Questions received during the ITIL Practitioner Global Summit - Morning session

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1. I have just received my ITIL Expert qualification. Now I would like to take the ITIL Master level - how shall I go about this? Do I still need to take the ITIL Practitioner exam?

As this qualification is assessment-based and there is no training course provided, you should contact an AXELOS Examination Institute to get all the required documentation to prepare and apply for ITIL Master. While you don’t need the ITIL Practitioner qualification to progress to ITIL Master level, the community feedback we have received is supporting our belief that you would still find ITIL Practitioner provides a useful set of skills and techniques.

You can find more details about the ITIL Master level and a list of Examination Institutes here: https://www.axelos.com/qualifications/itil-qualifications/itil-master.

2. Where does the ITIL Practitioner fit in for those who have completed the ITIL Expert Level?

This is a question we have seen coming up many times since the ITIL Practitioner launch. We have positioned ITIL Practitioner as the next step after ITIL Foundation, but for those already further in their professional development, ITIL Practitioner should not feel like a step back. While this qualification is not required to take the ITIL Managing Across the Lifecycle (MALC) exam that leads to the ITIL Expert qualification, we would recommend anyone already on ITIL Expert level or aspiring to get there to take a look at ITIL Practitioner. There are numerous techniques and methods introduced in ITIL Practitioner that are not currently covered in MALC, and we believe the practical nature of the guidance helps ITIL Experts to be even more successful with their improvement initiatives - especially as for people on the ITIL Expert level, these tend to be a lot more complex.

3. Do you think the ITIL vision of an ICT Service Desk with 1st/2nd/3rd lines is still relevant in an Agile/DevOps oriented ICT department?

We believe it is, while the exact mechanics of how it is designed in an organization might differ from some of the models used previously. The 1st line of support is usually highly skilled in efficient communication and while aiming at resolving incidents as quickly as possible, they also ensure the customer experience during the interaction is as pleasant as possible. Very often, it is not reasonable to require software developers or technical IT specialists to interact with customers directly, as this interrupts the normal flow of work and leads to more things being started than actually finished. Tapping into that skillset when dealing with a tough incident - which should not happen too often if the systems built are self-healing - makes a lot of sense, though. Sometimes, the Service Desk as we know it is actually the Business Service Desk - especially in organizations whose whole business is providing ICT-based services. This in turn means that the function might not sit with the IT team, but the model as such - with customer-facing professionals in the 1st line - is still the same.

4. Why not create an “ITIL Agile” (like PRINCE2 Agile)?

PRINCE2 is as agile as the organization using the methodology wants it to be - this is the beauty of PRINCE2. The existing guidance doesn’t tell you whether you should use a waterfall-based project management approach (still very common and often required in non-IT projects) or an agile one. The PRINCE2 Agile publication explains how to take full
benefits of PRINCE2 in an agile-oriented organization - more hands-on guidance that was missing but required by many.

The same way, ITIL can support an agile approach to IT service management - in fact, a lot of guidance for this has been available as the core ITIL content for years. ‘Traditional’ IT has been focusing on creating stable systems and keeping the lights on, but with the added capabilities of automation, and the commoditization of IT infrastructure, the responsiveness of IT can be increased considerably. What we found when talking to ITSM professionals over the past few years is that guidance on how to do this is difficult to find - it’s often implied, while the ‘how’ is not described in detail. So, as the first step to help organizations get the full benefit of modern IT capabilities, we decided to make the guidance more explicit, and connect to the core competencies needed to successfully adapt the guidance to one’s organization.

5. In my organization, there is a CSI VP role, but I don’t see any ITIL processes being adopted to support the organization - no change management, no problem management, no availability management, or any other relevant process. I have tried to introduce some of these concepts myself, but haven’t seen any traction so far. What should I do next?

Challenges like this are an excellent example of where ITIL Practitioner guidance can help. While ITIL is essentially documented common sense and adopting the service management mind-set should be a no-brainer, there are many undercurrents in organizations that might prevent people from following what they know is best for them. ITIL Practitioner provides tools and techniques to uncover and address these, and find ways to bring people on the improvement journey with you.

6. Are there training centres that provide ITIL Practitioner in UAE (Dubai)?

You can find a list of local accredited training organizations on our website: https://www.axelos.com/find-a-training-provider. There are quite a few in UAE, and to our knowledge, some of them are already geared up to deliver ITIL Practitioner.

7. Would there be templates provided to be used during an improvement initiative similar to what we have seen with other practices like PMP, etc.?

One part of the ITIL Practitioner guidance is the Toolkit, that comprises various worksheets, checklists, and templates referenced throughout the book. All of this is also linked to specific steps in the CSI approach, to ensure relevant information is captured at the right time.

8. Does giving 3 credits for the ITIL Practitioner course/exam devalue the 3 credits awarded when someone completes Lifecycle course/exams?

We believe the practical and demanding ITIL Practitioner exam justifies awarding 3 credits to those successfully completing it. We have received questions about which ITIL Intermediate Lifecycle course to drop in favour of ITIL Practitioner when on the path to ITIL Expert - while we understand that training budgets are tight, we hope people attend courses mostly to get the new knowledge and skills to be better at their job. ITIL Practitioner is a complementary qualification that helps to bring the specialist skills from ITIL Intermediate qualifications to life.
9. What is the recommended duration for the Practitioner training course?

The syllabus has been designed so that the content can be delivered in two full days, but AXELOS does not mandate the length of the training course. We have already seen both 2-day and 3-day courses being advertised, and we strongly believe that organizations need to assess their real needs, and then decide on the best course length for their employees. Three days does, of course, leave more time for additional exercises and group-work. We have also seen discussions about potential 5-day Practitioner courses tailored to the context of a specific organization and delivered in a workshop format, so there are many options. From our point of view, it’s important that the training course truly prepares an individual to be successful in delivering improvements once they go back to the workplace - passing the scenario-based exam successfully is proof of them having the needed skills.

10. Will the training courses include practical exercises? If so, will these exercises be common for all ATOs or developed by individual ATOs for their own use?

We have already seen dozens of training organizations designing their own courseware for ITIL Practitioner and while all different, a common theme in all of them has been heavy focus on practical exercises and group-work to bring the Guiding Principles, the Critical Competencies, and the CSI approach to life. When we first started talking about the potential approach to course design, we suggested a ratio of 1/3 lecture and 2/3 practical exercises. In many cases, the courseware we have seen is more in the range of 75% - 80% practical exercises.

11. Was it not the original idea that the ITIL Intermediate Capability stream focus was on practical application of the ITIL guidance? Could ITIL Practitioner not be integrated in these qualifications?

We believe the skills acquired in ITIL Practitioner are invaluable for anyone embarking on a more specialist skills focused journey on the ITIL qualification path. Therefore, we’d encourage training providers to explore the options of bundling ITIL Practitioner with various ITIL Intermediate qualifications, and designing new, highly interactive training courses to take advantage of the practical nature of ITIL Practitioner.

12. Is the ITIL Practitioner publication available in PDF format?

Yes, ITIL Practitioner Guidance is available as a book, as a PDF download, and as an online subscription. Please check our publisher’s web site (https://www.tsoshop.co.uk/bookstore.asp?FO=40152&DI=644828).

13. What is the initiative taken by AXELOS to make C-level staff to aware of the benefits of ITIL Practitioner?

AXELOS is working on a practical white paper targeted at executives, explaining both the value of ITIL Practitioner, and the role executives have in enabling continual improvement, and supporting ITIL Practitioner qualified professionals in making the change happen.

14. Will the ITIL community re-establish the Change Log that used to exist? This was a forum where constructive change recommendations could be made, rather than problems raised
Yes, we are revisiting the Change Log approach to support the continuous dialogue with our community, and to enable a fast feedback loop for published guidance.

15. What is the main relation between the 9 Guiding Principles from ITIL Practitioner and the principles from other service lifecycle stages?

The Guiding Principles should be kept in mind and followed in any lifecycle stage, with any process, and by any and all ITSM professionals.

16. The ITIL Practitioner qualification summarizes and helps businesses/customers achieve the value they want. So as an ATO why should I suggest to candidates to follow the ITIL Expert path which requires more time and money.

ITIL Practitioner complements the base knowledge about ITSM and the language of ITIL, acquired on ITIL Foundation level, and the specialist skills, acquired in various ITIL Intermediate qualifications. ITIL Practitioner helps ITSM professionals to be more successful when planning and delivering improvements, but it doesn’t replace the need for specialist-focused skills which are the focus of ITIL Intermediate qualifications and the MALC qualification.