Vodafone – ITIL Maturity Model assessment: validating investment in service management practices

Interview with Jason Hamer

Service Management Architecture and Governance, Vodafone

Last year, global telecommunications company, Vodafone, <u>shared its journey to create a global service management (GSM) function</u>, supported by the ITIL framework. Its own internal measurement revealed how the GSM had reduced major incident numbers, increased change volumes and reduced customer issues.

Four years after the GSM team was formed – and within an evolving market place – Vodafone decided to seek external validation of its service management capability through an ITIL Maturity Model assessment with itSMF UK.

Here, Jason Hamer - who leads Service Management Architecture and Governance – explains the rationale for, and value gained, from assessing the company's service management maturity:

The GSM team at Vodafone has been responsible for driving a vision of simplification, standardisation and consolidation over the past four years.

We wanted to measure how far we'd come and gather evidence of our accomplishments via an official assessment. For that reason alone, the ITIL Maturity Model assessment would do the job.

However, there were other motivations to obtain external validation: in providing digital and IT service management both inside Vodafone's global operations and to other customers in the telecommunications sector, we needed to demonstrate transparency in a commercial arena – making it clear the value that organisations were getting from the services they pay for and which we provide.

Within this shared service model, it's important to show our level of maturity as a service provider and an ITIL Maturity Model certification holds weight when we're responding to requests for proposal.

The ITIL Maturity Model assessment: a comprehensive process

Working with itSMF UK as an Accredited Consulting Partner, the assessment focused on the ITIL service value system and numerous practices across the organisation, including:

- Continual improvement
- Change enablement
- Incident management
- Problem management
- Service design
- IT asset management
- Service configuration management

This covered the key practices the GSM delivers to multiple markets, including 11 or more European markets plus multiple internal business units along with cloud and infrastructure, office and IT.

My role was to host an initial discussion with the assessor, provide the background to our aims, vision and strategy and then facilitate people within the team – in our process centre of excellence, governance team, plus contacts in each practice area – who would support information gathering.

The assessor then conducted interviews to understand fully what the team delivers and identify the evidence for this.

Assessment findings: improvement insights and some pleasant surprises

On the one to five scale of maturity offered by the ITIL Maturity Model, we know how difficult it is to reach level five.

In fact, on a transformation journey, there is no such thing as a stable state and organisations should always be continually improving. In our case, that means focusing on configuration management to improve data quality and assurance – elements that are already in line with our existing roadmap and activities – and which will help us build a service data model to understand what happens in the business if things fail.

However, the assessment included some pleasant surprises: it referenced the quality of our documentation, including version control and support to all practices. That said, we've made improvements to our ITAM documentation, which is now managed more directly by the team using standard templates, formats, frameworks and governance to ensure consistency.

In addition, an internal GSM practice not covered by the ITIL Maturity Model assessment – service compliance – was found by the assessor to be referenced in other practices. Who knows, there could be room for this in a future ITIL Maturity Model.

ITIL Maturity Model certification – a source of pride

As a result of the maturity model assessment, we obtained official certification of our level 4 maturity level.

After sharing this internally with the CIO and teams, the reaction was how proud everyone is in a job well done and proof that the hard work over four years was worth it; and this ratifies the value we deliver as a service management organisation, both internally and externally.

At the start of this journey, I wrote the original paper for service management in Vodafone to exist as it does today; moving from fragmented pockets of service to a single service-providing organisation that delivers value. And it's a real credit to the team that is now delivering that vision.

We know that our model – delivering simpler and standardised services – provides value both within Vodafone and to other organisations, and we can repeat this consistently to whoever we provide services to.

Caroline Wyatt at itSMF UK said:

"It was a pleasure working with the team at Vodafone who are clearly all committed to service improvement. In fact, they are expanding beyond the traditional scope of the ITIL practices with the Service Compliance team and the results reflect their efforts."

Notes:

1) This article was originally published on the PeopleCert website **here**.

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