Demystifying ITIL / ITSM Training - Part One

By Rick Lemieux

The days of hanging out a simple "IT Service Management Training" shingle in front of a training center are long gone. Today, training providers and their customers operate in an amazing world of course and delivery formats.

Much has been written (some good, some bad and some ugly) about the current state of the ITIL/ITSM Version 3 training market. Outside of the politics (which I will leave up to other industry pundits to write about), not much has been written about the process you or your organization should go through when selecting a program (or provider) to support your ITIL/ITSM training needs.

This DITY is the first of a two-part series designed to give practitioners and training coordinators a detailed understanding of the components that make up an ITSM training program, along with insight into the process of training program and instructor accreditation.

ITIL/ITSM Training Categories

The ITIL/ITSM training market consists of four primary training categories – Orientation, Certification, Simulation and Workshops. Each category has a series of programs designed to teach and certify the specific skills and knowledge associated with the process area(s) under review. Primary categories include:

ITIL/ITSM Orientation (awareness)
These non-accredited four- or eight-hour programs are an inexpensive and effective way to introduce the concepts, relationships and benefits of IT Service Management to IT **executives and staff** who may not play an active role in the program but need to understand the value an ITSM program brings to the enterprise.

These programs are available **online and in the classroom** and may include non-accredited testing to verify each student understands ITSM and the ITIL. Some organizations include them in their orientation program for all new staff, some of whom later enter a certification training program.

ITIL/ITSM Certification
ITIL certification training programs introduce **IT professionals and managers** to the basic and advanced concepts of IT Service Management as described in the IT Infrastructure Library. Accredited by APMG and other Examination Institutes (ISEB, EXIN, Loyalist etc.), these courses help students prepare for the certification exam along with acquiring valuable insights from instructors and mentors who have actually managed IT operations and ITSM programs.

These programs are available **online and in the classroom** and may include accredited certification testing to verify each student understands ITSM and the ITIL.

ITIL/ITSM Simulation
These interactive simulation programs are a high-impact, energetic way to accelerate your team's understanding and acceptance of ITSM and ITIL in your organization. Facilitated using real-world applications of process management in the context of a game, these programs bring to life the behavioral and process issues faced by IT organizations today.

They do this through a realistic scenario with which participants can directly relate and may have actual experience. This experiential learning approach causes breakthrough understanding of ITSM and ITIL V3 best practice, and transforms

learning into an engaging, fun and highly memorable shared experience. These programs are only available **in the classroom** and include in-class discussions to ensure that each student understands the ITIL process areas and functions they are responsible for.

ITIL/ITSM Workshops

These non-certification workshops provide IT Practitioner teams with a hands-on, structured approach to the key concepts associated with process design, process integration and technology selection. These programs are only available in the classroom, and feature lectures, discussion, team exercises and quizzes.

Highlights of these programs include learning how to develop process design, integration and technology requirements plans.

ITIL/ITSM Delivery Venues

Unlike ITIL/ITSM version 2 training, the version 3 syllabi from APMG provide support for training both in the classroom and online. The ITIL training market supports the following classroom and online delivery venues:

Public Classroom Instructor-Led Training
Public classroom training provides a venue for individual students looking to become certified in ITIL/ITSM best practices. This training option tends to be the most expensive delivery option on the market today as vendors need to include in their per student price the costs associated with venue, sales, marketing (including enticement gifts and exam retakes), and food and beverage catering provided as part of the program. Public programs also tend to have a higher cancellation rate due to the minimum number of students required (normally six to ten students) to run a program.

Private Classroom Instructor-Led Training
Private classroom training provides a venue for enterprises looking to certify multiple students in ITIL/ITSM best practices. This training option, assuming you meet the student minimum requirements (typically 10), brings with it a lower price per student as the cost of coordinating the venue, student registration process and catering now falls into the lap of the client.

Online Training
Online training provides an on-demand venue for all students looking to become certified in ITIL/ITSM best practices.

Online training delivery formats include:

- Professionally Produced Streaming Video – These self-study programs recreate the instructor-led classroom online, using streaming video technology to deliver the instructor lectures, student courseware and practice exams. Optional services include live mentor support, program management and individual or group onsite certification services.
- Scenario-based Training – These self-study programs present the training in the context of a simulated case study, using animated characters and other training tools.
- Voice over Programs – These self-study programs use low-cost development tools to create online programs built on classroom slide decks with instructor voice over.

This training option, because it removes most of the delivery, coordinating and travel costs, is the least expensive and most flexible option on the market today. In most cases, programs can be consumed in a public, onsite, remote (PC) or mobile (iPod/iTouch) classroom environment. Unlike classroom programs, online training does not have student minimum (or maximum) requirements as each student is managed as an individual training event.

Summary

Hopefully the above information has provided some insight into the categories and venues available to build out an ITIT/ITSM training program. In a few weeks I will follow up with the second DITY focused on the topic of accreditation… stay tuned.