ABC of ICT™ whitepaper

Introduction

In a CIO survey 95% of CIO's declared an intention to adopt ITIL to achieve business goals. Unfortunately still 70% of IT organizations are unable to demonstrate the value of ITSM improvement initiatives. A Forrester report also revealed that 52% of failing ITIL initiatives do so because of 'resistance to change', causing wasted time, effort, energy and costs and increasing business risks. We've had ITIL for more than 20 years, despite the hundreds of thousands of ITIL certificates it seems we still have difficulty knowing how to successfully use it to achieve business needs, and we have difficulty creating buy-in, overcoming resistance and embedding it in the organizational behavior and culture. Why is this? It is because of ABC (Attitude, Behavior and Culture). '*ABC is like an Iceberg, much of it hidden beneath the surface yet capable of causing enormous damage to your ITSM improvement initiative, or more importantly to your business!*'. **It is ABC that will determine the success or failure of your ITSM improvement initiative**. For too long now the Iceberg has remained invisible, we don't see it, we don't talk about it we ignore it and hope that it will go away by itself. The fact that it has existed for more than 10 years proves that current ITSM training isn't helping address it. 94% of 200 respondents in a survey revealed that 'current training and certification doesn't help address ABC issues'. It is time for something different.

Purpose of this whitepaper:

The purpose of this whitepaper is to show you what the ABC of ICT™ is, and to show the negative impact it is having on ITSM improvement programs and on the performance of organizations. This whitepaper will explain why we are consistently and persistently failing to recognize and address these ABC issues. We will show that 'Failure is no longer an option', with the growing importance of IT to business operations we can no longer afford *not to* successfully adopt and deploy best practice frameworks such as ITIL to bring IT under control. We will show you how the ABC of ICT™ products, services and solutions will enable you to both recognize and address ABC issues within your organization and if you are a training or consulting organization how you can add these products and solutions into your approaches. We will provide case studies to show how ABC issues have been successfully addressed using ABC of ICT™ approaches. The appendices show the shocking results of ABC surveys so far and share with you success factors as identified by leading industry experts who have addressed ABC issues.

Content

ABC@WORK
Attitude Behavior & Culture in Organizations

What is the ABC of ICT™?

ABC stands for the Attitude, Behavior & Culture within IT organizations.
"ABC is like an iceberg, much of it hidden beneath the surface and difficult to see, but nevertheless dangerous and capable of inflicting enormous damage to your ITSM initiative, or more importantly to your business."

The following are brief descriptions of Attitude, Behavior and Culture, taken from the publication ABC of ICT™ – An Introduction.

Attitude - What people think and feel.

It is their demeanor and how they react to the world about them. How they react to a change initiative, a colleague or a customer. Examples of attitude are:

- somebody thinking "The users are ALWAYS complaining....just ignore them they will soon go away!";
- somebody thinking "...I'll believe that when I see it..." after a manager has just announced 100% commitment to the ITIL program.

Embarking on an ITSM improvement program means to embark upon a program of organizational change, this means changing people's attitudes. You need to create buy-in and commitment for the change. You need to identify and address attitudes that are counter-productive, attitudes that can lead to negative behavior and threaten the aims of the change program.

In order to change attitude it is important to first make the attitude, conscious, visible, open. People need to 'be made aware'. Secondly it is important to relate the relevance of the attitude to the current and desired behavior. To get people to change attitude it is important that they feel the negative consequences and pain in relation to the current behavior or they see the benefits of newly desired behavior.

Behavior - What people do.

Behavior is influenced by attitude and by the culture of the organization. Examples of behavior are:

- **somebody** saying they will follow the ITIL procedures **but not doing** it.
- **not registering** a solution, or **not sharing knowledge** to a first line employee even though you know it would help, and even knowing you should be doing it.

To implement ITSM or to improve processes means behavior must change. As ITSM impacts all levels within an organization from operational, to tactical and line management to strategic managers as well as the User and the business community both **IT and Business behavior will need to change** to some degree. This is a significant realization because as we have said earlier 'people do not like to change behavior', they will be likely to resist in one way or another until they have bought into the need and the benefits. Until they have bought into the need and the benefits their attitude will be one of distrust as well as discomfort and possibly a lack of confidence at having to change the way they do things.

Culture -The accepted ways of working within an organization.

Culture refers to the values and standards that people find normal. Examples of culture are:

- **'Knowledge is power'**, or the 'hero culture' in this type of culture people believe that sharing knowledge diminishes their own value, therefore they want to be the only ones with the expertise and knowledge, they are the hero's.
- The **blame culture**. Everybody points the finger of blame and mistakes are punished.

In fact you could say that 'Attitude' is individual and comes as a result of personal beliefs and experiences which influences behavior. Culture is often difficult to grasp but could be described as the organizational or corporate attitude. Often employees in an organization are unaware of the culture and how this influences their personal attitude and behavior. This is why culture is one of the most difficult things to change. It is 'soft' you can't see it, you can't touch it, you know it's there, you can get bogged down in it and unable to move, it can stop a change program in its tracks. It is something to be taken seriously if you want your change program to succeed..... it would seem that the most common approach is to ignore it and hope that it will go away or change by itself.

Where did the ABC of ICT™ come from?

More than 10 years ago we gave our first ABC worst practice presentations around the world at ITSM conferences. The presentations made use of the cartoons and absurd practices taken from the "ITSM from Hell" book. To our utter horror and surprise many people came up to us afterwards and said "that is exactly what we do in our IT organization". Ten years later we came back and delivered exactly the same presentations and received exactly the same responses which was both a stunning and frightening situation. ***Despite all the frameworks and best practices we have thrown at the IT management problem we still haven't improved.***

The reason for originally presenting ABC was my (Paul Wilkinson) own personal naivety and experience in 'Implementing' ITIL. I was guilty of many of the ABC of ICT™ worst practices, a mistaken belief that ITIL was something you 'Implement'. All you have to do is design some process flows and procedures and hand these over to the organization to follow, after all I have a service manager certificate with distinction so I know what I'm talking about.....Really!? It was after some painful, embarrassing failed implementation projects that I realized that ITIL was all about organizational change. I was soon confronted with resistance at all levels within an organization. Resistance was a ***big*** hurdle to the successful adoption and deployment of ITIL. In my time as a consultant I saw numerous failed attempts and projects in which 'ITIL' was THE objective not what you should achieve with it."

World-wide feedback from 1000's of organizations

It is our belief that it is the ABC 'Worst practices' that will determine the success or failure of your ITSM improvement initiatives, not the frameworks and the models. ***It is ABC that will prevent you from realizing the value offered by these frameworks. It is ABC that presents a business risk.***
People came up to us after the presentations asking "How do we resolve all these issues?". It was this need for solutions that prompted us to develop a set of products to help solve the ABC of ICT™ worst practices. Since then we, the authors, have been travelling the world extensively. We have been giving 'worst practice' speeches at international IT Service management conferences. This has given us the chance to talk with hundreds of IT professionals that recognize and agree with our 'worst practice' observations and findings. We have also had the opportunity to deliver hundreds of ITSM simulation workshops which has brought us into contacts with literally thousands of customers implementing, or struggling to implement, ITSM practices. During these workshops we have been able to discuss key issues that people recognize in relation to ITSM success and fail factors. We have discussed these issues with IT operational employees, team managers, line managers, Process managers, Project managers even CIOs and occasionally business people from the boards of directors as well as end users. We have also had a chance to discuss our findings with those of our 100 or so international GamingWorks partners that help and advise their customers to adopt and deploy ITSM best practices. All of these findings have been documented in the ABC of ICT™ publications and translated into the ABC@Work products and services. So all in all we feel we are able to say what we have found represents truly global 'worst practices'.....And more importantly, what we have found represents truly global 'Best Practice' approaches to dealing with the ABC issues that just about every organization adopting ITIL is faced with.

Why is ABC of ICT™ necessary?

ITIL is becoming increasingly important to organizations. Why? Because IT is becoming a critical component for many businesses. As such ITSM is becoming a strategic asset. In a CIO survey 95% of CIO's declared an intention to adopt ITIL to achieve business goals. ITIL V3 sums up exactly what is needed and at the same time what is going wrong.

> A Service according to ITIL V3 is '*a means of delivering value to the business by facilitating outcomes they want to achieve without the ownership of specific costs and risks*'.

Unfortunately however still **70% of IT organizations are unable to demonstrate the value of ITIL**. A recent Forrester report also revealed that **52% of failing ITIL initiatives do so because of 'resistance to change'**, causing wasted time, effort, energy and costs and increasing business risks. It would appear that all the time, effort, money and energy being pumped into ITIL initiatives is failing to deliver Business Value.

We can no longer afford to fail!

With the growing importance of IT to business operations we can no longer afford not to bring IT under control. In the past number of years there has been an explosion of frameworks aimed at bringing IT under control. ITIL V2, ITIL V3, CobIT, MOF, BiSL, ASL, ISO20000. It seems as though as soon as we have failed to successfully apply one framework we blame the framework as being wrong and then adopt another. More recently IT Governance has become a hot issue, as a result of the need to bring IT under control. This drive for Governance is one of the reasons why many CIOs are adopting ITIL. The success of ITIL is no longer a 'nice-to-have' but a 'need-to-have'. Failing to get it right THIS time could mean the red card to many IT organizations. So the status quo is no longer acceptable. We must change. The sense of urgency is clear to many. But is the sense of urgency felt by all.

So basically Governance is one of the biggest drivers demanding the need to bring IT under control, minimise risk, demonstrate value. If we look at a definition of Weil & Ross (IT Governance book, Harvard press) describing Governance we will see where one of our first ABC worst practices stems from.

'Specifying the Decision rights and accountability **frameworks**

to

encourage the **desirable behaviour** in the use of IT'.

Why do we use this definition (From Weill & Ross)? Because this book from Weill and Ross is based upon proven Best practice taken from numerous case examples. Why have we split the definition above into 3 lines like this? Because one of our primary worst practices is that we focus so much on the first line (adopting the frameworks such as ITIL that will define some responsibility and accountabilities) that we forget, and do not adequately address the second part 'encourage the desirable behavior in the use of IT'. Which is what IT governance is all about 'doing the right thing to responsibly manage the IT assets in an organization such that it poses no risk to business continuity, and such that the investments we make deliver value'.

Findings from our own ABC in Action (Apollo 13 – An ITSM case experience' business simulation - see the article '**Using simulations to increase the success of your ITSM initiative**' published in the IT Service Management Global Best Practice book – volume 1, 2008, Van Haren publishing) also reveal that the key learning point, identified by more than 1000 students is that '**People and behaviour related issues**' are the most significant success or fail factor in improving IT performance. Issues such as the need for:
- clearly defined, agreed and accepted tasks, roles and responsibilities;
- personal accountability;
- creating buy-in and commitment;
- leading change and 'walking-the-talk';

- 'acting' customer focused instead of 'saying we are' customer focused;
- breaking down organizational 'silos';
- managing the soft issues relating to organizational change.

Why are we failing to address ABC?

There are two key reasons we are failing to address ABC problems.
1. It has never been raised as an issue before. It has **remained invisible for too long**, and not been given the attention it deserves. The publications, conferences and articles pay too little attention to its relevance.
2. The way we **focus training on obtaining a 'certificate'** as opposed to learning to successfully deploy ITSM frameworks.

ABC: the hidden Iceberg
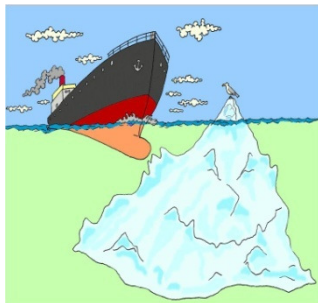
For too long now the hidden Iceberg of ABC has remained submerged. We fail to talk about it and address it. The hidden ABC worst practices have caused untold damage (e.g. waste of time, effort, money) and failed improvement initiatives. **It is time we recognize and resolve the ABC worst practices once and for all.** In the case examples using the ABC cards and ABC in Action we will demonstrate this to you, at the same time showing you how you can make it visible. Once it becomes visible you can discuss it, once you can discuss it you can agree to deal with it.

We've had ITIL for more than 20 years, despite the hundreds of thousands of ITIL certificates it seems we still have difficulty knowing how to successfully use it to achieve business needs and we have difficulty creating buy-in, overcoming resistance and embedding it in the organizational behavior and culture. In a recent survey we conducted with more than 200 IT companies 94% declared **'Current ITIL training and certification does not help adequately address ABC issues.'**

Current training and certification isn't helping?

As we have already mentioned, the definition of a service according to ITIL V3 is 'a means of delivering VALUE to the business in terms of the OUTCOMES they want to achieve without the ownership of specific COSTS and RISKS'.

Apply this to the way we currently purchase ITIL foundation training, after all this may be seen as a Service being offered by training companies. See if this Service delivers the value we are really looking for.

A survey reveals most people purchase a foundation training for the following OUTCOMES:
- A Certificate
- A Common terminology

We asked a group of decision makers in an IT conference: '*Is this the VALUE your Business manager expects and wants when agreeing to let IT spend their budget on sending IT people to this training?* '*NO…'.* was the unanimous response.

The result of this outcome based approach to purchasing a foundation training is the following:

- COSTS go up: Because of longer implementation time learning how to use and apply ITIL, plus higher costs due to resistance and lack of buy-in. It costs more effort, time and energy.
- RISKS are higher: The risk that the project will be delayed or may fail. The Risk that business value will not be achieved. The risk that staff become demotivated and may leave the company.

As a Business manager you would expect people to understand what they have learnt in the context of Value, Outcomes, Costs and Risks. *We challenged the delegates to go and ask all of the people having attended a foundation training to explain what ITIL meant to their business in this context. How would it deliver value, what outcomes would it help achieve and how would it mitigate costs and risks.* Also as a business manager you would expect they would know something about how to apply what they have learnt. The VALUE needed from the training is that they can place ITIL in the context of a business problem, understand how ITIL will help and they will know how to translate theory into practice.

Knowledge is more than a certificate

ITIL certification means I know what I am doing
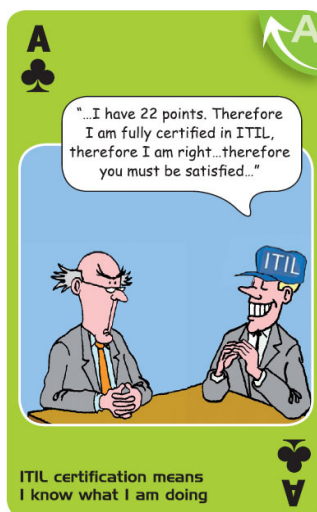
The theme of the itSMF conference in which we presented the above argument was 'Knowledge to win'. We suggested we explore what this means. The definition of knowledge in the dictionary shows where we go wrong with existing training.

Knowledge:
Expertise and skills acquired through
experience or **education**;
the **practical** or **theoretical** understanding of a subject.

We focus too much on the education and theory and not enough on experience and practical application. Winning knowledge is based on experience and practice.

Would you fly with a pilot who only had passed a theoretical exam?

A trainee Pilot may take all of the theoretical classroom training and pass all of the exams and certificates with 100% pass rate. We asked the group in the conference, "If a pilot has however not had practical experience in a simulator would you fly with this Pilot?. NO hands went up. Yet we send all our IT staff on ITIL theory and gain certification then let them loose on our business critical IT to apply what they have learnt! A business simulation, such as the ones used in ABC in Action (see the section on products and services) provides a safe environment for testing and learning to apply plus mistakes pose no risk to critical real life operations and Business Value. In a simulation people learn how to translate Theory into Practice. They learn HOW to translate ITIL into value, they are confronted with resistance and learn to address ABC issues, gaining buy-in and commitment to improvement actions. This is a much higher Return-On-Value (ROV) of a training investment.

Resistance: A common theme.

Another reason why existing training isn't helping is this - A report revealed that 52% fail because of resistance. We performed an additional survey using the ABC of ICT™ cards to focus specifically on resistance. We asked 60 ITIL practitioners to select the three most common types of resistance they encounter. Once again these 60 represented hundreds of ITIL adoption programs. We consolidated these into a top 10. This top 10 can be found on the ABC@Work website.

The results of this survey at the time of publication can be found in Appendix B. We asked the practitioners which ITIL training helps recognize and deal with these types of resistance **'None'** was the answer.

We analyzed the 35 cases published in the ABC of ICT™ – An Introduction and summarized the findings in Appendix C. Analysis revealed that ALL encountered some form of resistance, however current training offerings do not help identify this or deal with it.

Why was ABC of ICT™ developed?

It was this lack of success with ITSM improvement frameworks such as ITIL and the fact that current training isn't helping to solve these long term issues that were the reasons that ABC of ICT™ was developed. We wanted to develop a set of instruments to help create awareness for the need to address ABC problems as well as instruments to help people assess themselves and enable them to take their own steps for resolving these issues.

The ABC of ICT™ publications which are the core set of products and services underpinning ABC of ICT™ were not developed by GamingWorks or ABC@Work alone. We gathered the feedback from literally thousands of participants in the business simulation Apollo 13 to develop the 57 industry recognized ABC worst practices in the ABC of ICT™ card set. We invited Industry recognized gurus, practitioners and ITIL authors to write case studies in the ABC of ICT™ – An Introduction book. Sharing their experiences from hundreds of practical implementations giving tips, hints and practical advice on how to deal with ABC issues.

We wanted to reflect a broad base of Internationally recognized issues and solutions. We wanted ABC of ICT™ to be **by practitioners for practitioners**. We also wanted to translate the IP into certification and accreditation programs through EXIN. This was to make it openly available to both end-user customer organizations and training and consulting companies.

What are the ABC of ICT™ products, solutions and services?

The ABC of ICT™ consists of three sets of products and services. The Publications set, the Capability set and the Trainers set.

1. The publication set
The publication set consists of:

- **The ABC of ICT™ Card set**. This is a set of playing cards containing 57 industry recognized worst practice cartoons. This card set is an **awareness and assessment instrument**. This card set has been used in international workshops and conferences around the world to capture worst practices, recognize their impact and identify a need to resolve them.

- **The ABC of ICT™ Exercise workbook**. This is a workbook containing **exercises**, worksheets and training tips **for using the ABC of ICT™ card set**. These exercises can be performed in separate workshops or integrated into existing ITIL training courses and used to capture real, practical input for a continual service improvement initiative.

- **ABC of ICT™ – An Introduction**. This is a book which describes what ABC is and why it is necessary. It also contains more than 30 case studies by industry experts explaining **how to tackle ABC worst practices**. The book contains additional guidance and tips on addressing ABC of ICT™. This book is aimed at anybody involved in, or responsible for improving ITSM practices.

2. Capability development set
The capability development set is aimed at developing new competences and capabilities and for addressing ABC issues. The capability development set has been designed and developed

by ABC@Work. ABC@Work is a new joint venture between the developers of the ABC of ICT™ and independent experts in dealing with Attitude, Behaviour and Culture. It is intended to have a certification and accreditation scheme to enable all training companies to be able to adopt and offer these types of training. The accreditation program will ensure that end customer organizations selecting ABC of ICT™ training receive proven quality and expertise. The capability development set consists of:

- **ABC fundamentals training**. This is a one day training in which the ABC of ICT™ concepts are explained. Delegates will **use the ABC cards** to perform two exercises to assess their own personal and organizational ABC and the impact on their business. Delegates will identify intervention actions they can take away **and apply in their own organizations**.

- **ABC of ICT™ workshops**. These are workshops using the ABC of ICT™ cards and are designed to **create awareness and recognize ABC of ICT™ worst practices**. These workshops can be performed as part of IT conferences, or as in-house workshops for teams and departments. These workshops will be facilitated by certified, accredited workshop facilitators.

- **ABC in Action**. This is an intensive, interactive training which makes use of a business simulation. Delegates will **learn how to confront and resolve common ABC issues within their team or organization**. The simulation will be preceded by ABC workshops or a detailed intake interview to identify the learning objectives and the ABC issues that need resolving. ABC in Action will make use of the Apollo 13 simulation (ITSM organizational improvements), The Challenge of Egypt (Program and project management organizational improvements), The Ultimate Route (Project and Risk Management organizational improvements) or the Greatest move (Business process and organizational improvements). ABC in action is aimed at confronting and changing attitudes and behaviour.

3. **Trainer and Facilitator set**
   The trainer and facilitator set is aimed at teaching people to deliver the ABC of ICT™ workshop, Fundamentals or ABC in Action. ABC@Work is working together with certification and accreditation organizations such as EXIN to help ensure the quality and expertise of training companies wanting to offer one or more of the ABC of ICT™ capability development set.

- **ABC of ICT™ Workshop – Train the Trainer film**. This is an intensive training film in which Jan Schilt and Paul Wilkinson describe ABC of ICT™ and show how to do some of the basic exercises using the ABC of ICT™ cards. Following this TTT you will be able to conduct ABC of ICT™ workshops or exercises using the Exercise workbook or you will be able to integrate exercises as part of your ITIL training courses.

- **ABC of ICT™ Fundamentals Train the trainer**. This is a program to teach a trainer how to deliver the ABC of ICT™ fundamentals training.

- **ABC in Action Train the Trainer program.** This is an intensive train the trainer program to teach facilitators how to use business simulations to address ABC issues. Trainers for this program must demonstrate a practical ability and track record for training soft skills, must undergo ABC fundamentals training and become a cerified Traine for the Business Simulation.(e.g. Apollo 13, Challenge of Egypt)

Individuals or organizations wanting to become certified or accredited to deliver any of these types of training can contact EXIN (Workshop facilitator at present) or ABC@Work (www.ABCatWORK.nl).

How can you use the various products?

The following sections describe how you can use three of products and services. The sections describe the ABC of ICT™ card set as an assessment or survey instrument for identifying ABC issues,

ABC of ICT Fundamentals training, a 1 day basic training and set of exercises for learning about ABC and identifying steps to take in your own organization, and ABC in Action – a business simulation for addressing ABC issues.

The ABC of ICT™ Card set

The ABC card set is an awareness and assessment instrument designed to help organizations identify, recognize and address ABC issues. The set contains 57 industry recognized 'worst practice' cartoons and is aimed at creating dialogue and discussion so that these ABC issues can be brought out into the open. Once they are brought out into the open and recognized action can be taken to address them. *So long as ABC issues remain hidden and so long as we avoid to talk about them or discuss them, they will remain a danger, A danger that may turn into resistance and undesirable behaviour that threatens YOUR business.* **Undesirable behaviour that will prevent your organization from achieving success, and as a result pose a risk to the business.** The cards can be used with a range of separate exercises for various stakeholder groups. There is a separate publication the ABC of ICT™ Exercise workbook which contains a number of exercises as well as work sheets and facilitation tips.

What can you do with the cards?

- You can use them within traditional ITIL/ITSM awareness or training sessions to help **identify issues** that need resolving by ITIL/ITSM frameworks, or **identify issues** that need resolving if these types of frameworks are to work!.

- You can use them in team meetings for **self reflection and assessment**, ask a team of IT people," If we gave these cards to a User which ones would they choose and say 'this represents our IT organization'".

- You can use these as a real **survey**, give them to YOUR Users and Customers and ask them to choose worst practices that apply to YOUR IT department.

- You can use them to **confront people**. Select cards appropriate to your organization and put them on the table when people display a certain worst practice behavior. You can then discuss why this card was put on the table.

- You can give them away as gifts to all IT staff to **create awareness**, at the start of an improvement program, or to use themselves.

- You can put cartoons on your web-site to raise awareness of issues, and have people vote on the applicability of a worst practice to YOUR organization, and leave quotes & comments. This helps you **capture input** for improvement programs.

Examples use: Awareness and assessment

The ABC of ICT cards can be used with all levels of IT and Business staff involved in IT. The cards have been used with IT operational staff, CIO teams and even with Business users and Business managers. This is a case with senior IT staff.

This was the theme of the Business & IT Masterclass held in the Netherlands. The Masterclass is part of a series of sessions organized by the BITA center aimed at Senior IT professionals and IT managers. During this session we held an ABC of ICT™ round table using the ABC of ICT™ cards as an assessment instrument.

In line with the theme of the Masterclass the focus of the ABC workshop was 'How business savvy are we really'? Do we know what ABC worst practices the business experiences? and Do we know what the business impact really is of our poor IT capabilities? We hoped with the workshop also to give an answer to the question 'who needs to takes the initiative?'

Six teams performed an exercise using the ABC cards. They were asked to demonstrate their 'Business savvy' by picking the worst practice cards they thought THEIR Users would choose if asked. The top recognized worst practices during the workshop were:

ABC worst practice	
IT has too little understanding of business impact and priority	6
Too little business involvement in requirements specification and testing	6
Throwing (ITIL) solutions over the wall and HOPING people will accept them	5
Everything has the highest priority according to the business	4
Maybe we should have tested that change first	4
9 to 5 culture	4

The teams were also asked to demonstrate their 'Business savvy' by identifying the business impact of these worst practices. The impact of all these worst practices was seen as:

Business impact	
Lost business opportunities	4
Poor IT investment decisions	4
Lost revenue	3
Damaged business reputation	3
Higher operating costs	2
Failure to comply with regulations	2
Decreased staff productivity	1
IT impact	
Solutions don't meet business needs	5
Dissatisfied customers	4
Threats to business continuity	4
Unreliable service quality	2
Higher costs	1
Increased downtime	1
Delays in deploying Solutions	1

Judging by these results Business & IT alignment is still a problem for most IT organizations. If these ABC issues are not addressed then Business & IT integration or Fusion is a long way off.
We in IT will need to take the initiative and gain the trust of the business and prove that we can solve these issues to gain the credibility of being a partner capable of Business & IT integration or Fusion.
Until we can gain that trust and demonstrate our credibility gaining a place on the board will have a difficult proposition to sell.

A recent Forrester report also confirmed that 80% of organizations do not have business and IT alignment under control and indeed IT is poor at demonstrating and realizing value.

The conclusions of this ABC workshop were :
- ABC worst practices exist in all organizations.
- These worst practices have a high impact on the business, *we assume*, although we do not really know and have not generally verified this with the business. This answers the question who needs to take the initiative*? IT must identify the impact on the business of poor IT management capabilities.*
- If the impact we have assumed is accurate then it is an unacceptable business risk, which therefore can no longer be ignored. *IT must take its responsibility for signaling and managing this business risk.*
- Currently there is no personal responsibility or accountability for addressing these issues in most of the organizations. This confirms that these issues are often hidden and unseen and therefore nobody is assigned accountability for resolving what is an unacceptable business risk.

Following the ABC workshop Peter Hinssen conducted a video conference with the delegates. Peter had not seen the ABC workshop or results. He answered questions about his latest book Business – IT fusion. In response to the question 'what should people take away from your book and apply directly' Peter confirmed the main issue to be the 'people' issue. Addressing skills and competences and behavior and culture. The second thing was the recommendation for IT to take the initiative before it is too late. These findings confirmed the results and conclusions of the ABC workshop

We also asked **Jerry Luftman, Executive Director & Distinguished Professor at the Stevens Institute of Technology**, another guru in business and IT alignment for his view on ABC in relation to business and IT alignment.
"ABC is fundamental to Business –IT alignment. It begins with the right mindset or attitude: it is not about aligning IT TO the Business or aligning WITH the business; it is about aligning IT AND the business.
Alignment is about ensuring the right behaviors and mechanisms are shared and adopted for effective communications, value demonstration, governance. partnership, technology scope, and skills/HR. It is a culture that recognizes the need for a continuous process of harmony, not a one-time exercise. It is a relationship based upon a mutual understanding, mutual respect, and a shared vision on the future of the business and how IT enables and drives that future."

Example use: On-line survey

ITSMF survey

The itSMF in the Netherlands posted worst practice cartoons and statements on their website and asked people to vote and give feedback. Initially they were reluctant to post the first statement, the reason being 'We have been using ITIL for more than 15 years in the Netherlands, IT organizations have operational support processes under control'. The results were an eye-opener to the itSMF and were worse than we suspected.

Statement 1 Result: **89%** agreed	'We are not Customer focused enough in IT'.
Statement 2 Result: **86%** agreed	'We are poor at sharing and reusing knowledge in IT'.
Statement 3 Result: **94%** agreed	'Current ITIL training and certification does not adequately address ABC issues'.

The results were used to start Forum discussions. When the cards are used this way 'in-house' on Intranets the surveys help you to identify training needs, and issues that need solving in your organization. This allows you to capture input for a Continual Service Improvement (CSI) initiative or Service Improvement Initiative (SIP) and focus your marketing and communication on explaining how a CSI or SIP will address and resolve these issues.

We have now used the cards in workshops at more than 30 international itSMF events to capture a global picture of the most common ABC worst practices. The shocking results of this international survey can be found in Appendix A.

Example use: Changing attitude.

The following is a short example of how the card exercises helped to change the attitude and behavior of a group of managers. We chose this example as it relates to one of the top three globally recognized worst practices in the ABC of ICT™ card set.

We started the session by having people put the 2 of Clubs on the table:
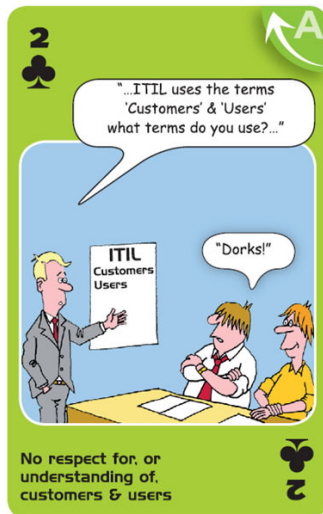
People then voted on the statement: "We are not customer focused enough in IT."

- In the itSMF website vote **89%** agreed with the statement and gave examples of behavior that needed changing, many of them directly related to the ABC cards.
- At the itSMF best practice conference **86%** agreed.
- The itSMF Academy workshop scored considerably lower. Only **75%** agreed with the statement.

Walking around the teams to get a feel of their 'attitude', this is what we saw and experienced:

- At one table there was 'irritation', and the 'crossed-arm', 'head shaking' negative body language, implying that it was a mistake attending this session.
- "So you obviously don't agree?" we asked.
- "Now…yeah. Listen, **of course we are customer focused! We are IT managers at this table and we talk to customers all the time.** If you talk about the support teams and the techies then you are right….what do you want us to vote? Of course we can make your figures look high!?"
- "Vote as you perceive it", we said. "The idea is to recognize worst practices that need fixing…..you obviously don't have any…….**as managers.**"
- Their attitude was WE don't need to change. WE have no worst practice BEHAVIOR.
- As part of the next task we put the 'User' card on the table. The task was:

"Imagine the end-users or customers are sitting here at the table and we give them the pack of worst practice cards. We then ask them to select three cards that apply to your organization; which cards would they choose?"

Each participant chose three cards.

The aim of this task was to force them to think from a different perspective, try to take time out from the daily operation to think from the perspective of another stakeholder. The stakeholder that we provide IT services for, in fact!
The next task was to discuss all the cards chosen and select, as a team, the top three. *The interesting aspect now was how to choose a team top three.* Should we choose the cards that were chosen the most? We told them to choose using the following criteria, related to ITIL V3 Service Strategy: Value, Outcomes, Cost and Risk.

"Look at each card and discuss the consequences to the business. Think in terms of wasted money, lost revenue, delayed projects, down-time and non-availability of critical systems, solutions that fail to deliver business value". This created a range of new discussions and new insights.

The teams were finally finished. We asked them all, including the team of 'customer focused' managers to present their findings. We call this team the A-Team for obvious reasons, heroic champions capable of aligning business and IT single-handedly.
These were the results:

The A-team (as well as three other teams) chose the card the Queen of Clubs 'No understanding of business impact and priority' as the top recognized worst practice.

- Example behavior was:
  - the business won't invite us to discuss business needs, we are too late in the process;
  - we try to tell the business but they won't listen;
  - we allocate resources and start a project portfolio and then find they are no longer important;
  - we have business users declaring that the solutions don't meet their needs.
- Example consequences were:
  - failure to solve 'real' business problems;
  - delays in business projects;
  - lost business opportunities and business revenue;
  - not enough testing, causing downtime and additional changes;
  - unpredictable services and project performance;
  - increased costs;
  - business dissatisfaction
  - IT frustration.

We then asked the team "Is this an acceptable business risk?" The answer was "NO!"

Now the 64 million dollar question. "Now that you recognize that this is what you, as an IT organization, do and that it is an unacceptable business risk, IS THERE ANYBODY ACCOUNTABLE IN YOUR (IT) ORGANIZATION FOR RESOLVING THIS?".........

There was a moment of silence…. "No"

"So let me just summarize then, to see if I understand. YOU IT managers are customer focused enough…..however, you accept that your current behavior causes unacceptable business risks? And you also accept that you don't need to do anything to ensure that this business issue is resolved….is this an example of being customer focused enough?"

The vote was now 100% at the A-Team. "We are not customer focused enough." "So what are you going to do now?" we asked. **"We are going to perform this exercise in our organization…..more people need to be confronted with the consequences of our attitude and behavior**"

Available Exercises

How can you now get a set of cards and use them in your organization? ABC@Work has developed a set of exercises that you can do with the cards. We have documented a number of these in an exercise workbook published by van Haren. There are five key exercises in the book.

The are five main exercises in this handbook. These exercises focus on:

- '**Customer & User focused**' .
  What is the Customer or User perception of our ABC worst practices? What impact and consequences do these have? Are these worst practices an acceptable business risk? Is anybody currently 'Responsible' and 'Accountable'for resolving these worst practices?
  This exercise has been added to the exercise book as global results show that a common worst practice is 'IT is too internally focused'.

- '**Value**'.
  Do we KNOW what value we should be delivering? Does everybody have a shared understanding of that value? Are we currently demonstrating that value?

- '**Resistance**'.
  What type of resistance will we (or do we) see and experience if we try to apply ITSM best practices? This exercise has been chosen as more than 50% of ITIL initiatives that fail do so because of 'resistance'.

- '**Training & competence needs**'.
  Will the current ITIL training and certification help us address the ABC worst practices we identify in OUR organizations? What training do we need? How do we ensure our partners

have the right skills and competences for addressing ABC issues?

- **'Leadership & commitment'**.
  Is there real commitment to making change happen and leadership to ensure that it does?

We have also published an ABC of ICT™ book which contains, case studies of worst practices and practical advice from industry experts to help you solve them. The book will also describe examples of behavior and what to look for to help you understand how to use the cards and what type of questions to ask.

These cards enable you to:

- identify, recognize and agree whether these worst practices apply to your organization;
- look at worst practices from the perspectives of different stakeholders (e.g 'Users'- which cards would Users choose to describe your organization);
- identify how stakeholders are impacted by a worst practice and identify which stakeholders display which type of worst practices;
- enable teams, possibly comprised of various stakeholders, to get together to discuss the worst practices;
- discuss and agree the consequences and risks of these worst practices;
- recognize and create 'buy-in' to the 'need' to find a solution to resolve them;
- identify stakeholders that need to be involved in solving the worst practices;
- discuss and agree possible solutions to resolve the worst practices;
- provide input to 'Continual Service Improvement' initiatives.

They are a powerful learning instrument and a powerful change enabling instrument when used in this way.

What do people say about the ABC of ICT cards

Maarten Bordewijk, Getronics-PinkRoccade, senior ITIL trainer, Netherlands.
"Any IT Service Management initiative that doesn't address ABC is bound for failure. Any educational institute wanting to give people the capabilities and knowledge for successfully deploying ITIL should use the ABC cards to support the necessary discussion in training modules leading up to formal certification."

Alejandro Debenedet, EXIN, Netherlands
"The ABC card exercise was a lot of fun, and put people immediately to work, brainstorming on the worst practices and their consequences, aided by the easily recognizable cartoons. It was interesting to see how people from different backgrounds could quickly interact and agree on how the situations apply to daily life and how they need to be approached."

Peter Lijnse, Director Service Management Art, Canada
"This card game is a valuable instrument for training and consulting companies like Service Management art. Because it is easier to point out worse practices. I use some of the cards in training or consulting sessions. The moment I see the behavior I take out the card and put it on the table, so we can have a discussion around it. It is much more powerful than addressing it verbally".

ABC of ICT™ Fundamentals training

The first step in dealing with ABC of ICT™ is understanding more about what it is, and then identifying worst practices that exist in your organization. That is what the Fundamentals training is all about. In the training two exercises using the ABC cards are performed, delegates will examine and discuss resistance and gain insight into the experience and tips of experts taken from the more than 35 cases in the ABC of ICT™ – An Introduction book. In this training you will identify some first steps you can take for making ABC and its impact visible and starting a dialogue in your organization.

The ABC of ICT fundamentals was developed by ABC@Work. The course syllabus as well as a set of certification questions will be made available to EXIN and other organizations so that accredited

trainers and training organizations can develop their own fundamentals training courseware in line with the syllabus. A factsheet describing the fundamentals can be found on the ABC@Work website.

What do delegates say about the Fundamentals training?

Head of Application Lifecycle management, large Financial institution: *'....the exercise on Customer and User focus MUST be added to all ITIL training, particularly for the operational staff. The exercise created the awareness of the customers and what they need, helping to create a change in attitude. That is what it is all about.'*

Management of Change expert: '*This makes organizational change, a subject that is worrying many IT people, concrete and practical, the humor ensures it is something they can understand, relate to and use in a practical way.'*

Head of business relationship management: '*This really made us think. It revealed some hidden gaps in what we thought we knew, but are only assuming. I'm going to go back and do these exercises with the business.'*

Head of ICT support: *'The ABC training was an inspiration. A delightful and practical instrument for managing change. We can use this. I'm going to use this with our teams.'*

IT operational manager: *'We were only allowed to choose 3 cards in the exercise, I identified at least 30 that we need to resolve in our organization. The thing is we all picked the same cards but we never talk about these issues in our team meetings'.*

Team leader: *'Many eye openers about how I currently do things. Am I on the right track? Am I focusing enough on gaining commitment and buy-in? and am I on the right path?'*

Business department manager: IT User - *'This made us realize we don't talk enough with IT about impact and priority, the cartoon cards were a great way of getting us (IT and the business) to open up and discuss them in a constructive way instead of finger wagging and blame. I was dreading coming to this IT meeting thinking it would end in arguments. In one hour we raised and agreed upon a number of issues and follow up discussions.'*

ABC in Action – Working on ABC in Business Simulations

ABC in Action is the name of an interactive session, making use of a business simulation to identify, confront and deal with specific ABC issues. ABC@Work makes use of a range of business simulations from GamingWorks. Simulations are experiential learning instruments based on 'Learning by doing'. Research shows that experiential learning is the most effective form of learning. Business simulations are ideal ways of confronting people with their own attitude and behavior within a safe environment. They provide a safe way of testing new behavior, and doing so in the context of your work (e.g. ITSM); so it is much easier to transfer the lessons learned back into the working environment.

 An ABC in Action simulation will answers questions such as:
 "How can we confront people with their current Attitude and Behavior and create a need to change?"
"How can we effectively deal with the ABC worst practices that prevent us from realizing the value offered by these frameworks?"
"How can we create buy-in and overcome resistance?"
"How can we empower and enable people to deal with ABC issues themselves?"
"How can we raise awareness about ABC and create a positive change in people's Attitude & Behavior?"
"What can we take away from the learning experience and apply in our own organization?"

Case 1: Overcoming resistance

A Forrester report revealed that the key reason for ITIL implementations struggling is 'resistance to change' (52%). The need to get buy-in is a crucial success factor. In business simulations resistance occurs in similar ways as it does in real life. The advantage of a simulation is that the facilitator can deal with it as it happens so that it can be discussed openly. More importantly, participants experience how to deal with it among themselves, as a team. Often resistance is a result of not seeing the need or the benefits of change or a fear of change and what it may mean. In a simulation people get to see, feel and experience the benefits of new ways of working on both their own work and on the business. In this transcript of an ABC in Action – Apollo b13 is an example of how this works.

An IT manager hired us to support his ITSM improvement program. He selected the 'ITIL Never work here' card in order to explain what he was dealing with. "This is what we see" he said. "Many people have bought in to ITIL, but a hardcore of people, who are influential, still openly moan and criticize. They are influencing others and creating a negative feeling.

We started an Apollo 13 simulation with this group of the most strong 'resisters'. "These people will not accept it…", "these people will work against you" we were warned and told to expect a session of 'no hopers'.

We did an introductory round. "What do you expect from this training?"

"....I expect this will be a waste of time!"
"... I could be doing something more useful"
"... I do not believe in this process stuff..."

When asked to clarify, it came down to 'too much unnecessary registration and bureaucracy that nobody needs…'

"We don't have the time to explain or hand-over…."
"It will just give me MORE work and more people telling us what to do…"

It was clear this resistance was related to time pressures, workload and not believing that processes could help in any way.

We played Apollo. The initial round was a disaster. There was stress, frustration, anger and a general belief of "see, we told you that processes were a waste of time." The sponsor for the workshop was getting worried. We had made the resistors even angrier and they had even more reason to believe they were right.

The interventions in the game, thought up by the resistors themselves, were:

- get rid of the annoying repeat work that was wasting their time;
- agree a priority mechanism to help everybody decide what work should be done first;
- agree an escalation mechanism so that somebody else could make a call on priority when there was a conflict about what to do next;
- agree to give each other the right information to enable everyone to do what they need to do;
- agree to give each other feedback when things are not working as agreed.

We tested their new procedures, process design and agreements. The next round went much smoother. They achieved their goals and targets. We asked them "How does it feel?"

"Smoother, easier, less stress, more time to pick up the difficult projects, more ability to plan."
"How come?" we asked.

They concluded that it was because they had agreed their own procedures, they had all done what they had agreed and promised, they had handed over some of the workload to other people. They had, in fact, done all of the things they were being asked to do but now they were able to experience the difference this made to their own tasks.

We reflected back on what had happened and how we had listened to their underlying concerns, and we tried to show them how these could be solved by doing the very thing they were resisting.

The reflection comments were:

"...I didn't realize it could make our lives easier.."
"...this stuff can work, I must admit I am surprised. I will tell my team we need to get involved and make sure the process design project involves us so we can ensure the right things are done..."

Case 2: Empowering people to change

An international financial institution based in the Netherlands needed to improve the performance of the IT service delivery organization (250 employees). With a growth in the number of services and customers, critical use of IT within the business had risen. The business demanded higher performance on quality, reliability, availability and continuity. And with frequent adoption of new technologies, there was a need to provide flexibility and stability at the same time.

Although the organisation had been trying to improve the Service Management organisation for some years using ITIL processes, performance was insufficient to meet these business demands. The most stressing issues were:
- No real 'ownership' of processes; not enough wide spread 'buy-in' or 'adoption' to process working (at all levels). People did not follow procedures, there was resistance, people did not see the value, the managers were not committed to making processes work.
- No measurable, demonstrable results using processes.
- Inconsistent quality in the delivery of services.
- Process working is very much a top-down initiative.
- And all of this let to frustration on both the business and the IT side.

Conclusions:
The conclusion was that process based working did not support the business drivers. The current ways of working were an unacceptable risk to the business, and the way in which change was being managed had a high risk of failure.

Solution approach:
The customer agreed to the follow key success factors in finding a solution.

- People needed to be confronted with their current attitude, beliefs and behavior and be confronted with the need to change.
- People needed to see and feel the benefits that process based working could give to them and to the business, and must want to adopt process working.
- People needed to recognize what the new DNA (behavior profile) was and what it would mean to them and the organization as a whole.
- People also needed to be actively involved in changing their own ways of working.
  So far the initiatives had been very much top-down.
- People (managers) also had to show commitment to the new ways of working.

The customer did not want to hire in external consultants for lengthy expensive engagements. There was a desire to empower and enable the people to improve themselves. It was decided to use the business simulation Apollo 13. The simulation would focus on the following learning objectives:

- **Process based working and** the impact on performance (good and bad)
- **Supply chain focused** working; recognize and manage the whole chain, give feedback and address undesirable behavior with everybody in the chain.
- **Customer focused** working, what does this mean?
- **Working together to realize results;** using clearly defined tasks, roles and responsibilities and addressing each other on the agreed roles and responsibilities.
- **Personal ownership and accountability;** making the change happen, feeling empowered to change their own work.
- **Team work** work together more effectively, improve communication within and between teams, improve giving feedback to each other.

ABC@Work facilitated ABC in Action - Apollo sessions in which the participants were confronted with their current attitude and behavior and challenged to develop, test and apply new behavior in line with the learning objectives. For example, at the start of the session each participant was asked: "You have given up a day of your valuable time to be here. One of the desired new behavior items is **Personal ownership and accountability**. What Result do you want to see achieved in this training? What is YOUR personal learning objective for today?"

Individual learning objectives were recorded and reflected on throughout the sessions as well as the overall learning objectives for the program, for example:

- how the team had learnt as a 'team' to improve;
- how the team learnt to actively engage with and involve the Customer;
- the impact of people not taking ownership of their roles and responsibilities

The end of the sessions would be used to capture improvement suggestions to be transferred into the *working environment. Team leaders and employees would capture, prioritize and agree improvements* to be implemented into the live operations.

The responses to these ABC in Action - Apollo sessions were very enthusiastic. Besides having had a great day, participants said that they learned a lot about how to be successful in Service Management. To give insight in the 'Return on Value' from their training investment, we measured with the participants how the key learning objectives such as 'Customer focused' and 'Team working' contributed to success in the simulated environment. See the results in the graph below.

'X' program	How we currently perform (In own Organization)	Success criteria in Apollo 13	How important this is for our future	Difference between now and required
Process based working	3,29	3,84	4,17	0,85
Supply chain focus	3,01	3,36	4,15	1,14
Customer focused	3,63	3,73	4,40	0,77
Clear Tasks, Roles and Responsibilities	3,15	3,76	4,24	1,09
Personal responsibility and accountability	3,65	3,60	4,15	0,50
Team working	3,53	3,89	4,21	0,68

1 = poor
5 = good
Based on these results, improvement suggestions were captured to used as input to the overall improvement program.

More than 250 improvement suggestions were captured. These were categorized and prioritized and were embedded into team and personal action plans and targets.

Result: working together on improving results

Three months after finishing this ABC-approach, ABC@Work received a phone call from the IT Director that shows the effect of our approach.

"I wish to register a complaint" he said, sounding quite cheerful.
We wondered what it could possibly be, the evaluations were all positive.
"What is it?" we asked a little concerned.
"I cannot book a meeting room any more, they are always full!" he said. "
"We don't understand?" we replied. "What has that got to do with us?".
"All the meeting rooms are booked for 30 minutes, the entries in the planner all say 'Apollo'. The rooms are booked by 3 or 4 people from different departments who never used to talk to each other. They get together to analyze a bottleneck and make improvement agreements…

"It is unbelievable" he went on to say. "We have been trying to get people to improve their work for years, we have tried quality approaches and process frameworks….you play a GAME with them all and after 1 day they all become change agents!!!".

It wasn't a real complaint he said. It was a luxury problem. "However" he went on to add "I am now put in a difficult position. I now understand what management commitment means, I now get all these teams coming up to me with a mass of improvement requests, I do not have the budget or resources to solve them all so some teams become disappointed. We are now a victim of our own success, but better this than the way it used to be."

Appendix A: Shocking global results of ABC of ICT™ Workshops

In this Appendix we will publish the findings of our ABC round table surveys. These are results of more than 30 international roundtable workshops, using the ABC of ICT™ card set. These findings finally explain why it is that ITSM improvement initiatives fail to realize hoped for results and why it is the business is still not satisfied with our performance as IT organizations. **The results of the surveys will help give you insight into what YOU need to do to ensure your ITSM initiatives are successful**.

The following figure shows top 10 worst practices chosen from these workshops. These are the results of sessions held in Canada, Belgium, Denmark, England, Finland, Germany the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Singapore, Switzerland, Poland, USA. These results represent the finding of more than 1200 workshop delegates.
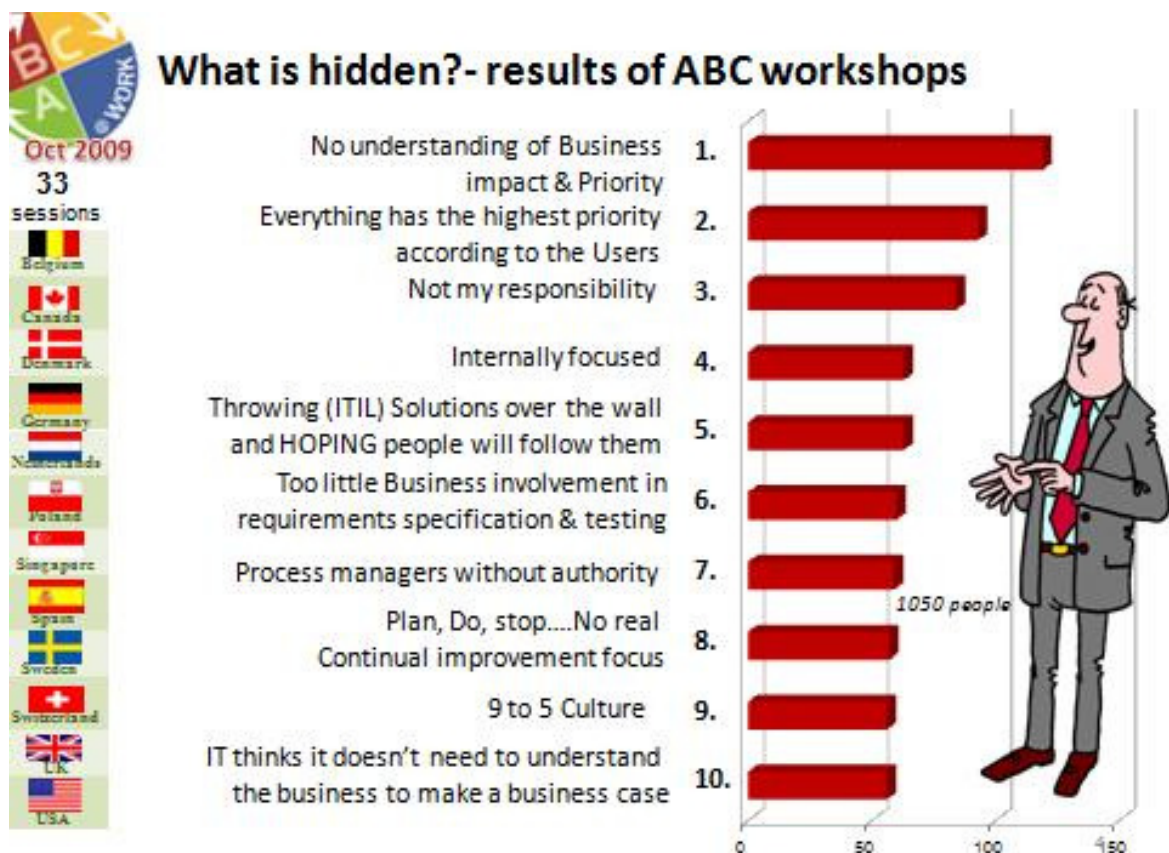
What do these results tell us? If we break ITSM improvement initiatives into 2 distinct questions "Why are we doing it" and "How do we improve". We see the following emerge.

"Why are we doing IT?"

The top chosen card is 'IT has too little understanding of Business impact and priority'. If this is so then what are all these ITIL improvement programs supposed to be realizing?!! 'Everything has the highest priority according to the users' scores number 2. Is this any surprise if we are 'internally focused' and 'do not understand business impact and priority'. To summarize. *It would appear that all of these ITSM improvement initiatives have too little relationship to business needs.* This is also confirmed by the number 10 in the list 'IT thinks it doesn' t need to understand the business to make a business case'.

"How do we improve?"

If we then look at how we deploy ITSM the results are equally shocking. 'Throwing solutions over the wall and hoping people will accept them!" is the top worst practice associated with ITSM improvement programs. 'Process managers without authority' and an approach of 'Plan, Do, Stop....No real Continual improvement focus". Is it any wonder that a Forrestor report revealed the top reason for failing ITSM improvement initiatives is 52% - resistance to change.

Why do these worst practices persist? Look at number 3 in the list 'Not my responsibility", nobody seems to feel the ownership and responsibility for breaking down these ABC barriers. Until this happens I am sure we will be back in ten years time giving the same ABC presentations.

Should we worry?

Let's go back to the question :"Why are we doing all these ITIL improvements?"

ITIL V3 definition of a Service: '*A Service is a means of delivering Value to the business in terms of outcomes they want to achieve without the ownership of specific costs and risks*.'

We asked participants in the workshops to discuss and agree the impact of these worst practices. "What is the negative impact on business value? What outcomes are we failing to achieve? What wasted costs do we cause for the business? And what risks do these worst practices pose?

These are the overall results captured so far.
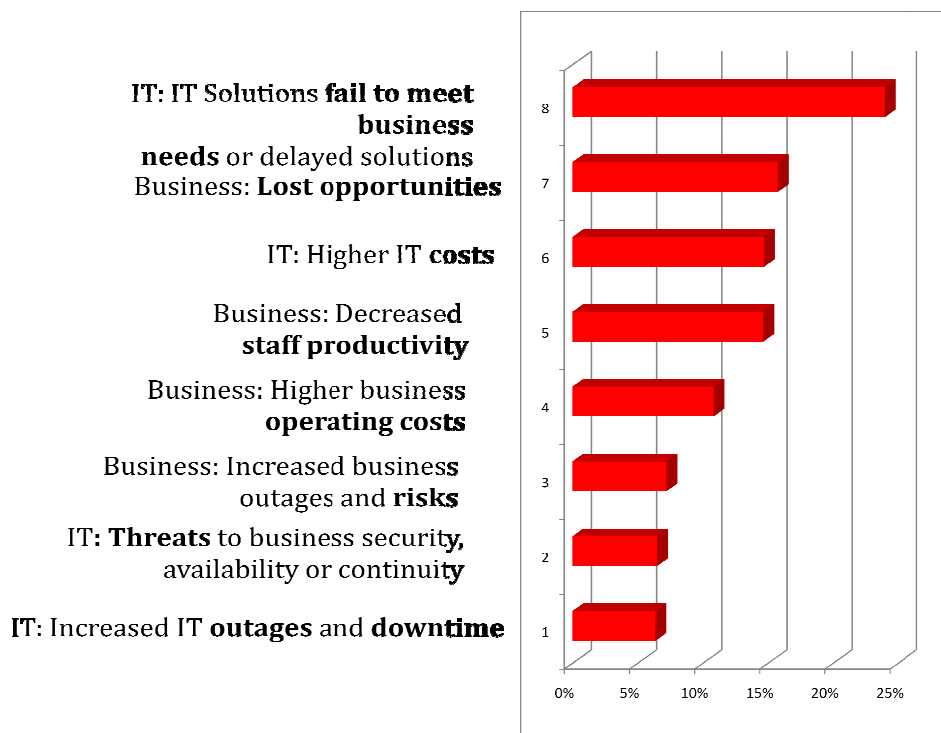
As can be seen these worst practices cause wasted costs, risks and prevent the business realizing the value and the desired outcomes they need. If this isn't a 'sense of urgency' for addressing ABC then we don't know what is!. The question is, *will the people reading this article feel responsible for doing something about what they have just read*? Or will they say it is not my responsibility and blame somebody else?

Back ground

The ABC of ICT™ is explained, along with case studies and advice on how to solve them in the book ABC of ICT™ – An introduction. Many of the ITIL authors as well as other industry recognized leaders provided cases, as well as practical advice, in this book. If you want to see a summary of what the experts suggest for solving these then see the article 'what the experts say' on the GamingWorks website. The book is accompanied by the ABC of ICT ™card set and an exercise book that explains how to perform exercises using the cards. EXIN, together with ABC@Work the developers of the ABC of ICT™ material are developing an accreditation program for the ABC of ICT™. There is an 'ABC of ICT™ Fundamentals'1 day training course in which delegates can also learn how to use the ABC cards in their organizations and how to take initial steps for making ABC visible in their organization and how to create a dialogue for solving them.

A number of members of the itSMF USA board participated in a small Train-The-Trainer session to learn how to use the ABC card set and to determine if ABC of ICT™ had any Value for itSMF members. Their conclusions were: 'This is exactly what is needed.....", "...our members need to understand this is what it is all about". The board members are hoping to roll the workshops out across the LIG communities.

Appendix B: Top 10 types of resistance

As IT becomes increasingly important to business operations more and more IT organizations are turning to ITIL and such ITSM frameworks to bring IT under control and provide services that deliver business value. ITIL V3 sums up perfectly what we in IT need to deliver "**Value to customers in terms of outcomes they want to achieve without the ownership of specific costs and risks**." Unfortunately MANY ITSM improvement programs fail, causing wasted costs and increased business risks. Many fail because of resistance to change. If we are to finally remove these wasted costs and risks and deliver real value with the frameworks it is important we identify these types of resistance so that we can learn to address them.

We have surveyed 60 ITIL practitioners who have together been involved in literally 100's of ITSM improvement projects to identify the top types of resistance. We used the ABC of ICT™ Card set and asked the practitioners to choose the top 3 types of resistance they most often encounter.

This article identifies the overall Top 10 types of resistance chosen.

We will be conducting a survey of more than 1000 international IT practitioners and users of ITIL to gain a more detailed and accurate set of findings. These will be shared with the whole ITSM community. Hopefully the training companies and consulting companies will translate the findings into solutions so that we can manage the costs and risks and finally start delivering value.

The Top 10....

- **Saying 'Yes', but meaning 'No'**
  People promise to deliver new procedures or designs and fail to do so, other work is more important. Or in live operation people say they will follow a procedure or update a tool but don't.....

- **No management commitment**
  Managers giving 'lip' service to the importance of ITIL, or managers not 'Walking the talk'. Managers who don't address the issues of 'Saying **Yes**, but meaning **No**'.

- **Business managers: Demand and Give. We demand and you give in**
  We are unable to engage the business and convince them of the need for ITIL and how it is vital for delivering value. We are unable to convince them that if they do not work with IT in prioritizing initiatives, or becoming more involved in requirements specification, testing and acceptance, we cannot guarantee their needs for managing costs and risks. A Forrester report also revealed that the second largest reason for failure is lack of business buy-in and engagement.

- **Plan, Do,Stop......No continual improvement focus**
  Too often ITIL projects are simply that! projects. The results are not embedded into a continual improvement cycle to ensure as business needs change or new IT solutions are deployed that ITSM remains aligned and that processes continue to deliver value and protect against escalating costs and risks.

- **Not my responsibility**
  One of the reasons we keep presenting our ABC worst practices every 10 years! too little responsibility for making change happen. Very often RACI models become paper exercises. The single most significant success factor identified by more than 1000 students having played Apollo 13 was 'the need for clearly defined and owned tasks, roles and responsibilities'.

- **Throwing (ITIL) solutions over the wall and HOPING that people will follow them**
  Despite the more than 15 years of ITIL, the training and certification offerings and the annual itSMF conferences with the 100's of presentations and cases we still do not know how to adopt and apply ITIL. We still fail to engage and involve people in designing their own processes and procedures. We still think we can 'Implement' or 'Install' ITIL. In the ABC of ICT™ - An Introduction industry experts shared their tips and approaches. These have been summarized in our article 'What the experts say' to help people identify how to successfully adopt and apply ITIL.......The question is does anybody feel responsible for reading them and doing something with them.....or will most people adopt the number 5 resistance characteristic

'Not my responsibility'.

- **ITIL is the objective not what it should achieve**
  We still do not fully understand the Value and outcomes we need to achieve using ITIL. ITIL becomes the goal itself. This supports the facts that 70% of ITIL initiatives are still unable to measure or demonstrate value. Another survey using the ABC cards to identify the top ABC within IT organizations reveals number 1 'IT has too little understanding of business impact and priority'.

- **Everything has the highest priority according to the users**
  Is it any wonder! If we have spent more than 15 years 'playing with ITIL' and most companies do not understand business impact and priority or the value they expect to deliver to the business using ITIL.

- **The ITIL Consultant: A process flow and some procedures are all you need**
  This coupled with 'ITIL is the objective and not what it should achieve' as well as 'Throwing (ITIL) solutions over the wall and HOPING people will follow them' signify a real need for additional training and certification as part of the formal ITIL training offerings on how to adopt and apply ITIL (I deliberatly avoid the word IMPLEMENT!!).

- **Maybe we should have tested that change first**
  In terms of ITIL, this also reflects the throwing it over the wall before we have gained buy-in and commitment for the solutions developed.

These to me are shocking findings considering the hundreds of thousands of ITIL certificates in the world.

Who has successfully overcome these types of resistance? tell us what YOU did to overcome these so that we can share them with the community. If you are just embarking on your ITSM improvement program be aware of these. Ensure YOUR consulting or training provider explains how they will help address these types of resistance.

If you are a training company use these and reference them in your training and help people recognize them and overcome them.

Appendix C: What the experts say. Best practice tips and advice for solving ABC issues.

This appendix contains a summary of the key success factors compiled from an analysis of the more than 35 cases contained in the ABC of ICT™ - An Introduction book. These are what the experts do to ensure success when adopting and deploying ITSM best practices. The are interventions aimed at changing attitude and behavior. Interventions aimed at creating buy-in, commitment and overcoming resistance. Following these success factors can help reduce the unacceptable business risk of improvement initiatives failing.

The Cases and examples in the book were provided by industry experts and practitioners, including ITIL V2 and V3 authors, Sharon Taylor (Chief ITIL examiner), Richard Pharro (APMG), Alejandro Debenedet (EXIN). The case studies provided by the contributors represented their experience based upon literally hundreds of practical examples they encounter in their daily lives.

Each of the cases was focused on describing a real life example of one of the ABC of ICT™ worst practice cards AND an example of what was done to overcome the worst practice in order to successfully apply ITSM best practices.

We have analyzed all of the cases and identified common approaches and success factors. These findings can help ensure your ITSM improvement program successfully deal with the ABC issues that may prevent your organization from realizing value and success using ITSM best practices such as ITIL.

Success factor	Number of times
Involvement of all functions in design. Involve development and operations. Face-to-face meetings, workshops, simulations to stimulate discussion and involvement and address resistance.	8
Spend time with the customer, learn how they use your services, spend time with the business, listen instead of speaking, communication is more than talking or 'sending', Engage with the business, moaning won't help, take ownership and control and seek ways to actively identify business needs and ways to improve business and IT working and trust. Joint sessions and discussions change attitude (reviews, designs, simulations, workshops)	7
Understand business needs first before making a proposal, agree priorities at all levels (incidents, changes, projects) with business. Look from customer, user and business perspective. Consider hiring people from business to bring business perspective, moving business analysts into IT.	6
All in IT must know what value is and how their tasks contribute toward this. People must know what 'success' is and how it can be measured and demonstrated.	6
Look beyond certification. Look for a demonstration of capabilities when selecting or hiring ITIL capabilities. Selection based upon evidence. Defining roles and skills needed, look for skills in managing change.	6
Executive commitment, Business & IT, without commitment culture change will fail, commitment is needed to succeed.	5
Communicate and market IT and what it can do for the business, Marketing and learning to speak in user and customer language, communicate outcomes and results not 'ITIL', Communicate business priorities, business goals.	5
Using facts and figures to create business buy-in. Use impact, consequences, risks, facts and figures to change attitude.	4
A holistic approach, consciously addressing people, process and technology when applying ITIL.	4
Improving is a continual and gradual maturing, need to walk before you can run, being aware that it takes time and effort and is a journey.	4
Treat the company money as if it is your own. The business pays the salary, business needs drive decisions, need to consider impacts of decisions and behavior on business impact.	4

Manage every project in line with enterprise bottom line, understand business implications of a project, Look at, and start project from a business perspective, with business involvement, Business & IT involvement in decision making and projects	4
Confronting people with consequences of behavior on business and own team/department ,self assessment and confrontation.	3

Observations

All experienced attitude issues that were impacting behavior and the willingness to change behavior. Involvement and cross functional meetings, face-to-face, changed attitude the most and leads to buy-in, acceptance and eventual behavior change. Involvement and discussions and joint sessions will bring resistance to the surface.
Business goals, impact, consequences are a necessary element in helping change attitude. Pain and needs are more common than wants and desires for the future – creating a sense of urgency as opposed to painting a vision for the future.
Producing Procedures and documentation is an iterative, involved process that goes through a barrier of resistance.
A Holistic approach of consciously aligning and integrating People, Process and technology increases the chance of success. Failures and frustration were often attributed to cases when a holistic approach was not consciously adopted from the beginning.
Successful initiatives involve marketing and communication in user and customer terms. Communicating in business language to both IT and the business. Communication at all levels. Communication with executive involvement and commitment.
Getting people to look from different perspectives, involving and discussing from different perspectives, learning what others do and how your work impacts them helps change attitude. "I didn't realize" is a common statement following these types of interventions.
Training should also have a component for gaining buy-in, showing benefits, making the link to own situation and pain. Simulations are seen as a powerful mechanism.
Resistance is a fact of ITSM improvement and change and it must be consciously dealt with.
Successful companies spend more time, effort and energy on the 'people' side. Winning hearts and minds, empowering, enabling, rewarding.
Look beyond certification. Ensure skills for managing organizational change are developed or insourced. Look for a demonstrated ability to manage change and the people issues when hiring in.