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Salvation Army – Maturity Model assessment has helped secure funding for our team & skills

Interview with Jayne Chapple

Head of IT Service, The Salvation Army

IT service management (ITSM) and the ITIL framework have been a constant throughout Jayne Chapple's career. So, eight years ago, when an opportunity arose to help The Salvation Army UK & Ireland improve process and service management practices, she jumped at the chance.

Jayne joined at a pivotal point in the organisation's history. Following an intensive review by an external consulting company, it was clear the charity required improvement in some of the fundamentals needed to efficiently carry out its mission-critical work with society's most vulnerable people.

A new approach to service management

"I've always been a big advocate for ITIL and have continuously updated my own knowledge and certifications. I have witnessed the value it holds for all kinds of organisations – large and small, public or private," Jayne said.

"The outcomes of the review highlighted several areas of improvement, and I was tasked by the CIO to turn things around. Change management, incident management, problem management, capacity and availability were key processes to be implemented."

Measuring the impact using the ITIL Maturity Model

Jayne knew it would be important to measure the impact her strategy for turnaround was having. It would help her influence stakeholder engagement and support the case for employing more skilled practitioners.

"I was aware of the ITIL Maturity Model and could see how useful it would be for motivating the team and keeping stakeholders positively engaged in the changes made. Initially, without any funds, I had to run a self-assessment with the model."

"The first year, we started at 0. Process, documentation and the lack of any policies was hindering the smooth delivery of service to our 7,000-strong army of volunteers and staff."

Far from disheartened, Jayne committed to doing the review every year and, by 2023, her team had made significant progress.

"The organisation is so different today. We have an Enterprise Architecture Group and Steering Board, which includes service design. It's not been easy though – even small changes have taken a long time to embed."

"Just getting people to follow a simple process has taken huge effort. But it's been worth it," Jayne added. "There's no longer a blame culture when things go wrong. Instead, people review processes and change management logs to identify fixes. As a result of these cultural shifts, I could benchmark our performance as 2.8-3 in 2023/4 across 10 key areas."

The value of external appraisal

Jayne knew an external assessment was needed to keep everyone motivated, get the recognition the team deserved and get buy-in to maintain an ITIL-led approach.

"I avoided any bias in my self-assessments and, in fact, last year marked down one of my teams in IT Services."

Then, in 2024, the Head of Risk agreed to fund a formal assessment. itSMF UK was appointed to conduct the assessment and concluded a maturity score of 3.

"It was a huge moment for us. It not only validated our approach, but also the importance of a supportive culture. We all speak the same language – something our assessor, Luci Allen, noted in her report."

Strong maturity evident

Luci summed up the findings, "The team showed strong maturity in their IT Service Management practices, with a clear commitment to continual improvement and aligning IT services with organisational goals. Their efforts to build a resilient IT infrastructure will help safeguard against future threats and enhance service delivery."

Jayne adds that Luci's report also provided areas to focus on, "This is helpful for prioritising next steps and provides a benchmark for measuring the impact future changes have. For instance, we'll soon be reviewing our ITSM toolset. Such a significant change must be managed carefully. It will be interesting to see how we rate next year as it's probably the one area where we could move the dial."

New appointments for future success

The Salvation Army UK & Ireland has the option to have a 'surveillance audit' in 2026 and 2027, which Jayne will ensure happens. She believes it will help keep the focus and consistency but also ensure the right people are in the right roles.

"A year ago, the maturity model outcomes helped justify the appointment of a service experience manager. A problem manager is next on the list of appointments. It's good for the team, and it's good for stakeholders. We are all working together."

It just works

Jayne agrees every organisation can gain from doing the Maturity Model assessment. "I've shown you can do it yourself to begin with, build confidence you are moving in the right direction and then get the external validation at a time when you've made large strides forward."

"But no matter where you are on the journey, remember this – it just works."

Working together for better service management

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