



What Does ITIL Mean - For You

What's an ITIL and do I need one?

In an industry filled with buzzwords and acronyms, what's one more? This one is useful for those responsible for the computer infrastructure budget to know and understand. **ITIL** stands for Information Technology Infrastructure Library and it is *a well documented set of IT Management best practices* developed for the British government in the early 1990's *to optimize the management of technology*.

Since the original development & publication of these standards, a worldwide independent community has formed for the purpose of maintaining, updating, and publishing these standards (the last major update was in 2000). This body is called itSMF and the Canadian chapter can be contacted via their website: www.itsmf.ca. And yes, you can make use of the ITIL best practices.

Surprisingly uncommon 'Common Sense'

ITIL breaks down quite simply, and is expanded upon in more detail in a Tsunami whitepaper ("*How Do I Use ITIL in my Organization?*") accessible from www.tsunami.ca. ITIL can be divided most simply into the areas of **Service Delivery** (how IT is provided to the business) and **Service Management** (how IT is measured & optimized).

These areas encompass topics such as help desk or trouble ticketing processes, change & configuration tracking, capacity & performance auditing, service continuity (or disaster recovery), security, financial management of IT services, as well as a number of other topics.

The first thing that people who have managed technology (or have had to budget for it) will notice is that the ITIL methodologies seem familiar. This is because the framework was developed around commonly accepted best practices, and leverage management ideas from hundreds of successful IT shops.

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How does this affect me – and my business?

Do you want to make sure your technology infrastructure runs as cost effectively as possible? ITIL isn't only for Fortune 500 companies – these best practices can be adopted into any size company, because you choose the components that work best for your company – from two computers to a vast network of 20,000.

The ITIL documentation is available in a series of books outlining these best practices in all areas of IT management, and can help optimize any organization. There are potential risks and problems with the implementation, as with any major change to an organization (see "*How Do I Use ITIL in my Organization?*") for more details), and it is important to be well educated about the entire framework & make sure you build an organization that will be prepared to adopt the required changes.

Fortunately, these best practices can be well explained and effectively implemented by investing time reading the ITIL documentation, or speaking with a certified ITIL consultant.

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