find beneficial and may inspire an organization to redefine its own process and procedures. However, if adopted, they should always be adapted to the organization’s architecture, needs, and objectives.

Illustrative workflow maps are provided for some simple processes;<sup>3</sup> Figure 3.1 shows an example of a workflow map for the problem control process.

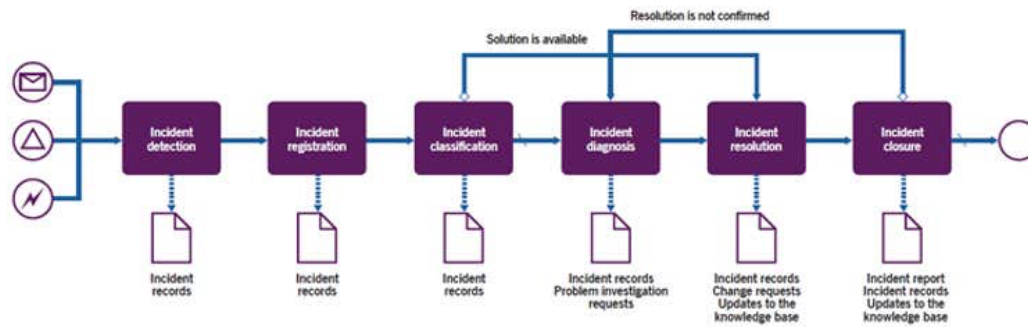


Figure 3.1 Workflow of the incident handling and resolution process

This section also includes a list of the inputs, activities, and outputs for each process. The change lifecycle management process is shown in Table 3.2 as an example.

Table 3.2 Inputs, activities, and outputs of the change lifecycle management process

Key inputs	Activities	Key outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change requests</li> <li>• Change models and standard change procedures</li> <li>• Policies and regulatory requirements</li> <li>• Configuration information</li> <li>• IT asset information</li> <li>• Service catalogue</li> <li>• Service level agreements (SLAs) with consumers and suppliers/partners</li> <li>• Financial guidelines and constraints</li> <li>• Risk information</li> <li>• Capacity and performance information</li> <li>• Continuity policies and plans</li> <li>• Information security policies and plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change registration</li> <li>• Change assessment</li> <li>• Change authorization</li> <li>• Change planning</li> <li>• Change realization control</li> <li>• Change review and closure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change records</li> <li>• Change schedule</li> <li>• Change review reports</li> <li>• Changed resources and services</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Value stream contribution

In 2023, a new section has been added to the updated practice guides. It includes:

- a brief introduction to service value streams
- description of the practice’s contribution to the key value streams of a service provider
- recommendations on value stream analysis.

In most cases, the practice’s contribution is described for the following common service value streams:

- creation of a new or changed products and services
- incident resolution
- service request fulfilment
- ongoing operation and maintenance
- continual improvement of products and services.

Table 3.3 provides an example of service configuration management practice’s contribution to the service provider’s value streams.

Table 3.3 Service configuration management in the key service value streams

Value stream	The role of service configuration information
Creation of a new or changed product or service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assessment of the impact of the new requirements on the current services</li><li>• Identification of the scope of required changes in products and services</li><li>• Control of the implementation of the approved changes throughout the change lifecycle</li><li>• Scheduling of changes with minimum impact on the live services</li></ul>
Incident resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Impact assessment during incident classification</li><li>• Incident diagnosis, identification of the failed components</li><li>• Identification of the teams/specialists responsible for the failed components</li></ul>

- Mapping of incidents records to each other and other records (problem, change)
- Planning and control of the changes required for incident resolution
- Verification of the changes made to resolve an incident

#### Service request fulfilment

- Identification of the team/specialist to which to assign the request
- Planning and control of the changes required to fulfil a request
- Verification of the changes required to fulfil a request

#### Ongoing operation and maintenance

- Detection of unauthorized changes
- Impact assessment of events
- Impact assessment of proposed and scheduled actions and changes

#### Continual improvement of products and services

- Capacity, performance, availability, and continuity assessment and planning
- Information security assessment and planning
- Service cost allocation and planning

## 4. Organizations and people

This section describes the following areas:

- roles, competencies, and responsibilities
- organizational solutions and teams (specific to the practice).



## 4.1 Roles, competencies, and responsibilities

The practice guides do not describe the practice management roles such as practice owner, practice lead, or practice coach. They focus instead on the specialist roles that are specific to each practice. The structure and naming of each role may differ from organization to organization, so any roles defined in ITIL should not be treated as mandatory, or even recommended. Remember, roles are not job titles. One person can take on multiple roles and one role can be assigned to multiple people.

Roles are described in the context of processes and activities. Each role is characterized with a competency profile based on the model shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Competency codes and profiles

Competence code	Competency profile (activities and skills)
L	<u>Leader.</u> Decision-making, delegating, overseeing other activities, providing incentives and motivation, and evaluating outcomes
A	<u>Administrator.</u> Assigning and prioritizing tasks, record-keeping, ongoing reporting, and initiating basic improvements
C	<u>Coordinator/Communicator.</u> Coordinating multiple parties, maintaining communication between stakeholders, and running awareness campaigns
M	<u>Methods and techniques expert.</u> Designing and implementing work techniques, documenting procedures, consulting on processes, work analysis, and continual improvement
T	<u>Technical expert.</u> Providing technical (IT) expertise and conducting expertise- based assignments

The competence profile for each role is formed of one or more competence codes shown in Table 4.1, arranged in order of importance. For example, 'MC' means 'main competency: methods and techniques expert, secondary competency: coordinator/communicator'. Examples of competency profiles for various roles are provided in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Examples of competency profiles

Activity	Responsible role(s)	Competency profile	Specific skills
Management of service level agreements			
Definition of customer requirements	Customer Relationship manager	CTA	Good knowledge of the service consumer's business
	Service architect		Good knowledge of the service provider's portfolio
	Service designer		
	Service owner		Communication and coordination
Visibility analysis	Product owner	TC	Business analysis
	Service architect		Risk analysis
	Service designer		
	Service owner		Good knowledge of the service provider's portfolio
	Technical expert		
	Supplier manager		
Drafting an SLA	Relationship manager	ACT	Good knowledge of the service provider's portfolio
	Service designer		Good knowledge of the products, including their architecture and
	Service owner		

## 4.2 Organizational structures and teams

The practice guides may describe organizational models for the practices, if there are recognized, common solutions in the industry. However, these are only examples; each organization should design its structures and teams according to its own architecture and objectives. This also applies to the naming of teams. Some examples are given in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Examples of teams and structures considerations

Practice	Teams and structures
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Incident management	Tiered versus flat team structures
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Problem management	A dedicated job position for the problem manager role
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Change enablement	Positioning of a change authority team
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## 5. Information and technology

The information and technology section covers the following areas:

- information exchange
- automation and tooling.

### 5.1 Information exchange

In each practice guide, the information and technology section describes the key information used by the practice. The lists are not exhaustive, but include the most common inputs to the practice. Some examples are give in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Examples of key information used by practices

Practice	Key information
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Incident management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Architecture and design of services</li> <li>• Partners and suppliers information, including contract and SLA information on the services they provide</li> <li>• Policies and requirements which regulate service provision</li> <li>• Stakeholder satisfaction with the practice</li> </ul>
Change management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services and their architecture and design</li> <li>• Proposed changes, including:</li> </ul>
Service level management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing service delivery, including information about:</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Automation and tooling

Each practice guide includes recommendations on automation and tooling. These recommendations are mapped to the process activities within each practice against the available means of automation, key functionality of the tools, and impact of the automation on practice effectiveness. ITIL 4 does not recommend specific tools nor describe the tools and functions attributed to specific vendors or solutions. Table 5.2 shows how automation solutions are used in the change lifecycle management process.

Table 5.2 Examples of automation and tooling recommendations

Process activity	Means of automation	Key functionality	Impact on the effectiveness of the process
Change enablement planning and optimization process			
Change enablement initiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workflow management and collaboration tools</li> <li>Analysis and reporting tools</li> <li>Work planning and prioritization tools</li> <li>Orchestration systems</li> <li>Knowledge management tools</li> </ul>	Analysing existing procedures, resource and role planning for processes and procedures, documenting and communicating formalized procedures	Low to medium, especially for pattern analysis and discovery
Change review and planning	Analysis and reporting tools	Remote collaboration; change data analysis	Medium to high, especially for high volumes of changes
Change model and procedure improvement initiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workflow management and collaboration tools</li> </ul>	Formal registration of the initiatives	Low to medium

- Work planning and prioritization tools

Change model and procedure update communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workflow management and collaboration tools</li> <li>• Orchestration systems</li> <li>• Knowledge management tools</li> </ul>	Communicating updates to the affected teams	Medium to high, especially when the organization is large and the number of updates high
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In the practice guides updated in 2023, there is an additional Table 5.1 which summarizes the application of the automation tools in the practice. An example of this table from the Service Configuration Management Practice Guide is provided in Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3 Automation solutions for the service configuration management practice<sup>5</sup>

Automation tools	Application in service configuration management
CMS tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discover CI data</li> <li>• Store and manage CI data (create, update and delete CI records, display and modify attributes)</li> <li>• Integrate different databases</li> <li>• Identify and reconcile data from different data sources</li> <li>• Monitor and control CMDB health</li> <li>• Verify data</li> <li>• Certify CMDB data (compliance tool)</li> </ul>

Workflow management  
and collaboration tools

- Support planning and review activities of the practice
- Support communications during ad-hoc provision of configuration information
- Integrate the CMS into service value streams (mapping of CIs and service management records; access to CMS in contact of other practices)
- Manage exceptions

Inventory and discovery  
tools

Gather and verify information about the CIs

Knowledge management  
tools

- Share and utilize guidelines for service configuration management
- Support ad-hoc provision of service configuration

Classification and  
analysis tools

Analyse stakeholders requirements and CI data

Work planning and  
prioritization tools

Plan and track improvement initiatives

Analysis and reporting  
tools

Practice measurement and reporting

## 6. Partners and suppliers

The partners and suppliers section covers the following areas:

- relationships with third parties involved in the practice
- sourcing considerations for the practice.

### **6.1 Partner relationship management**

Very few services are delivered using only an organization's own resources. Most, if not all, depend on other services which are often provided by third parties. Relationships and dependencies introduced by supporting services are described in the practice guides for service design, architecture management, and supplier management.

It is important to ensure that dependencies on third parties do not limit practice performance. This section may include recommendations on agreements, information exchanges, system interfaces, responsibilities, and other solutions that can help to establish effective and beneficial relationships with partners and suppliers when certain components of a practice are outsourced.

This section is included in the practice guides where there are generally recognized, effective solutions specific to that practice.

### **6.2 Sourcing considerations**

Most practice guides outline the capabilities, roles, and resources that may be outsourced, with an explanation of the risks and benefits of outsourcing in each case. These recommendations aim to help organizations, but they will not be applicable in every situation. Sourcing decisions should take many internal and external factors into account; it is impossible to provide a universal solution.



## 7. Capability assessment and development

In 2021, Axelos released the ITIL Maturity model<sup>6</sup>. One important feature of the model is the capability assessment of all 34 ITIL practices, based on their practice success factors. Although the full list of the capability criteria is only available to the Axelos Consulting Partner organizations, the updated practice guides include the capability criteria for the respective practices. Besides the capability criteria, section 7 of an updated practice guide includes a brief description of the capability levels, as defined in the ITIL Maturity Model, and recommendations on the practice self-assessment and development.

The ITIL maturity model defines the following capability levels applicable to any management practice:

- Level 1 The practice is not well organized; it's performed as initial or intuitive. It may occasionally or partially achieve its purpose through an incomplete set of activities.
- Level 2 The practice systematically achieves its purpose through a basic set of activities supported by specialized resources.
- Level 3 The practice is well-defined and achieves its purpose in an organized way, using dedicated resources and relying on inputs from other practices that are integrated into a service management system.
- Level 4 The practice achieves its purpose in a highly organized way, and its performance is continually measured and assessed in the context of the service management system.
- Level 5 The practice is continually improving organizational capabilities associated with its purpose.

For each practice, the ITIL maturity model defines criteria for every capability level from level 2 to level 5. These criteria can be used to assess the practice's ability to fulfil its purpose and to contribute to the organization's service value system.

Each criterion is mapped to one of the four dimensions of service management and to the supported capability level. The higher the capability level, the more comprehensive realization of the practice is expected. For example, criteria related to practice automation are typically defined at levels 3 or higher because effective automation is only possible if the practice is well-defined and organized.

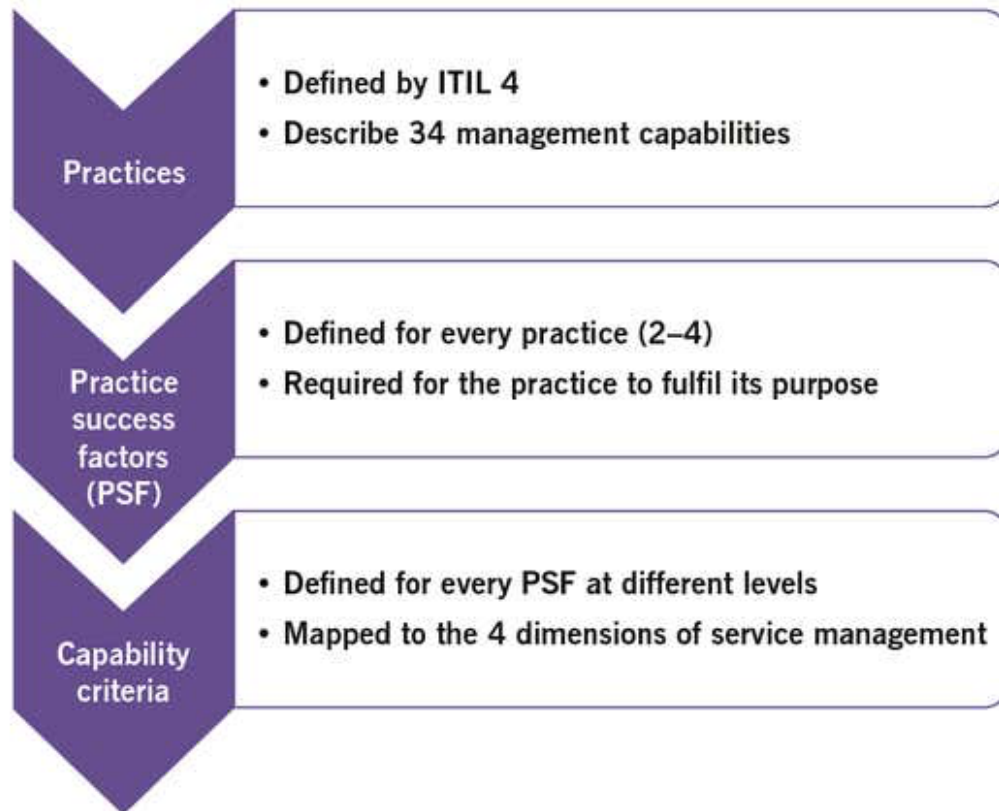


Figure 7.1 Design of the capability criteria

An example of the capability criteria for service configuration management is shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Example of the capability criteria for the service configuration management practice

PSF	Criterion	Dimension	Capability level
Ensuring that the organization has relevant configuration information about its products and services	Key users of the configuration information and their requirements are identified	Value streams and processes	2
	Information about product and service configuration is available when needed and meets user requirements	Information and technology	2

Procedures for requesting and obtaining configuration information are defined and communicated to relevant stakeholders	Value streams and processes	3
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Responsibility for the management of configuration information is clearly defined	Value streams and processes	3
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Configuration information covers relevant details about third-party services	Partners and suppliers	3
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Configuration information is managed using an integrated information system	Information and technology	4
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Configuration information is exchanged between the organization and its suppliers and partners, where needed	Partners and suppliers	4
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The quality and availability of the configuration information is continually reviewed and improved	Value streams and processes	5
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## 8. Recommendations for the practice success

The final section of the updated practice guides includes a table with practical recommendations for the practice success, mapped to the ITIL guiding principles. An example from the service level management practice guide is provided in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Example of the recommendations for the service level management practice success

Recommendation	Comments	ITIL Guiding Principle(s)
Ensure clear ownership of all services	Regardless of the responsibility for the service components, there should be clear accountability for each service and its quality. Service owners should be known to the service provider's teams and have sufficient authority to drive the service improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Think and work holistically</li><li>• Focus on value</li><li>• Collaborate and promote visibility</li></ul>
Include in SLAs what is important for the customers	SLAs are not a means of avoiding liability; they should be used for the communication and improvement of service quality. For this, they need to be focused on the service quality as perceived by the customers, not on technical measurables readily available for the service provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus on value</li><li>• Collaborate and promote visibility</li><li>• Keep it simple and practical</li></ul>
Continual improvement of services is more important than SLAs	SLM is not about management of SLAs, it is about management of the service quality. The main focus of the practice should be on continual service improvement, and SLAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progress iteratively with feedback</li></ul>

	should be considered as a means to that end.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on value</li> </ul>
For user-facing services, consider experience management	Service value is subjective, and experience is an important aspect of continual service improvement. Consider including user experience in the SLAs, if that is what is important for the customers. But even if it's not in the SLAs, capture the feedback, process it and use for continual improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on value</li> </ul>

In the earlier versions of the practice guides, the final section includes a reminder of the seven guiding principles, with no further recommendations on their application.

### 9. Acknowledgements and feedback

PeopleCert International Ltd is grateful to everyone who has contributed to the development of the practice guides and this manual. These materials incorporate an unprecedented level of enthusiasm and feedback from across the ITIL community. We will continue develop these publications based on the ongoing feedback from the readers.

[1] Only in the practice guides versions before the 2023 update

[2] This is section 3.1 in the practice guides updated in 2023

[3] Simplified BPMN notation is used for these illustrations; see <https://www.bpmnquickguide.com/> for details.

[4] This is section 3.2 in the practice guides updated in 2023

[5] Tables 5.1, only in the practice guides updated in 2023.[1] An overview of the ITIL Maturity Model: <https://www.axelos.com/for-organizations/itil-maturity-model>

[6] Only in the practice guides updated in 2023

[7] An overview of the ITIL Maturity Model: <https://www.axelos.com/for-organizations/itil-maturity-model>

[8] Only in the practice guides updated in 2023