

## Where is the ITIL Fairy?

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“Once upon a time.....” - is that how it starts?

“And they all lived happily ever after.....” - is that how it ends?

The ITIL fairy tale?

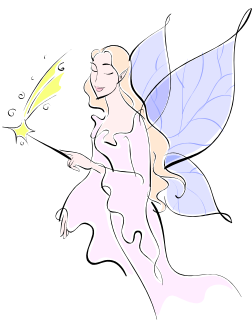
For some organisations, the ITIL fairy tale has come true, and they have reaped the benefits, some of which include:

- ✓ improved quality of service;
- ✓ reduction in costs;
- ✓ improved customer satisfaction;
- ✓ motivated staff;
- ✓ increased productivity;
- ✓ increased business;
- ✓ reduced total cost of ownership; and
- ✓ increased return on investment

But how did they achieve it? What happened between “once upon a time” and “happily ever after”?

Somewhere in between, an ITIL fairy sprinkled magic dust to make everything happen, everyone happy and the world a better place?

.....Wouldn't it be nice if it was all that easy?



“Yes”, I hear you say, “but that is just in fairy stories”.

Really? If that is the case, then why do so many organisations I work with seem to think that their implementation of ITIL will play out like a fairy story?

Time and time again I discover organisations waiting for the fairy dust, the fairy godmother, or some act of God to make their ITIL implementation happen.

They embark on the journey and quite possibly do all the right things. They determine where they currently are, where they want to be, how they are going to get there and then.....they wonder where the ITIL fairy is who is going to make it all happen!

So many organisations spend large amounts of money engaging consultants to help them get to the point of implementation but as we all know, it has to be the organisation itself that “makes” it happen. The consultant can advise and guide, but implementation is in the hands of the organisation and its people. The consultant hands over a project plan and/or process designs etc. and then the organisation looks around and wonders what is going to happen next and who will make it happen.

**There is no ITIL fairy.....the only people going to make it happen are YOU!**

So why do organisations never get to the end of the story, because they are still waiting for the ITIL fairy?

My belief is that organisations do not recognise the hard work, investment, commitment and time needed to achieve a successful ITIL Implementation. These are words we bandy about all the time - management commitment,

investment, ownership, top-down approach, etc. But often they do not have any substance and what we are hearing is pure lip service.

Before embarking on adoption of best practice as per ITIL and a service improvement programme, senior management need to ask: “Are we serious?”

Don't engage consultants to perform an assessment of current processes against best practice unless you are serious about following through. Don't waste your money! So you get a nicely bound report that identifies areas for improvement. It is money down the drain unless you plan to act upon the advice.

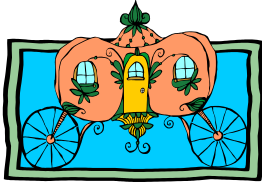


Here are my suggestions for ensuring that you reach that happy ending:

1. Firstly, as already mentioned, ensure you are serious before embarking on the journey. Don't just pay lip service to your adoption of ITIL by performing an assessment or gap analysis on current processes against best practice just so you can be “seen” as doing “something”.
2. Ensure that everyone recognises that it will involve commitment, investment, time and resources. **DO NOT UNDER-ESTIMATE THE IMPACT ON THE ORGANISATION.** You do not have the luxury of stopping everything else whilst you adopt ITIL. You have to maintain business as usual as well as undertaking a service improvement programme.
3. Manage expectations. It is not going to happen overnight like the tooth fairy coming! Most ITIL process improvement projects take on average 6-12 months. In larger organisations, this could be up to 18 months.
4. Remove the barriers to changes in working practices via a continual and ongoing awareness campaign and communication. Implementation of IT Service Management brings about changes in working practices and procedures and there will be resistance to that change. It is important to keep **ALL** the mere mortals (also known as Muggles) informed of business benefits and why certain changes and measure are being planned by the higher order.
5. Who is going to do it? I don't think that any organisation has staff sitting around just waiting to be tasked with a service improvement activity! Carefully consider how you are going to make sure that staff have time to undertake the service improvement activities effectively. Do not adversely impact staff morale by giving people tasks that are going to be impossible to achieve due to their other day-to-day commitments. Free-up staff so that they can undertake the planned activities and back fill where necessary with temporary or contract staff,
6. Don't expect everyone to be transformed into ITIL advocates automatically like the result of a widespread sprinkling of magic dust. There will be lots of stubborn goblins and troublesome pixies that will make your life difficult. Remember that everyone has to understand what ITIL is, the benefits, and why the organisation is making the change. Ensure everyone undertakes some level of training in ITIL so they can be a part of the transformation. Some of those troublesome pixies can make the most powerful sorcerers working for you if you take the time to get them on board.



7. So you've given the sorcerers a spell book and wonder why things aren't changing? Sorcerers need apprentices. Training a handful of staff in ITIL does not bring about the change. The change needs to be driven from the top down and made to happen. Training should be delivered in a timely fashion. Don't waste money on training if you are not serious about adopting best practice and utilising the learning that has been acquired. Non-utilisation of learning will not recognise return on investment as the learning will be lost through lack of use. Or you may find that your sorcerers go elsewhere to utilise their new-found skills!!



8. Don't expect an external consultant to make it happen for you. Recognise that it is the organisation and its people that will bring about the change. Consultants are just the footmen on the pumpkin coach assisting where need be. They can certainly be invaluable - bringing vast amounts of experience and knowledge - having ridden the coach many times before. They can provide you with your roadmap. However, the coachmen - the drivers - for the organisation have to come from within the organisation itself.
9. You cannot implement ITIL in a silo approach. Make sure you address the interfaces and the integration of processes. You cannot implement Problem Management without changes to Incident Management. You cannot implement Configuration Management without a supporting Change Management process. These are just two examples of the crucial integration between processes. The witches in the coven casting their spells know that it is the combined effect of "eye of newt and toe of frog" with "wool of bat and tongue of dog" that produce the desired end result.
10. Recognise that there will be hurdles and challenges along the way - many of which you may not have anticipated. Be prepared! There will be difficult bridges to cross and you have to be determined to face and deal with the troll stopping your progress and forge ahead.
11. So many organisations know that they do NOT have the right staff in the right roles but rather than face the music and deal with the situation, they embark on their adoption of ITIL in the hope that it will not be affected by the issue. It will be affected. Do not expect the junior pixie to act as the wizard and drive organisational change. The staff you charge with undertaking service improvement activities are likely to have to be change agents across the organisation.



12. Although we all know that process and people are uppermost in an effective ITIL implementation, tools and technologies are needed to support the process and people. Don't underestimate the investment needed in appropriate supporting tools - not only in the purchase - but more so in an effective implementation of the tools. How can the sorcerer operate without easy access to a book of spells and the ingredients and equipment to perform the job in hand?
13. And last but not least, who is your champion? I have said there are no fairies, but if there were, there would also need to be an Oberon - the King of the Fairies. Who has the big picture? Who is driving the change? Who is coordinating all the activities? Who is making sure that it happens?

I know that all the above has been said before, but I also know that organisations are still failing to recognise their return on investment in consultancy services, process design, tools and technologies etc. by not addressing these issues up front.

They hide under the toadstool when it all gets too hard and hope that while they wait the illusive ITIL fairy will come and sooth the pain. Don't be like so many organisations that have a fairy tale beginning to their service improvement programme but never achieve a happy ending.

There is no ITIL fairy - the only people going to make it happen are YOU!



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