White Paper

HDI Support Center Certification: A Pragmatic Approach to Verifying Core ITIL Process Maturity

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The Situation

Currently ITIL is taking the world by storm. Many organizations are actively implementing ITIL processes, spending millions of dollars to train personnel and re-engineer their processes to become more efficient and effective. Individuals are being trained and certified at various levels: Foundation, Practitioner, and Service Manager. Consulting organizations are advising on how to re-define and re-deploy processes in efforts to boost productivity, cut costs, and boost employee and customer satisfaction. For those of us in service and support, its exciting to see that *IT Service Management*— Service Support and Service Delivery—is at the very heart of ITIL; that service and support is at the core of this exciting framework for IT best practices.

Given this backdrop of accelerated change toward implementing best practices in the industry, its astounding to note that large numbers of organizations who are "implementing ITIL" and are in various states of implementation may in fact be wondering – **where do they stand in terms of implementing ITIL in their support center?** Have they just started, have they made significant progress, or are they mature in the critical core process areas? How much work remains to be done, and where?

Will individual ITIL certifications provide the answer, or give them a true assessment of their process maturity? Hardly – individual Foundation, Practitioner and Service Manager Certifications are positioned to confirm an individual's capabilities – not infrastructure capabilities. The truth is, while ITIL "individual certifications" are heavily promoted in the industry, an infrastructure verification program for assessing the maturity of ITIL processes in the support center is sorely needed.

True, various consulting organizations offer "ITIL assessment" engagements, but oft times these same consultants are also interested in selling consulting services. Are consultants in a position to objectively assess support center maturity, given their motivation to sell consulting services? No—their assessments of necessity include a built-in bias. And while some consulting organizations go so far as to "verify" the compliance of 'technology tools' with ITIL, they have not done so for support center processes.

What is needed is a support center specific program that assesses and verifies the level of ITIL process maturity in the support center. Is there such a program? The answer is YES: **HDI Support Center Certification**.

The Solution

HDI's Support Center Certification program is uniquely positioned to provide an objective, professional, 3rd party assessment of these critically important ITIL processes:
- Incident Management
- Problem Management
- Change Management
- Configuration Management

- Service Continuity Management
- Service Level Management

Overview - HDI Support Center Certification

HDI's Support Center Certification (SCC) program has been carefully developed by an open industry standards committee representing more than 25 practitioner experts from around the world. The goals of the SCC program are simple: first, provide organizations with standards for evaluating the extent to which they deliver world-class support. By achieving compliance with an acceptable level of performance with respect to SCC Standards, an organization can not only improve its performance, but also distinguish itself as an HDI Certified Support Center. Secondly, the SCC program provides global recognition for organizations that have demonstrated excellence, efficiency, and commitment to quality service and support.

The program consists of a set of standards that comprise eight core areas and 67 statements. The core areas include:
- Five Enabling factors that drive results:
  - Leadership
  - Policy and strategy
  - People management
  - Resources; and
  - Process and procedure
- Three Results factors that follow from these Enabling factors:
  - People satisfaction
  - Customer satisfaction
  - Performance results

HDI™ SCC Reference Model
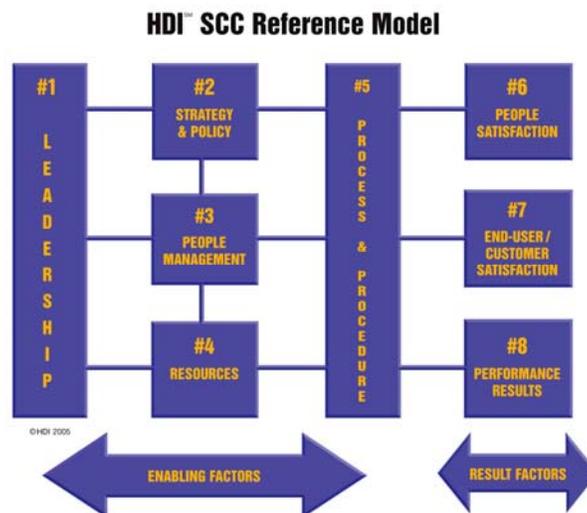
Four levels of maturity exist for each of the standards, and weighted scoring determines the overall effectiveness and success of the support organization. HDI's SCC program requires an on-site audit be conducted by an HDI Certified Auditor to ensure that organizations meet minimally required scores for certification. In order to maintain certification status, companies must continue their commitment to the HDI SCC program and its standards through bi-annual mini-audits.

**The benefits to clients of the SCC program are numerous**:

- Adherence to best practices
- Improved productivity and support center operational performance
- A means of assessing the maturity of critical ITIL support center processes
- Improved morale for support center staff
- Publicity and recognition
- Demonstrated commitment to quality service and support
- Improved customer satisfaction levels

The process of moving towards certification can directly affect the overall quality of operations, profitability, customer satisfaction, and provides a framework for successful strategic planning, service delivery, technology optimization, and communication of business value propositions to executive management.

ITIL and IT Service Management — An Overview

The **Information Technology Infrastructure Library** (**ITIL**) is a framework of best practice approaches intended to facilitate the delivery of high quality information technology (IT) services. ITIL outlines an extensive set of management procedures that are intended to support businesses in achieving both quality and value for money in IT operations. These procedures are supplier independent and have been developed to provide guidance across the breadth of IT infrastructure, development, and operations.

Although developed during the 1980s, ITIL was not widely adopted until the mid 1990s.
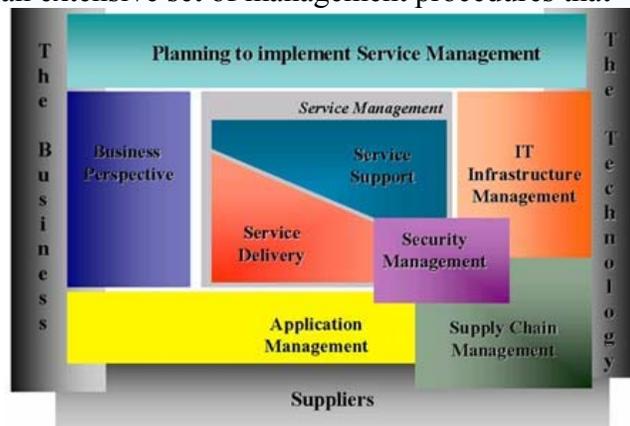
IT Service Management as a concept is related but not equivalent to ITIL. ITIL contains a subsection specifically entitled "IT Service Management" (the combination of the Service Support and Service Delivery volumes which are specific examples of an ITSM framework).

- Service Support includes operation functions and activities such as:
  - The Service Desk
  - Incident Management
  - Problem Management
  - Change Management
  - Configuration Management
  - Release Management
- Service Delivery includes planning and quality assurance activities such as:
  - Service Level Management
  - Financial Management for IT Services
  - Capacity Management
  - IT Service Continuity Management
  - Availability Management

Source: Wikipedia

Core processes and functions of IT Service Management include:
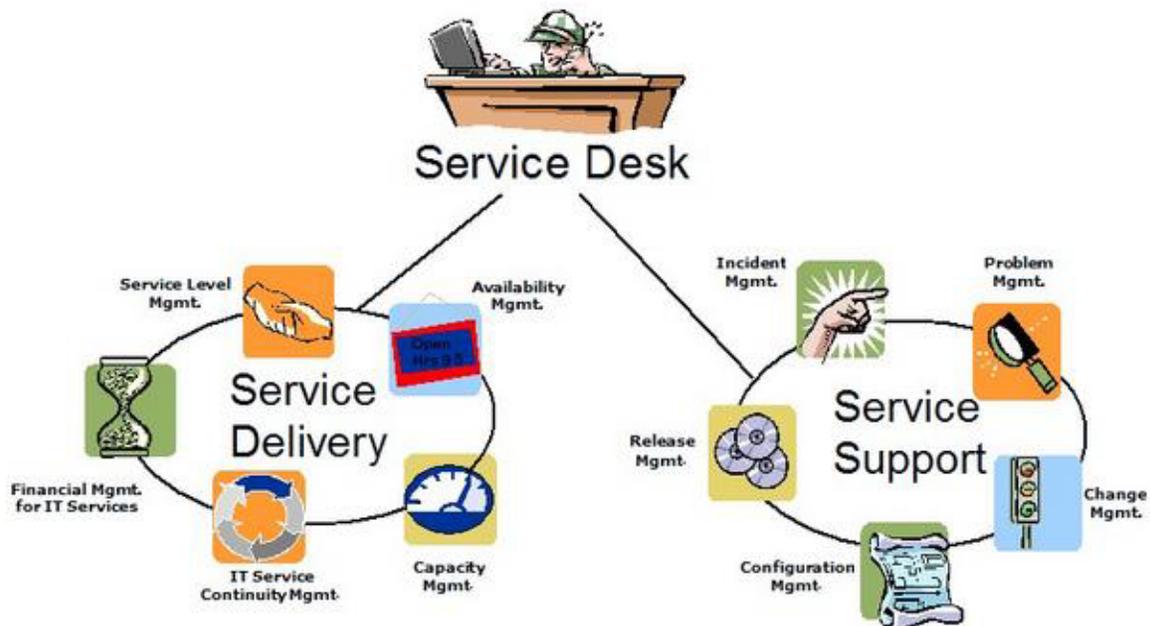
How Support Center Certification Facilitates ITIL Implementation

1. SCC provides a way to ensure that foundational processes and infrastructure are in place, providing a sound basis for ITIL Service Support and Service Delivery. Foundation processes defined in the SCC model include:
- Leadership
- Policy and Strategy
- People Management

Putting these processes in place helps ensure that an organization's Service Support and Service Delivery processes have a solid foundation upon which to operate.

2. SCC is a proven, internationally recognized assessment and certification program – designed to be compatible with and supportive of not only ITIL, but many of the "best practice" industry frameworks:
- International Standards Organization (ISO) 90000
- European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM)
- Malcolm Baldrige Award

3. SCC provides the professional, 3rd party <u>objective assessment</u> that you need to answer the question, ***"How mature are the core ITIL Service Management processes operating in my support center?"*** SCC assesses the maturity of such **key ITIL processes** as:

    <u>Service Support:</u>
- Incident Management
- Problem Management
- Change Management
- Configuration Management

    <u>Service Delivery:</u>
- Service Level Management
- Service Continuity Management

Note that these ITIL Service Support and Service Delivery processes **<u>map directly</u>** to the same processes as defined in the HDI SCC model (for more on this, see our diagram below).

4. The SCC program is objectively administered by a group of trained, experienced, HDI Auditors -- so you are assured of <u>quality</u>, <u>objectivity</u> and <u>professionalism</u> in the assessment of these core support center processes.

5. Given that SCC is supportive of IT Service Management, engaging the SCC program will facilitate the adoption of ITIL Service Management best practices, and thus the implementation of ITIL.

6. **Through its review and assessment of three Results factors, SCC provides a means for objectively assessing performance benefits** in the areas of Employee Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction and Key Performance Metrics. High performance in these key results areas is indicative of cost savings and revenue enhancing benefits for the organization…
- Higher employee satisfaction leads to lower employee turnover, higher retention, and higher employee productivity; and lower costs.
- Higher customer satisfaction leads to increased retention and lower costs.
- Higher performance on key indicators means lower costs and a more efficient, effective organization.

Full implementation of ITIL Service Support and Service Delivery processes should result in improved support center performance in these areas, and **SCC helps you assess the extent to which you are experiencing these results.**

Matrix Showing Direct and Indirect Relationships

Core SCC and ITIL processes map to each other very closely in the areas of:
- Resources
- Process and Procedure (see diagram below)
  …so the SCC and ITIL are naturally complimentary, and mutually supportive.

SCC Model	ITIL Service Management	Comments
1. Leadership		
1.010 Alignment with core business 1,020 Interaction with IT 1.030 Resource optimization 1.040 Promoting teamwork 1.050 Promoting the support center 1.060 Distribution of information	Needs SCC supporting processes	SCC processes in the Leadership area provide an important part of the foundation necessary for quality ITIL Service Support and Service Delivery.
2. Strategy & Policy		
2.010 Vision and Mission 2.020 Goals and Objectives 2.030 Business and operations plans 2.040 Stakeholder input	Needs SCC supporting processes	SCC processes in the area of Policy and Procedure provide the second leg of the triad of foundational processes.
3. People Management		
3.010 Job descriptions 3.020 Training plans 3.030 Career development plans 3.040 Personal performance appraisals 3.050 Employee satisfaction 3.060 Compensations 3.070 Reward and recognition	Needs SCC supporting processes	SCC processes in the area of People Management provide the third leg of the triad of foundational processes.

4. Resources		
4.040 Incident/Service Request Distribution	Service Support—Incident Management	Both SCC and ITIL require a process for efficient and effective distribution of incident and service requests to support staff.
4.070 Service Mgt. System	Service Support—Incident Management	Both approaches require a system for managing incidents and service requests, tracking activity end-to-end, and reporting activity.
4.090 Knowledge Management	Service Support—Problem Management	ITIL, like SCC, requires that the organization advise users proactively about known errors that have solutions. This is commonly done through Knowledge Management.
4.120 Security	Service Delivery—Security Management	Security Management processes must be in place to satisfy both SCC and ITIL requirements.
5. Process and Procedure		
5.010 Proactive Detection and Remediation	Service Support—Problem Management	Both SCC and ITIL specify that there are reactive and proactive aspects to Problem Management. In SCC, Proactive Detection and Remediation maps to ITIL proactive Problem Management.
5.020 Self-Help	Service Support—Service Desk	SCC requires a Self-Help process be in place; in ITIL, the Service Desk is to distribute information to end-users to keep them informed, and also to proactively notify users about known errors and ways to avoid problems.
5.040 Service Level Management	Service Delivery—Service Level Management	Both SCC and ITIL require that organizations define service levels, specify Service Level Agreements, and manage service delivery in accordance with these agreements.
5.060 Service Requests	Service Support—Incident Management	SCC, like ITIL, defines service requests as a type of incident, to be handled by the Service Desk, and processed, tracked, and reported on by Incident Management.
5.070 Incident/Service Request Logging	Service Support—Incident Management	SCC standards require that there be a documented process in place for logging quality incidents, as does ITIL Incident Management.

5.080 Prioritization	Service Support—Incident Management	Both SCC and ITIL require that the support center have a priority scheme and a process in place to classify incidents as to impact and urgency, so as to enable the center to process work more efficiently and effectively.
5.090 Incident Status	Service Support—Service Desk	SCC requires that support centers keep end-users informed about the status of incidents. ITIL agrees, noting that the Service Desk needs to take a leading role in communicating status.
5.100 Incident Resolution	Service Support—Incident Management	ITIL and SCC both require processes for incident resolution.
5.110 Incident Closure	Service Support—Incident Management	ITIL and SCC both require processes for incident closure.
5.120 Problem Management	Service Support—Problem Management	Both frameworks require a Problem Management process be in place within the support center.
5.130 Change Management	Service Support—Change Management	Both SCC and ITIL require that a change management process be in place to manage, control and minimize the impact of changes on the organization.
5.140 Configuration Management	Service Support—Configuration Management	Both frameworks require that a Configuration Management process be in place to manage assets and configuration items in the organization's infrastructure.
5.160 Service Continuity Management	Service Delivery—IT Service Continuity Management	Both SCC and ITIL mandate that a Service Continuity process be in place, to help ensure the continuous operation of critical IT services that support the business.
6. People Satisfaction		
6.010 People Satisfaction Feedback	Needs SCC results to assess people satisfaction	ITIL Service Management implementation should produce higher people satisfaction. SCC assesses the level of staff satisfaction as an indicator of positive results in the support center.
7. Customer Satisfaction		
7.010 Periodic End-user/Customer Satisfaction	Needs SCC results to assess customer satisfaction	Proper ITIL Service Management implementation should also result in higher customer satisfaction. The SCC program not only requires that customer satisfaction measurement processes be in place; it also assesses the level of customer satisfaction as an indicator of

		positive results.
8. Performance Results		
8.010 Number of incidents 8.040 Incident resolution time 8.100 Resolution time distribution 8.050 First Contact Resolution rate 8.090 Technical escalations 8.130 Cost per incident	Service Support— Incident Management: - Number of incidents - Avg. resolution time - Avg. resolve time by priority - Percent of incidents resolved by first line support - Avg. cost per incident	Both ITIL and SCC agree it is essential to establish Key Performance Metrics for the support center, and to measure and report against these on a continuing basis. SCC sets a number of core metrics which most support centers should monitor for performance. ITIL Service Management underscores the importance of defining Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and recommends` many of the <u>same metrics</u>.

Summary

The SCC program provides a valuable, objective, cost-effective way of laying down <u>foundational processes</u> for IT Service Management core processes—Service Support and Service Delivery—and <u>assessing to what extent</u> organizations have implemented core ITIL Service Management processes.

By engaging Support Center Certification, organizations can:

- **Lay a solid foundation** of Leadership, Policy and Strategy, and People Management for effective IT Service Management.
- **Enlist an objective, third party process** to facilitate the implementation of ITIL, as well as assess the maturity of their support center processes.
- **Verify the extent** to which they have implemented ITIL IT Service Management Service Support and Service Delivery processes.
- **Put in place quality assurance processes** to facilitate the delivery of quality support.
- **Assess the impact on performance indicators** for People Satisfaction, Customer Satisfaction, and Performance Metrics.
- **Experience a greater degree of success** in terms of ITIL Service Management implementation and support center performance.

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Bringing Your Closer to Your Customers