



Creating Quick Wins

Where do I start implementing ITIL?

This is one of the most frequently asked questions of Pink's consultants. The fact is that every IT organization's starting point will be different. To help answer this question, IT leaders should conduct a process maturity assessment (refer PinkLink August 2005 Issue) to identify "pain" spots, and where all important quick wins can be achieved.

Major change and continuous improvement efforts, such as the implementation of ITIL's best practice framework, takes time – sometimes years! Complex efforts to change strategies, restructure organizations, and reengineer processes risk losing momentum if there are no short-term goals or quick wins to meet and celebrate.

Most people, including senior management and the CFO, won't go on the long march unless they see compelling evidence within a short time frame that the journey is worth the effort and cost, and producing expected results. Without short term wins, too many employees give up or actively join the resistance. What does it really take for IT leaders to effectively plan and deliver quick wins? Profession John Kotter - considered the world's leading authority on leading change - gives us insight.

Best Practices For Leading Change

Harvard Business School's Professor John Kotter introduced an organizational change model several years ago that is widely regarded as *the* best practice framework for leading change and major transformations. He has written many articles and two highly acclaimed books on the subject: *Leading Change* and *The Heart Of Change*.

Kotter's model, which features eight steps for leading and implementing successful change, has been featured previously in *PinkLink*. In this month's article, the focus is specifically on Step 6: Creating Short Term Wins.

Understanding Kotter's model will help IT managers at all levels of the organization master the successful implementation of ITIL best practices. As you undertake the planning and organizing of key activities, use this model as a guide to ensure all important areas are covered.

Summary Of Kotter's Model

Leading Change: Eight Steps	Core Challenge	Desired Behaviour
1. Establish a sense of urgency	Get people "out of the bunker" and ready to move.	People start telling each other, "Let's go, we need to change things!"
2. Create a guiding coalition	Get the right people in place with the trust, emotional commitment and teamwork to guide the difficult change process.	A group powerful enough to guide large change, influence others to accept change, and one that works well together.
3. Develop a vision and strategy	Get the guiding team to create the right vision and strategies to guide action in all of the remaining stages of change. This requires moving beyond number crunching to address the creative and emotional components of vision.	The guiding team develops the right vision and strategy for the change effort.



Leading Change: Eight Steps	Core Challenge	Desired Behaviour
4. Communicate the change vision (and, communicate it over and over again)	Get as many people as possible acting to make the vision a reality.	People begin to buy into the change and this shows in their behaviour.
5. Empower broad-based action	Remove key obstacles that stop people from acting on the vision.	More people feel able to act, and do act, on the vision.
6. Create short-term wins	Produce enough short-term (quick) wins fast enough to energize the change helpers, enlighten the pessimists, defuse the cynics and build momentum for the effort.	Momentum builds as people try to fulfil the vision, while fewer and fewer resist change.
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change	Continue with wave after wave of change, not stopping until the vision is a reality - no matter how big the obstacles.	People remain energized and motivated to push change forward until the vision is fulfilled – fully realized.
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture	Create a supporting structure that provides roots for the new ways of operating.	New and winning behaviour continues despite the pull of tradition, turnover of change leaders, etc.

Creating Short Term Wins

Creating short-term wins is different from *hoping* for short-term wins. The latter is passive, the former active. According to Kotter, in a successful transformation managers actively look for ways to obtain clear performance improvements, establish goals in the yearly planning system, achieve these objectives, and reward the people involved with recognition, promotions, or money.

In change initiatives that fail, systematic effort to guarantee unambiguous wins within a matter of months is much less common. Managers either just assume that good things will happen or become so caught up with a grand vision and the long term that they don't worry much about the short term.

People often complain about being forced to produce short-term wins, but under the right circumstances this kind of pressure can be a useful element in a change process. When it becomes clear that quality programs or cultural change efforts will take a long time, urgency levels usually drop. Commitments to produce short-term wins can help keep complacency down and encourage the detailed analytical thinking that can usefully clarify or revise transformational visions.

Why are short term wins so critical to the overall success of change efforts? They are very important because they help to:

- Create many milestones instead of just one final target or goal. Planning for, and achieving, quick wins provides important milestones people can look forward to while achieving the actual wins gives them a chance to pat themselves on the back sooner rather than only later
- Provide evidence that the sacrifice is worth it
- Justify the costs involved
- Give change agents credibility
- Provide opportunities to celebrate and to build morale and motivation, which are needed to keep change efforts moving forward down the long road ahead
- Fine-tune vision and strategies
- Give senior management and the guiding coalition concrete data on the viability of their ideas
- Undermine cynics and self-serving resisters; Clear improvements in performance make it difficult for people to block the need to change



- Keep bosses on board; Provides those higher in the hierarchy with evidence that the transformation is on track
- Build momentum; Turn neutrals into visible supporters, get fence sitters off the fence, turn reluctant supporters into active and willing participants

Case Study

Dale, an IT manager, was by nature a "big ideas" person – a very good visionary and long term thinker. With assistance from two other IT managers, he developed a concept for how a Configuration Management Database (CMDB) could be developed to help with improving knowledge and control of IT assets. In fact, the more the three thought of the opportunity, the more they realized that a CMDB could bring many related benefits to the business as well as the IT operation. The three managers gained approval for their initiative and pluggd away at implementing their vision for more than a year.

By their own standards, they accomplished a great deal: new discovery and audit tools and methods were developed, new processes and activities were defined, and a master CMDB was defined and populated. However, by the standards of skeptics, especially the CIO and divisional controller, who wanted to see more tangible and financial benefits to offset the costs, the managers had produced nothing. When questioned, they explained that big changes require time. The CIO and controller accepted that argument for over a year and then pulled the plug on the project.

In Dale's case, if he and his colleagues had deliberately incorporated a couple of short-term wins into their plan, the very useful project would probably have survived and helped IT and their organization.

ITIL Quick Wins

Many IT organizations start implementing ITIL's IT Service Management Process Model with the Service Desk together with a combination of one or more of the five support processes – Incident, Problem, Change, Release, and Configuration Management. Service Level Management is also sometimes considered. The reason that these areas are specifically included as common starting points is because they tend to be highly visible and therefore taking these processes to at least a process maturity level of "Control" can provide extremely meaningful quick wins.

But again, it's important to stress that everyone's situation is different. That's why it's necessary to conduct a process maturity assessment before identifying priorities, and planning and organizing implementation activities.

To understand more about how to create your own ITIL "road map" and identify ITIL implementation quick wins, refer to the Special Edition PinkLink June 2005 Issue, which provides a very in-depth and detailed white paper on this subject, written by Troy DuMoulin, one of Pink's most experienced executive consultants.

In Conclusion

Remember, a key challenge for leaders including CIOs, IT directors, project managers, process owners and change agents is to identify early successes as part of the overall planning process. Short term wins have to be created *by deliberate planning and action*.

Short term wins must be:

- Visible to everyone
- Meaningful
- Achieved within a short period of time