5 Best Practices from ITIL Incident Management

With the increased use of Enterprise Service Management, Artificial Intelligence, and digital transformation, the importance of ITIL Incident Management should not be overlooked.
How can an organization improve with ITIL Incident Management? Here are some best practices to help you improve your IT service desk.

1. Business value in your IT service desk

The IT service desk was not only made for service desk but as a "people support" to help both employees and customers with what they need. Here are some ways to help your organization create value- or prevent value leakage- in your organization:

- Fix IT issues that will minimize production loss and perform preventative maintenance.
- Align expectations to everyone within the company with stakeholders and below.
- Why people do work certain ways to explain how they provide value to the organization through their jobs.
- Discuss where your IT service desk causes pain, helps, and what can be improved on, and examine the overall impact on your IT organization.

2. Reassess your IT service desk level targets

Think about the key service level targets you're currently working towards in your IT service desk. Understand your targets are meeting the needs of your organization and how well it is.

- When were your targets first set?
- Have you refreshed your targets to reach business demands, technology, and employee expectations?
- Were the targets agreed upon and influenced by key stakeholders?

> **There's often a focus on what IT support does, rather than on what IT support achieves through what they do. It's often very much about operations, and not about outcomes.**

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Incident vs. Problem

Incident:

Incidents are unplanned or unexpected service interruptions that require a technician to respond quickly to restore a service or get an asset back to working order. Examples of an incident could be a printer jam or an application not working properly.

Problem:

Problems are issues that arise within an organization that need to be set aside for further investigation to determine their root cause, and therefore are typically not resolved within your standard Incident SLAs. Problems are often identified from multiple similar incidents that may involve the same tool, object or individual. An example of a problem is a software tool that experiences the same error multiple times a week requiring someone to set aside time to determine what is causing the error to reoccur so often.

3. Reconsider the value of your current ITIL incident management

Leading discussions with your stakeholders on aligning your IT performance with business expectations to lead in with more "How are we doing" instead of "This is what we measure, what do you think?".

- Misunderstanding metrics.
- Having too many metrics.
- Ignoring the behavioral aspects of metrics.
- Metrics only be targeted as a goal to reach, not a springboard for improvement.

4. Positive change is not automatically a good thing

Here are a few incidents that could help you understand change in your service desk:

- A positive way to look would be if an increase of incidents could mean the service desk is performing well so employees will more than likely contact IT for their issues.
- Some incidents may be simple to solve like password resets which could lead to asking why password resets are not an automated workflow.

5. Problem management can reduce your number of incidents

Understanding the difference between incidents and problems is important but your IT support should make a proactive effort to use problem management tools and techniques to cut down time-consuming and reoccurring issues on your service desk. With these quick solutions, your IT analyst can focus fully on investagation and resolve underlying causes for occuring issues, which can help IT become more proactive.

Need more information?
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