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ITSM (Information Technology Service Management) is a relatively young industry. Yes, that's actually what IT is all about, the delivery of "services" to business people that enables them to do their work. The IT services delivered are possible through the correct combination of people, process, technology, and external suppliers. Although centralized computing or mainframe technologies date back further, it is only since the introduction of the Internet and distributed network technologies of the 1990s that the IT industry has progressed to the commoditized state of today. In its early years, IT was primarily focused on technology alone. Later, IT focused on providing support to users (the recipients of its services). More recently, the IT industry has focused on *service provision* to its business customers.

The transition from misunderstood technology geeks to service provider has been a difficult road for IT departments and companies. Most have yet to begin the journey, many are on the journey, and few have mastered the journey that evidences an improved and more mature IT. Hence, the proliferation of the industry recognized best practices called ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library).

ITIL is a process oriented approach to IT service delivery and support. It was created in the United Kingdom in the late 1980s and early 1990s (version 1) as a set of process guidance for their use and is owned by its OGC (Office of Government and Commerce). Being public domain, the usage of ITIL spread rapidly because it was and still is the best set of IT process guidance available. Today, there is no greater proof of the ITIL benefits than its worldwide acceptance, use, alignment with ISO IT industry standards, and the cadre of professional certifications available to those who study and master the ITIL content. The ITIL is now refreshed and rewritten by the international users group of the ITIL called the ITSMF (Information Technology Service Management Forum). In the early 2000s, the ITSMF refreshed the ITIL from more than 40 individual books to a library of seven books (version 2). July 2007 brought yet another refresh that yielded five core books of ITIL (version 3), an advanced process-oriented service lifecycle model, an alignment with current industry trends, and a broader focus beyond process guidance.

Professionals take the time to learn about the best practices of their industry. Doctors, lawyers, retailers, manufacturers, sales people, bankers, builders, teachers, architects, engineers, etc. all have best practices associated with their industry. For IT professionals, the ITIL is that set of best practices. As an IT professional from front line to CIO, consider familiarizing yourself with or becoming a student of the ITIL.