

# ITSM Governance, Process Ownership and Implementation of Strategic Process Roadmaps

## Abstract

Governance has moved to the forefront of business and IT organizations over the past decade as it contributes to developing trust between the service organization and its stakeholders, users, and customers.

Good governance is rarely mentioned in the evening news. However, there are many examples where governance has failed and global business mishaps or total failures have been highlighted in the news.

Most organizations have a great intent, using state of the art tools, and well-defined process/procedures but where the lack of governance is slowly engulfing the organization into a black hole of missed opportunities.

One specific ITSM governance challenge is “*The Information gap between IT leadership and IT operations*”.

Establishment of Process Owners and the development of Strategic Process Roadmaps will help eliminate this Information Gap.

## Lack of assigned Process Owners creates pain for the organization

A Process Manager is concerned with the “management” of the process.

The Process Owner’s main focus should be to “govern” the process (i.e. set direction, prioritization and decision making).

Management **plans, builds, runs and monitors** activities in alignment with the direction set by the governance body to achieve the enterprise objectives.

Governance ensures that stakeholder needs, conditions and options are evaluated to determine balanced, agreed-on enterprise objectives to be achieved; **setting direction through prioritization and decision making**; and monitoring performance and compliance against agreed-on direction and objectives.

Many organizations that are purchasing an ITSM / Service Desk tool or implementing ITIL processes don’t identify Process Owners. Not having Process Owners in place and lack of effective ITSM governance creates a number of issues for the organization.

Most Process Managers would agree that ensuring that the processes are managed efficiently and effectively requires the right skills, integrated tools, reliable data, and well-defined process and procedures. This is however not enough! A clearly defined, single overarching ITSM governance framework for all the ITSM processes with identified roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, established communication channels (i.e. process and tool councils), and defined escalations with established thresholds are also required!

Without a clearly defined single overarching ITSM governance framework encompassing all of the ITSM processes, ITSM platforms and assigned global Process Owners there will be many challenges that will grow and create havoc within the organization.

## Management vs. Governance

Many organizations confuse Governance with Management and the COBIT 5<sup>1</sup> differentiation of Management and Governance, listed to the left, is very helpful to understand the difference.

Within IT Service Management process context, the Process Manager is concerned with the management of the process and the Process Owner’s main focus should be to govern the process (i.e. set direction, prioritization and decision making).

## The need for process governance is true for any process

Any type of organization, even outside of IT, requires clear and structured governance over their processes. Process governance ensures that stakeholder needs are met, value delivered, there is a long-term plan and clear direction of the process, and that decisions are taken at the right level within the organization in a timely manner.

For example, the Service Desk relies heavily on a stable, supported, and responsive Incident Management process as one of the key processes used when executing Service Desk tasks on a daily basis.

<sup>1</sup> COBIT 5: A Business Framework for the Governance and Management of Enterprise IT

## Good governance is rarely mentioned

Well defined governance develops trust between the service organization and its stakeholders, users, and customers.

Governance has moved to the forefront of business and IT organizations over the past decade as it contributes to developing trust between the service organization and its stakeholders, users, and customers.

Good governance is rarely mentioned in the evening news. However, there are many examples where governance has failed and global business mishaps or total failures have been highlighted in the news. Think about some recent major IT failures covered, many of these failures are due to processes not followed or lack of governance e.g. changes are deployed without approvals or limited understanding of their scope and risk.

## Lack of Governance

The lack of governance produces confusion, less clarity, unclear structure and poor guidance.

The lack of governance produces confusion, less clarity, unclear structure and poor guidance. It's a situation that will take up more and more of an organization's time, resources, funding, and efforts. It will drain the organization of progress and ensure no continuous improvement takes place – it's a situation an organization should never have to face.

Many organizations have a great intent, using state of the art tools, and well-defined process/procedures but where the lack of governance is slowly engulfing the organization into a black hole of missed opportunities.

The lack of governance can take many forms and shape within an organization but there is one specific area where organizations struggle, this is *"The Information gap between IT leadership and IT operations"*.

The organization is often not aware that they have a governance gap, but they sure feel that something is not right.

The organization is often not aware that they have a governance gap, but they sure feel that something is not right. They work hard, put in long hours, create plans, write documents and spend significant time and resources. However, there are still issues, outages, confusion, lack of funding, and no clear decision taking or understanding of the direction – the governance gap is very much present!

Some examples of different governance challenges organizations encounter:

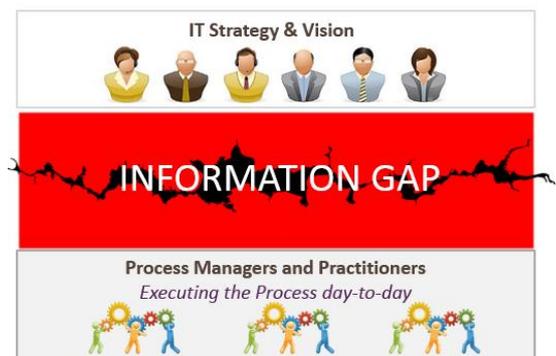
- Lack of ownership and accountability of a process without a long-term strategic plan. E.g. the process is not fulfilling business needs of speed, quality, agility etc.
- Miss-aligned goals that are not based on business value but on other priorities. E.g. the Service Desk focuses on reducing time to answer calls when the businesses primary concern is the duration of the new hire process or request fulfillment.
- No clear understanding what the scope of the process is. E.g. which business areas and line organizations do we support, which technologies and applications do we support and is our scope global or regional?

- No clear escalation path defined for management and technical escalations. E.g. who should be contacted for a technical issue that requires escalation? Who to contact to inform management about a major issue/outage?
- Lack of resources, funding and tools to execute the process efficiently and effectively. E.g. not having appropriate telephony systems, knowledge articles or self-help tools in place for the Service Desk and the Incident Management process.
- Lack of meaningful reporting and KPIs i.e. everything that can be measured is reported. E.g. there are measures/metrics overload and many metrics/KPIs have no defined "actions" based on exceeding thresholds.

## The Information gap between IT leadership and IT operations

One specific ITSM governance issue within organizations is that the funding for requested improvements are stalled or not approved by the IT leadership due to lack of direction and planning.

Here is the heart of the issue; Process Managers request funding for a tool, people, training etc. to their senior IT leaders as there are no Process Owners in place. Process Managers are “in the trenches” and their main focus is day-to-day operation that usually has a short-term operational focus vs. a Process Owner who is focusing on strategic planning and long-term focus for the process.



IT leaders are not sure if they should approve an ad-hoc funding request as there might be another request coming shortly that is “more important” that they should accept so they wait and defer instead.

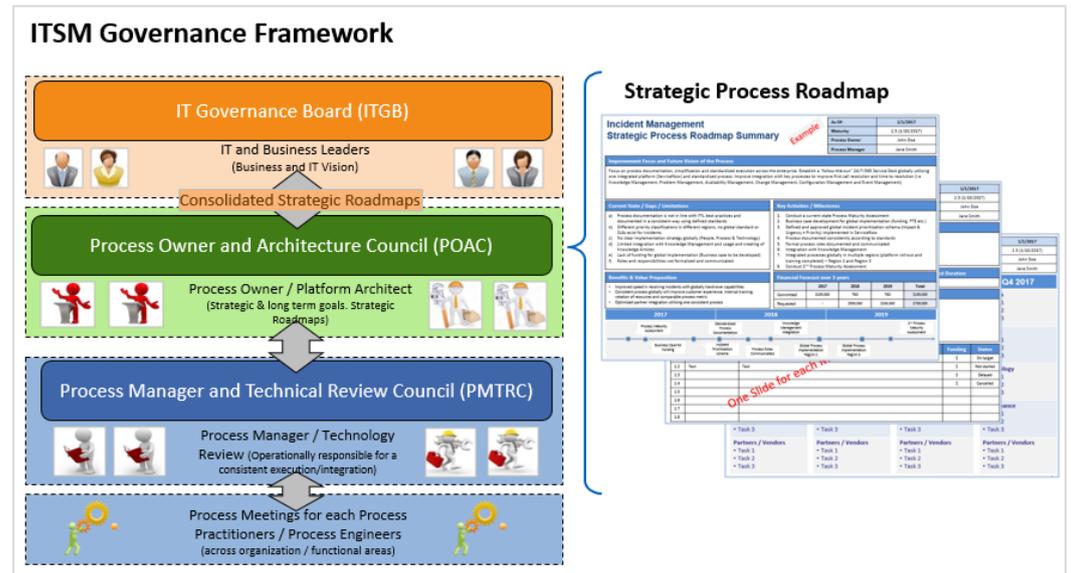
Imagine being a senior IT leader having all the different Process Managers ask for ad-hoc funding of initiatives without a strategic long-term plan, in an unstructured format and with limited coordination between all the other ITSM processes. Also, having funding requests in many different forms or shapes (business case, email, verbal etc.) is confusing and very difficult for IT leaders to understand the long term ITSM vision and the direction of the process.

IT leaders are not sure if they should approve the request (i.e. \$\$\$) as there might be another request coming shortly that is “more important” that they should accept so they wait and defer instead. As there is not unlimited funds, IT leadership is carefully evaluation what initiative should be funded which in this case could mean almost nothing is being approved.

So how do you resolve these issues? The answer is to establish a comprehensive ITSM governance framework, assign Process Owners and develop Strategic Process Roadmaps.

Specifically, for this governance issue “The Information gap between IT leadership and IT operations” it is required to assign and empower Process Owners and provide them with the right skills and tools.

Process Owners cannot exist in a vacuum but must function within a well-defined ITSM governance framework with Process Managers, an IT Governance Board, defined business/steering councils, known escalation paths with identified thresholds, and so on.



## Bridging the information gap by using Strategic Process Roadmaps

By using Strategic Process Roadmaps, it will eliminate one of the major ITSM governance issues many organizations are facing.

There are some very specific tools, techniques and templates a Process Owner can use to govern a process from a strategic aspect and to help bridge the information gap between the day-to-day operation and the organizations Strategy and Vision.

The same concept, tools, techniques and templates can also be used when governing IT Services and of course for the ITSM platform.

Assign Service Owners and ITSM Platform Owners (e.g. ServiceNow) and use the same templates when creating those Strategic Roadmaps.

To implement ITSM governance and use Strategic Process Roadmaps sounds all great, but very academic, so how can we make this more tangible?



# Benefits of Strategic Process Roadmaps

Some of the benefits of using Strategic Process Roadmaps are captured below. For some of the examples the focus is on the Incident Management process, but these benefits are of course valid for any of the ITSM processes:

- **Long Term Focus** - Incident Management and the Service Desk will have a long term (3-year) strategic plan and defined goals to be achieved. One critical aspect is the scope of the Service Desk and the Incident Management process which should be defined for the next three years. Scope to consider could be geographical, organizational, technical etc.
- **Planned Investments and Funding** - Investment required for executing the Service Desk and the Incident Management process will be aligned with the IT strategy and vision of the organization. A strategic plan that includes a long-term focus to request funding for e.g. people, training, tooling and other resources.
- **Strategic Alignment** - Alignment of the roadmap with the organization's mission, vision and values. Identification of the key value drivers for IT and the business that the Incident Management process must align with e.g. speed, flexibility, agility, quality or others.
- **Leadership Understanding and Commitment** - IT leadership will have a long-term plan and a clear understanding of what is required to reach the goals of the Incident Management process through continuous planning, reporting and governing of the process. Clear understanding via a 1-page strategic overview for the process with the key initiatives listed and funding requirements for the next three years provides clarity and management commitment.
- **Business Value Focused and Elimination of Pain Points** - Business needs are identified and addressed by creating a long-term and 12-month tactical rolling plans based on business value and to eliminate the biggest pain points of the business.

# Strategic Process Roadmap development

The consolidated Strategic Process Roadmap, developed by the Process Owner, is a great tool for the IT organization to get the right investments and credibility of the business.

To create the Strategic Process Roadmap is a tactical exercise that creates a strategic plan.

There are four key steps when developing the Strategic Process Roadmap.



To create the Strategic Process Roadmap is a tactical exercise that creates a strategic plan, it is almost like magic!

1. Make sure a Process Owner is assigned and that the Process Owners understand their role and accountabilities. A training initiative might be the best approach to have a common understanding across all Process Owners.
2. Answer the Strategic Process Roadmap Questionnaire which is one of the templates that is part of our implementation approach. The answers together with the process artifacts and information in step 3 are the key inputs to the Strategic Process Roadmap.
3. Review existing material, artifacts and information like the process assessment findings, CSI register, customer feedback, and any ongoing initiatives.
4. Populate a number of templates based on the answers of the questionnaire (step 2) and the process information gathered in step 3.

A Process Owner can be accountable for more than one process.

An example of how a Strategic Process Roadmap could look for the Incident Management process is depicted below. This is the 1-page overview of the Strategic Process Roadmap. The detailed milestone template is also displayed to be used for each of the Key Activities identified. Each Key Activity will have its own slide with details.

One of the key values of creating the Strategic Process Roadmap for all of the processes is that all the Process Owners can coordinate their strategic roadmaps and investment requests to the IT leadership.

Each of the processes will have to develop their own Strategic Process Roadmap but a combined and consolidated Strategic Process Roadmap from all the key ITSM processes by the Process Owners will be extremely helpful for the IT leadership when they look at future activities, investments, and priorities.

## Strategic Process Roadmap templates

A number of templates and tools are available when designing and implementing ITSM governance structures within organizations. This is a comprehensive methodology and the specific templates for developing Strategic Process Roadmaps consist of four separate artifacts.

- Accountabilities of Process Owners (PowerPoint)  
Clearly define the accountabilities for a Process Owners as they are significantly different from the responsibilities of a Process Manager.

Strategic Process Roadmap templates can be downloaded here: <http://www.tmanthey.com/speaker.html>

### Process Owner Accountabilities

- 1. Accountable for the strategic direction and long term goal of the process**
  - Set short term (12-month rolling) and long term (3 years) process goals
  - Define current maturity baseline and future process maturity level to be reached
- 2. Accountable for the overall performance and results of the process**
  - Set performance goals (SLAs, process output, quality metrics, CSF, KPI)
  - Define schedule for process maturity assessments (baseline is critical)
  - Define schedule for process audits (Compliance and execution)
- 3. Responsible to define process scope and goals**
  - Define organizational and technical scope of the process (Who and what should be included in the execution scope of the process)
  - Process specification, documentation and design, define clear Process goals (SMART)
- 4. Accountable to ensure support and commitment of resources**
  - Ensure funds (\$), resources (people), vendor relationship (partners) and tools (product) are made available to enable efficient and effective process execution
- 5. Assisting in assigning a Process Manager**
  - Ensures that a Process Manager is assigned who is responsible for the day-to-day execution, monitoring, reporting etc. and is empowered to execute the process

- Strategic Process Roadmap Questionnaire (Excel)  
A detailed questionnaire in multiple domains (People, Process, Technology, Partner and Governance) that a Process Owner should answer to provide input to their Strategic Process Roadmap.

Questionnaire Process	Comments	Activities per Quarter
Is there an approved process document (Process Guide)?	A draft process guide document exist but it has not been approved.	Q2 2018, Update the process guide and receive management approval.
Is the scope of the process defined? Should the scope be changed? (organizational or technical scope)	Scope of the process is defined. New scope to be established due to upcoming sourcing contract in Q3 2018.	Q3 2018: Update scope of process
Is the process guide published and made available e.g. on a process web page or collaboration site?	Process documentation is not published on a centralized site.	Q2 2018, establish a central site for all process documentation (agreement from other Process Owners and Process Managers) and publish process guide.
What is the current process maturity? Do you need to perform a process maturity assessment?	No process maturity assessment has been conducted recently.	Q4 2018, perform a process assessment after the new scope of the process has been defined as a new baseline.
What is the future process maturity to be reached for the process? What is the process Goal/Vision? Are there any gaps that must be addressed?		
Does a documented continuous improvement plan exist for the process? What are the most urgent activities?		
Are there detailed procedures created? (e.g. when using the different tools executing the process activities)		
Other relevant questions you need to ask and answer...		

- Strategic Process Roadmap template (PowerPoint)  
PowerPoint templates how to capture and document a Strategic Process Roadmap for each process as well as a template capturing the details for the Key Activities defined.

<Process Name> Strategic Process Roadmap Summary		As Of:	1/1/2018															
		Maturity	2.5 (1/10/2018)															
		Process Owner	John Doe															
		Process Manager	Jane Smith															
<b>Improvement Focus and Future Vision of the Process</b>																		
xx x x																		
<b>Current State / Gaps / Limitations</b>		<b>Key Activities / Milestones</b>																
a) xx		1. xx																
<b>Benefits &amp; Value Proposition</b>		<b>Financial Forecast over 3 years</b>																
• xx		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Committed</td> <td>\$</td> <td>\$</td> <td>\$</td> <td>\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Requested</td> <td>\$</td> <td>\$</td> <td>\$</td> <td>\$</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			2018	2019	2020	Total	Committed	\$	\$	\$	\$	Requested	\$	\$	\$	\$
	2018	2019	2020	Total														
Committed	\$	\$	\$	\$														
Requested	\$	\$	\$	\$														
<b>2018</b>		<b>2019</b>																
● Key activity / Milestone		● Key activity / Milestone																
		● Key activity / Milestone																

Each Key Activity / Milestone defined in the Strategic Process Roadmap will have its own slide with a detailed description. This is to provide additional information about the identified initiative. This is a great tool for IT leaders to understand each initiative better and provides input to the decisions if this initiative will be executed and funded.

<Process Name> Milestone Details <Milestone # and Name>		As Of:	1/1/2018
		Maturity	2.5 (1/10/2018)
		Process Owner	John Doe
		Process Manager	Jane Smith
<b>Detailed Description of the Milestone / Key Activities (What/Objectives/Scope)</b>			
xx x x			
<b>Target Completion Date</b>	<b>Estimated Complexity</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Duration</b>
Month Year	High / Medium / Low	High / Medium / L	X Months
<b>Domains</b>	<b>Benefits of Implementation (Why)</b>		
People	a) xxx		
Process			
Technology			
Governance			
Partner			
<b>Dependencies</b>			
<b>ID</b>	<b>Short Name</b>	<b>Key Activity</b>	<b>Description of Tasks to Fulfill Objective of Milestone (How)</b>
1.1	Task	to	\$
1.2	Task		\$
1.3			\$
1.4			\$
1.5			\$
1.6			\$
1.7			\$
1.8			\$

- 12-month rolling plan template (PowerPoint)  
A tactical plan that provides a 1-page overview of the activities to be executed by the Process Managers focusing on the upcoming 12 months.

<Process Name> Milestone Details <Milestone # and Name>			
Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018
<b>Process</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3			
<b>People</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3			
<b>Technology</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3			
<b>Governance</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3			
<b>Partners / Vendors</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3	<b>Partners / Vendors</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3	<b>Partners / Vendors</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3	<b>Partners / Vendors</b> • Task 1 • Task 2 • Task 3

As Of:	1/1/2018
Maturity	2.5 (1/10/2018)
Process Owner	John Doe
Process Manager	Jane Smith

The below slide is an example of a Strategic Process Roadmap for the Incident Management process. The top right box contains the Process Manage/Owner and the current maturity of the process. All other fields are populated based on the answers in the excel questionnaire (step 2) and information gathered in step 3.

### Incident Management Strategic Process Roadmap Summary Example

As Of:	1/1/2018
Maturity	2.5 (1/10/2018)
Process Owner	John Doe
Process Manager	Jane Smith

**Improvement Focus and Future Vision of the Process**  
 Focus on process documentation, simplification and standardized execution across the enterprise. Establish a "follow-the-sun" 24/7/365 Service Desk globally utilizing one integrated ITSM platform and standardized process. Improve integration with key processes to improve first call resolution and time to resolution (i.e. Knowledge Management, Problem Management, Availability Management, Change Management, Configuration Management and Event Management).

Current State / Gaps / Limitations	Key Activities / Milestones
a) Process documentation is not in line with ITIL best practices and documented in a consistent way using defined standards. b) Different priority classifications in different regions, no global standard or SLAs exist for incidents. c) No clear implementation strategy globally (People, Process & Technology) d) Limited integration with Knowledge Management and usage and creating of Knowledge Articles e) Lack of funding for global implementation (Business case to be developed) f) Roles and responsibilities not formalized and communicated	1. Conduct a current state Process Maturity Assessment 2. Business case development for global implementation (funding, FTE etc.) 3. Defined and approved global incident prioritization schema (Impact & Urgency = Priority) implemented in ServiceNow 4. Process documented consistently according to standards 5. Formal process roles documented and communicated 6. Integration with Knowledge Management 7. Integrated processes globally in multiple regions (platform roll-out and training completed) – Region 2 and Region 3 8. Conduct 2 <sup>nd</sup> Process Maturity Assessment

Benefits & Value Proposition	Financial Forecast over 3 years															
• Improved speed in resolving incidents with globally hand-over capabilities • Consistent process globally will improve customer experience, internal training, rotation of resources and comparable process metric • Optimized partner integration utilizing one consistent process	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th></th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Committed</td> <td>\$150,000</td> <td>T&amp;D</td> <td>T&amp;D</td> <td>\$150,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Requested</td> <td>-</td> <td>\$500,000</td> <td>\$200,000</td> <td>\$700,000</td> </tr> </table>		2018	2019	2020	Total	Committed	\$150,000	T&D	T&D	\$150,000	Requested	-	\$500,000	\$200,000	\$700,000
	2018	2019	2020	Total												
Committed	\$150,000	T&D	T&D	\$150,000												
Requested	-	\$500,000	\$200,000	\$700,000												

2018	2019	2020
Process Maturity Assessment Business Case for funding	Standardized Process Documentation Incident Prioritization schema Process Roles Communicated	Knowledge Management Integration Global Process Implementation Region 2 Global Process Implementation Region 3 2 <sup>nd</sup> Process Maturity Assessment

All of the templates described above can be downloaded at:  
<http://www.tmanthey.com/speaker.html>

**Author: Thorsten Manthey**

Thorsten Manthey is passionate about IT Service Management, ITSM governance and cultural and organizational transformation. Thorsten has worked across multiple industries including health care, pharmaceutical, oil and gas, manufacturing, financial services, insurance and telecommunications in North America, Europe and Scandinavia.

Thorsten holds a Master's degree in Computer Science and Engineering from Chalmers University of Technology and a Bachelor degree in Mechanical Engineering. He is an ITIL V3 Expert, obtained the VeriSM Foundation certification and a Certified Change Management Professional (CCMP). Thorsten speaks English, German and Swedish and is an international speaker and presenter.

**Contact**

Visit <http://www.tmanthey.com/speaker.html> for more information.

Thorsten Manthey  
Engagement Director, TCS  
Mailto: [thorsten@tmanthey.com](mailto:thorsten@tmanthey.com)