

An abstract, highly reflective metallic sculpture with flowing, organic forms, resembling liquid metal captured in time. It is positioned in the upper right and lower left corners of the frame, framing the central text.

ITSM LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT

TWO FUTURES OF IT

WHY **TRUST**—**NOT TOOLS**—WILL
DECIDE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

*A 20-Year Visual Projection of **Trust**,
Performance, and the Grove Method in Action*

By **Bob Roark**

Author of **The Grove Method** for ITSM Excellence Series

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Executive Summary

Over the last 80+ years, Information Technology (IT) has transformed from a backend utility into a critical driver of business performance. But somewhere along the way, something broke. Despite decades of investment in frameworks, tools, and methodologies, many IT organizations remain reactive, siloed, and distrusted by the very stakeholders they aim to serve.

This whitepaper traces that history—visually and narratively—through a multivariate chart inspired by Minard's work, mapping the rise (and recent decline) of trust, alignment, and value delivery across the IT landscape.

We examine how IT evolved:

- From stability-focused infrastructure teams...
- To process-heavy service providers...
- To today's overburdened, tool-saturated departments that struggle to stay aligned with business needs.

Then, we look forward. Using historical trends and current patterns, we present two projected outcomes for the next 20 years:

Scenario 1: The Grove Path Forward

If IT leaders embrace *The Grove Method for ITSM Excellence*—a field-tested framework built to restore alignment, rebuild trust, and stabilize operations—organizations can expect:

- Reunification of frontend (Service Delivery) and backend (Infrastructure & Applications) functions
- Better alignment between IT capabilities and business priorities
- Measurable increases in trust, stability, and strategic relevance
- Improved retention and morale across IT teams

Scenario 2: Business as Usual

If organizations continue their current trajectory—layering new tools on top of misaligned systems and reactive practices—we will likely see:

- Increased fragmentation across IT departments
- Declining trust in IT leadership and services
- More shadow IT, compliance risks, and unplanned spend
- Talent burnout, higher turnover, and widening gaps in delivery quality

The Grove Method

The Grove Method wasn't born in a boardroom—it was forged in the real-world friction between IT and the business. It emerged after decades of seeing good frameworks fall flat, not because they were wrong, but because they were incomplete. I created it to close the gap between what IT knows and what the business needs.

Named in tribute to Intel's Andy Grove—whose principles of clarity, alignment, and measurable leadership transformed modern management—this method also draws strength from the metaphor of a grove: a stand of trees that weathers storms by growing stronger together. That's what IT should be—coordinated, resilient, and rooted in trust.

The Grove Method is not a replacement for ITIL, Agile, DevOps, or any framework you already use. It's the stabilizing layer between frameworks, teams, and outcomes. The connective tissue that translates strategy into trust-building execution.

It's built on three pillars:

- **Trust as the core metric** — because transformation only sticks when people believe in what you're doing.
- **Alignment as the operating goal** — not just across IT, but with business priorities and customer outcomes.
- **Stability as the enabler of change** — because innovation without a solid foundation collapse under pressure.

No new platforms. No theory for theory's sake. Just practical, tested, field-ready steps that work in the chaos of real operations.

The Grove Method gives IT leaders a way to realign, re-earn trust, and finally deliver value that sticks.

Who This Paper Is For

This whitepaper is written for CIOs (Chief Information Officers), IT Service Management (ITSM) leaders, and forward-looking executives who are tired of short-term fixes and ready to lead their teams into a more stable, trusted, and effective future.

Call to Action

You don't need a bigger budget. You need a better method. This paper offers the strategic insight—and the clear next steps—to help you get started.

The future of IT isn't about what we deploy. It's about how we lead.

A Note on Authorship

To keep this whitepaper fast and accessible, I used Artificial Intelligence (AI) to refine layout and structure. But every insight, every metric, and every leadership tool comes from the trenches—from decades spent leading real teams through real friction.

This isn't theory. It's what works.

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Why Trust in Information Technology (IT) Is Breaking—and Why the Grove Method Is the Bridge Back

Let's start with the truth most IT leaders won't say out loud:

We've lost the trust of the business.

Not because we're not working hard. Not because our teams don't care. But because over the last several decades, IT has evolved at breakneck speed—without a unifying compass. We've grown faster than we've aligned. We've built more than we've explained. And in the process, the connection between what we deliver and what the business needs has fractured.

That fracture didn't happen all at once. It was slow. Creeping. Almost invisible. It showed up in small ways at first—frustrated users, misaligned projects, service tickets passed around like hot potatoes. But now the cracks are too big to ignore. The business moves one way. IT moves another. And the gulf in between is widening.

How did we get here?

It started with good intentions. In the beginning, IT was designed for stability. For control. We weren't customer-facing; we were back-office. We managed infrastructure, secured the network, kept the lights on. That was our value.

But as the digital era exploded, expectations changed. Suddenly, IT was asked to do more—faster. We weren't just supporting the business anymore; we *were* the business. Digital transformation, customer experience, automation—those aren't buzzwords. They're survival strategies. And IT is now on the front line.

The problem? We're still using the same playbook we wrote in the 1990s.

We respond to complexity with more tools. We answer chaos with more dashboards. We reorganize, rebrand, and restructure—but the outcomes remain the same. Despite all the investment, we still struggle to deliver what matters: trust, alignment, and value.

And that's where this story really begins.

The Grove Method was born out of my own experience—decades spent inside the system, watching smart, capable IT teams burn out while trying to do the right thing in the wrong structure. I didn't invent another framework. I built a method that connects the frameworks. Something that bridges silos, aligns teams, and gives IT leaders a way to shift from firefighting to future-shaping.

The Grove Method is about more than process. It's about posture. It's about re-centering IT around what the business actually needs—clarity, consistency, and confidence that what's delivered will drive results.

This whitepaper is your roadmap.

The Grove Method

The Grove Method didn't come from a whiteboard. It came from war rooms, boardrooms, and burned-out teams. It came from decades of watching good people in IT get blamed for broken systems they didn't create—and were never empowered to fix.

I named it *The Grove Method* for two reasons.

First, as a tribute to Andy Grove—former Intel CEO—whose belief in measurable management, strategic confrontation, and systematic thinking reshaped how I approached leadership. Grove taught that performance doesn't happen by accident. It's built through clarity, alignment, and pressure-tested truth. I applied that thinking to IT Service Management.

Second, a grove is a stand of trees that grows together. Individual trees are vulnerable. A grove can weather a storm. That image stuck with me. Because in IT, it's not enough to be strong alone. We have to grow as a system. As a whole.

So no—this isn't another framework. It's not a replacement for ITIL, Agile, DevOps, or any methodology your team already relies on.

The Grove Method is the stabilizing layer that sits beneath them. It connects the dots between frameworks, teams, and outcomes—so you don't just execute faster... you execute better.

It rests on three foundational ideas:

- **Trust as the core metric.**
Without trust, no initiative sticks. No budget holds. No tool delivers. You earn trust by delivering aligned, visible, meaningful value—consistently.
- **Alignment as the operating goal.**
Not just within IT, but with the business. The Grove Method exposes where your teams, tools, and metrics are pulling in different directions—and gives you the tools to realign.
- **Stability as the enabler of transformation.**
You can't innovate from chaos. The Grove Method helps you build the foundation—processes, language, reporting, and relationships—that allow transformation to succeed without blowing up the engine.

This method wasn't built in theory. It was built in the field. With over three decades of hands-on experience in federal agencies, Fortune 100s, and public K–12 systems, I saw firsthand what worked—and what broke down—across vastly different environments.

The Grove Method is the result of those lessons.

It gives leaders a structured way to move from reactivity to reliability, from friction to trust.

And the best part? You don't need to change your entire stack.

You don't need to convince the board.

You just need to start. One principle at a time.
One conversation at a time.
One trust-building decision at a time.

That's how we fix IT.
Not by adding more noise.
But by creating a Grove.

In the pages ahead, you'll see how IT has evolved—and where it diverged. You'll see a visual representation of that history, modeled after the legendary Minard diagram, mapping not just time but trajectory: from trust to tool chaos, from alignment to fragmentation. You'll see where we are right now—and what that means for the next decade.

More importantly, you'll see two possible futures.

One where IT embraces the Grove Method and reclaims its place as a strategic leader. And one where it continues down the current path, buried under process debt, siloed tools, and growing irrelevance.

This isn't just a theory.

It's the reality unfolding right now, inside every IT organization that's struggling to keep up while being asked to do more with less—and somehow become more strategic while reacting to every ticket.

If you're reading this, you probably feel it too.

You know your team is better than the results they're allowed to produce. You know your reports look fine on paper—but still don't tell the story of your actual value. You know that without a fundamental shift, the burnout, the silos, and the misalignment will only get worse.

But there's another way.

The Grove Method is the structure that puts IT back in alignment with what matters. It doesn't ask you to start over. It asks you to connect the dots—to see the patterns that brought us here, and to lead the shift that moves us forward.

If you've ever wished for a clearer way to explain what's broken—and what to do about it—you're in the right place.

Let's begin.

Section I: A Multivariate History of IT (1940–2025)

How Eight Decades of Progress Built the Perfect Storm

If you look at a dashboard, most IT organizations look like they're succeeding. Uptime is high. Tickets are closed on time. Budgets are reported as “efficient.” But something's off—deeply off.

You feel it when users roll their eyes at the mention of submitting a ticket. You hear it in boardrooms when digital transformation becomes a four-letter word. You see it in how often business leaders bypass IT altogether—buying tools, launching initiatives, and outsourcing core functions without so much as a conversation.

This didn't happen overnight. It's the result of a slow erosion that started decades ago. To understand where IT stands now—and where it's headed—you have to look at how it was built.

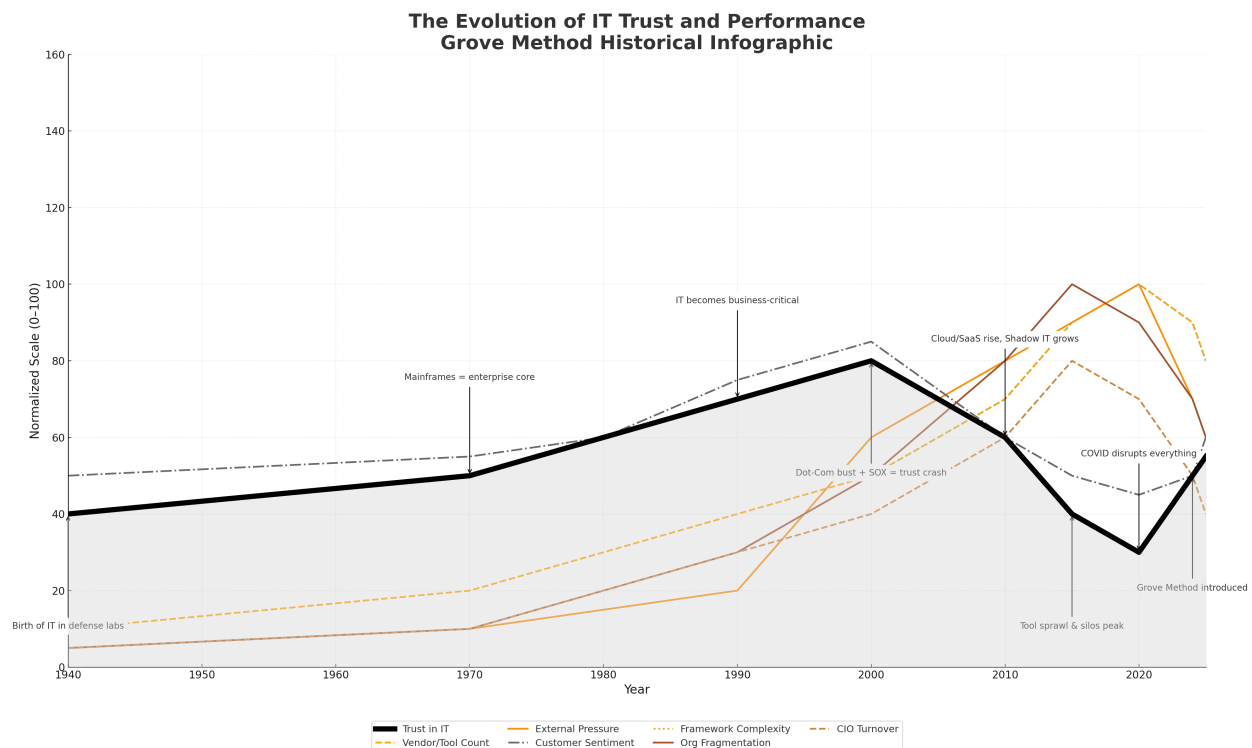


Figure 1: Historical Chart — The Decline of IT Trust and Alignment (1940–2025)

This multivariate chart traces the evolution of IT over 80+ years, showing how trust, business alignment, and service performance peaked during moments of strong integration—then declined as complexity, silos, and tool overload took over. It sets the stage for why a new approach is needed.

The Engineering Years (1940–1975)

In the beginning, IT wasn't called IT. It was computing. Big iron. Mainframes. Machines that filled rooms and required lab coats. These systems weren't designed for collaboration; they were designed for control. The operators were engineers, not service providers. Their mission was precision. Their methods were isolation. And their trust was implicit—because nobody else understood how any of it worked.

It was stable. It was structured. But it wasn't built for people.

This was the birth of the backend bias: the idea that infrastructure and control come first, and everything else will follow. For a while, that worked. But change was coming.

The Office Years (1975–1995)

With the rise of personal computing and enterprise software, IT moved out of the server room and into the business. Suddenly, the people using technology weren't engineers—they were employees. Accountants. Marketers. Sales reps. And they needed something IT wasn't trained to provide: support.

This was when the tension began. IT clung to structure. The business demanded speed. The result? Conflict. IT departments started saying “no” a lot. Sometimes for good reason. Sometimes because it was easier than saying “let's figure it out.”

During this time, the first real attempts at alignment began. Frameworks like ITIL emerged. Metrics were introduced. Service Desks were formalized. It was a step in the right direction—but not nearly enough. Because while IT was formalizing process, the business was picking up speed.

The Explosion of Choice (1995–2010)

The internet changed the rules. Permanently.

Technology was no longer scarce. It was everywhere. Software-as-a-Service, cloud hosting, mobile apps—all of it created a new reality: users had options. If IT was too slow or too rigid, people could route around it. And they did.

Shadow IT wasn't a policy violation—it was a survival strategy.

In response, IT didn't adapt. It cracked down. More policies. More approvals. More dashboards meant to prove performance. But performance didn't equal progress. Even as tools multiplied, trust eroded.

The irony? IT had never been more technically capable. But the gap between capability and credibility kept widening.

The Age of Transformation (2010–2025)

By the 2010s, the mandate was clear: transform or be replaced.

Every CIO was handed a playbook filled with buzzwords—Agile, DevOps (Development and P, Cloud, ServiceNow. The goal was modernization. The result was exhaustion. Teams were asked to move faster with fewer people. Tools were implemented without integration. And the frameworks designed to enable change started choking it instead.

What we got was activity without alignment. Change without clarity. A sea of dashboards saying “green” while users screamed “red.”

And through it all, IT kept asking: “Why don’t they trust us?”

It’s not a mystery. It’s a map.

For 80 years, we’ve built systems optimized for control, not trust. For internal logic, not external value. The Grove Method chart—modeled after Minard’s multivariate map—shows it clearly: trust and alignment peaked decades ago. What followed was a steep, slow descent into misalignment masked by technical progress.

And unless we act differently, we’ll keep mistaking new tools for new outcomes.

Key Takeaway:

We didn’t lose trust because we got worse at technology. We lost trust because we forgot who we were building it for. And without a new approach—one that reconnects people, process, and purpose—we’re just accelerating into deeper irrelevance.

Section II: Where We Are Now (2025)

Modern Tools, Ancient Problems

If you walk through most IT departments today, you’ll see dashboards, workflows, and automation that would’ve looked like science fiction twenty years ago. Teams are running ServiceNow, deploying bots, tagging incidents with Artificial Intelligence (AI), managing Configuration Management Databases (CMDBs), spinning up virtual agents, and aligning their operations to frameworks like Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), Control Objectives for Information Technology (COBIT), and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 27001.

On paper, it looks modern. On the ground, it feels anything but.

Because beneath the veneer of modern tooling, the same problems persist. Users are still frustrated. Projects still stall. Trust is still low. And IT—despite more investment than ever before—is still struggling to prove its strategic value.

The Illusion of Maturity

Over the last decade, organizations have invested billions in digital transformation. They've rebranded IT departments, launched Agile squads, hired DevOps engineers, and run endless "modernization" initiatives.

And yet, when you ask the average end user what they think of IT, the answer is almost always some version of this:

"They're hard to work with."

"They don't understand what we need."

"It's just easier to do it myself."

That's the problem. We've built mature systems—without building mature relationships.

In fact, many of today's ITSM environments have become more complicated than the problems they were meant to solve. The workflows are airtight, but the outcomes are unclear. We're closing tickets quickly, but not solving the right problems. We're optimizing SLAs while trust continues to slip through the cracks.

When Everything Is a Priority, Nothing Is

One of the defining characteristics of today's IT landscape is overload. Every team is stretched thin. Every request feels urgent. Every change triggers a cascade of new dependencies.

And in this chaos, we lose clarity.

Service Desks operate like triage centers. Field teams burn out chasing fix-it tasks. Infrastructure teams play defense against unrelenting tech debt. Meanwhile, leadership scrambles to produce reports that make it look like everything is working—because the alternative is too uncomfortable to explain.

We've created a culture where motion is mistaken for progress, and complexity is confused with maturity.

And as a result, IT feels like it's always catching up—always behind the curve, always defending its relevance.

The Trust Gap

Here's the hardest truth of all: the business doesn't care how hard IT is working.

They care about results. About reliability. About how easy or painful it is to get what they need.

When trust breaks down, people stop collaborating. They stop asking for input. They start finding their own tools, building their own workflows, and working around the very systems we've spent years perfecting.

That's not transformation. That's fracture.

And unless something changes, the most sophisticated IT departments in the world will still be stuck in the same cycle: too reactive to lead, too siloed to scale, and too misunderstood to matter.

Key Takeaway:

We've spent the last decade modernizing IT's surface—but not its soul. And if we don't address the root issue—trust—we'll keep dressing up dysfunction with dashboards and calling it progress.

Section III: What the Grove Method Is (and Isn't)

A Framework for Trust, Not Just Tickets

If you've made it this far, you probably already know this truth in your gut: something has to change.

Not because IT has failed—but because the world changed faster than our frameworks. We built great systems. We documented every process. We tracked every metric. But somewhere along the way, we lost the plot.

And that's exactly why I built the Grove Method (for ITSM Excellence).

Not to tear down what's working. But to reconnect what's missing.

What It Isn't

Let's start with what the Grove Method is *not*.

It's not a replacement for ITIL, or any formal service management framework. It doesn't conflict with Agile or DevOps. It doesn't ask you to scrap your ticketing platform, overhaul your org chart, or burn everything down and start from scratch.

In fact, Grove works best when it's layered on top of what you already have.

Think of it like this: ITIL is the map. ServiceNow is the vehicle. Grove is the Global Positioning System (GPS) that gets you where you're actually trying to go. It helps you navigate in real time—based on trust, context, and outcomes, not just steps and stages.

It's not theoretical. It's not academic. And it's not a magic trick.

It's a way of thinking. A way of operating. And, most importantly, a way of **rebuilding trust** between IT and the business.

What It Is

The Grove Method is a simple, brutally honest framework that helps IT leaders move from reactive service providers to strategic partners.

At its core, Grove is built on three truths:

1. **Trust is the currency of service.**
If your users don't trust you, they won't call you until it's too late—or they'll work around you entirely. No tool or metric can overcome a lack of trust. Grove puts trust at the center of every operational decision.
2. **Alignment beats velocity.**
Moving fast in the wrong direction is just failure on a deadline. Grove slows down the chaos long enough to ask: Are we solving the right problems? Are we aligned with what matters? Are we building credibility with every interaction?
3. **Stability enables everything else.**
Innovation, automation, and transformation all depend on a foundation that doesn't wobble. Grove helps teams stabilize their operations—so they can finally get ahead of the noise and lead with purpose.

Grove provides:

- A shared language for frontend and backend teams (Service Desk, Field, Infrastructure, Apps, Security).
- A set of 10 guiding principles (covered in *The Grove Principles for ITSM Excellence*).
- A blueprint for how to execute those principles in daily operations (*The Grove Method for ITSM Excellence* workbook).
- A roadmap to help leaders stabilize chaos and rebuild alignment in the first 90 days.

The Missing Layer

Most IT frameworks are designed to organize work. Grove is designed to restore relationships.

That's the missing layer in today's environment. Not more process. Not another dashboard. But the ability to see across silos, interpret the signals of trust, and adjust operations accordingly.

When Grove is adopted, things start to shift:

- Service teams stop being seen as “help desks” and start being seen as strategic partners.
- Metrics evolve from SLA-driven vanity reports to outcome-based conversations.
- Business units stop circumventing IT—and start collaborating with it.

And all of that happens without waiting for a new tool, title, or budget cycle.

Because Grove isn’t about what you buy. It’s about how you show up.

Key Takeaway:

The Grove Method doesn’t replace what you’re doing—it connects it. It bridges the gap between backend systems and frontend experience, turning reactive chaos into strategic clarity. And it does it by focusing on the one metric that matters most: trust.

Section IV: The Two Futures — With and Without Grove

What Happens Next Is Up to Us

If history has taught us anything, it’s this: IT will keep evolving. The question is whether we evolve with intention—or whether we let momentum and noise drive the next decade of decisions.

I’ve spent over 30 years watching these patterns repeat. From the mainframe to the cloud, from ticketing to automation, from handwritten logs to predictive analytics, we’ve never lacked innovation. But we’ve often lacked alignment. And more often than not, we’ve failed to see how *misalignment* slowly erodes trust—until it becomes nearly impossible to recover.

That’s what this section is about. Not a prediction. A projection.

Because if we follow the trajectory we’re currently on, we already know where it leads. And if we make different choices—starting now—we can still change the outcome.

The two charts that follow aren’t fantasy. They’re grounded in hard-earned experience and real-world patterns. One shows what happens if Grove is widely adopted. The other shows what happens if it isn’t.

Let’s walk through both.

The Grove-Enabled Future (2025–2045)

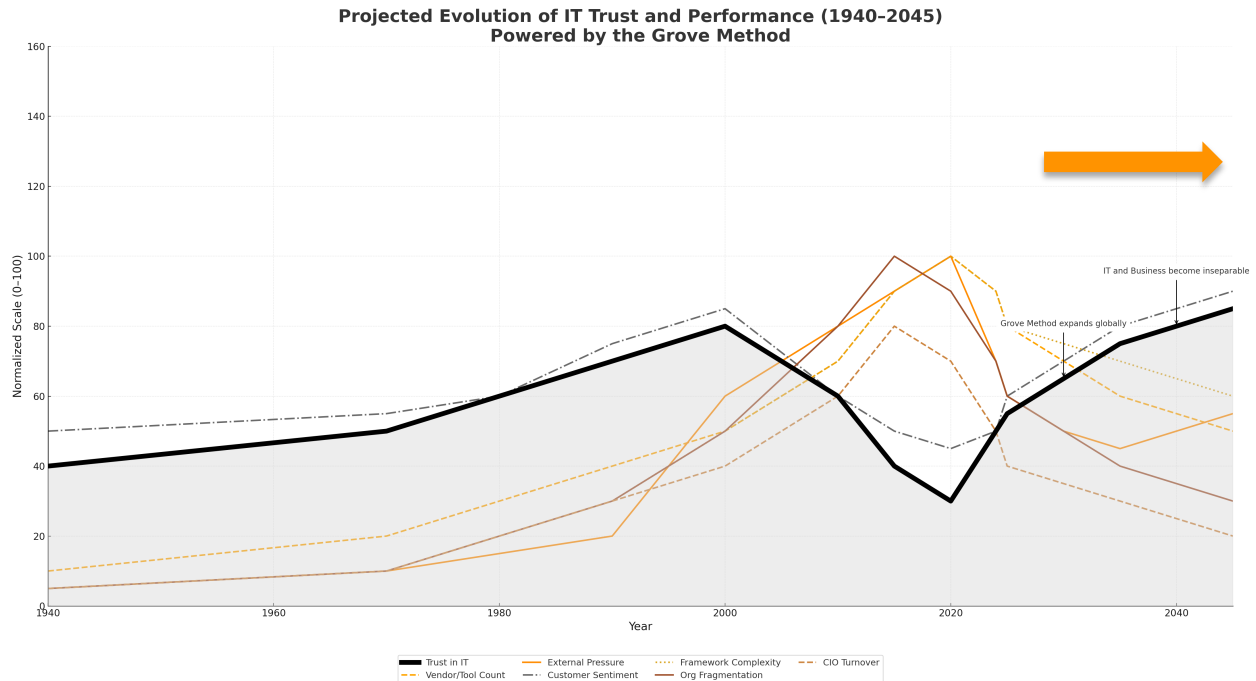


Figure 2: Projected Future with the Grove Method (2025–2045)

If IT leaders adopt the Grove Method, this projection shows a return to sustained alignment, growing stakeholder trust, and improved delivery outcomes. As teams stabilize and align under Grove Principles, IT becomes a trusted strategic partner once again.

If organizations adopt the Grove Method across their ITSM operations, here's what we can reasonably expect over the next two decades:

- **Trust rebounds and compounds.**
As departments consistently deliver on the right outcomes—not just speed or volume—credibility returns. Over time, trust builds across departments, not just between individuals.
- **IT becomes a stabilizer.**
Instead of chasing every crisis, IT begins to prevent them. Service Desks operate with confidence. Field teams support learning, not just firefighting. Infrastructure and security align earlier in project cycles.
- **Silos soften, not shatter.**
Grove doesn't pretend to eliminate silos, but it opens the channels of collaboration and accountability across them. Communication becomes clearer. Ownership becomes shared.
- **Metrics mature.**
Vanity metrics like ticket volume and SLA compliance give way to outcome-based indicators: trust velocity, time-to-value, repeat request rate, and more.

- **Business alignment drives every decision.**
IT finally stops speaking in IT terms. The service experience is designed around the user, not the org chart. Projects are selected based on value, not velocity.
- **Employee retention improves.**
When staff feel heard, supported, and able to do meaningful work, they stay. Grove environments create clarity, reduce burnout, and give teams purpose.
- **Shadow IT shrinks.**
Because when working with IT is easy and effective, people stop looking for ways around it.

The Grove-enabled future isn't just about performance. It's about resilience. In this future, IT becomes the stabilizing force behind every initiative—and the business finally starts to see IT as more than just a cost center. It becomes a partner. A driver. A core enabler of strategic outcomes.

The Grove-Neglected Future (2025–2045)

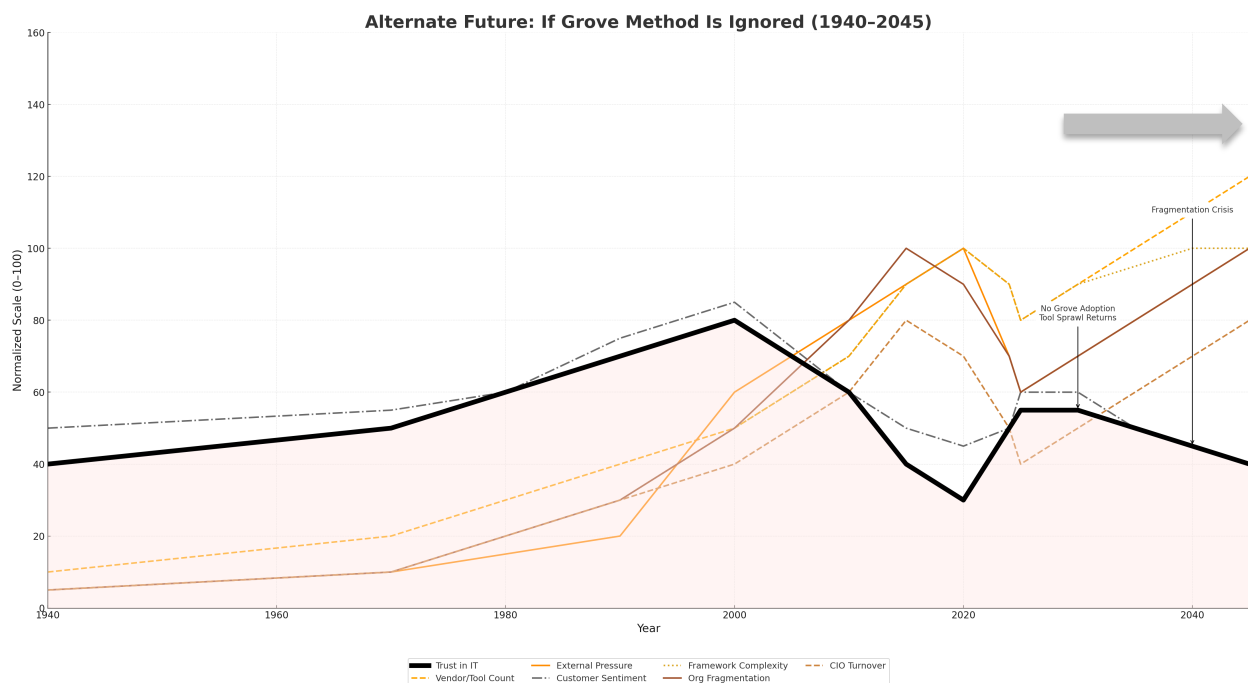


Figure 3: Projected Future Without the Grove Method (2025–2045)

Without intervention, IT's trajectory continues toward fragmentation, burnout, and eroding influence. Trust declines further, and service delivery becomes increasingly reactive, disconnected, and unsustainable—despite continued investment in tools and frameworks.

Now, let's look at what happens if we don't change course.

- **Tool proliferation continues.**
Every department buys its own solution. Platforms overlap. Licensing costs spiral. Integration becomes harder, not easier.
- **Ticket volume rises, but impact drops.**
The dashboards look full, but the outcomes remain flat. Teams chase quantity, not quality. Customers game the system to get what they need.
- **Shadow IT explodes.**
Business units stop asking for permission. They build their own stacks, hire their own vendors, and leave IT scrambling to catch up—again.
- **Burnout becomes normal.**
Staff turnover increases. Institutional knowledge disappears. The best people leave because they're tired of surviving inside systems that won't change.
- **Reporting misleads more than it guides.**
Executives keep seeing high SLA scores and assume things are fine—until a critical outage or PR disaster forces a reactive pivot.
- **IT becomes increasingly reactive.**
Despite all the investments, IT can't get ahead. Every gain is short-lived. Every new hire feels like another firefighter on a team of arsonists.
- **Trust erodes to apathy.**
Eventually, people stop complaining—not because it's fixed, but because they've given up.

In this future, IT becomes what the business always feared: a bottleneck. A bureaucracy. A black hole of effort without results.

And the worst part? It's preventable.

Key Takeaway:

The future isn't fixed—but the trajectory is. If we keep doing what we've done, we'll keep getting what we've got. But if we embrace the Grove Method, we can stabilize the present and shape a future where IT leads with clarity, trust, and strategic value.

Section V: Final Thoughts and Action Steps

This Isn't About Tools. It's About Trust.

I didn't write this whitepaper to add to your reading list.

I wrote it because I've seen what happens when we keep trying to fix systemic trust problems with faster ticket closure rates and new dashboards. I've watched organizations invest millions in tools, only to end up more fractured than before. And I've seen incredible teams burned out

by the weight of misaligned goals, conflicting metrics, and siloed operations that leave them feeling like failures—despite doing everything they were asked to do.

That's why I created the Grove Method.

Because what IT needs isn't another feature, framework, or flash-in-the-pan productivity hack. What it needs is stability. Alignment. And trust.

The Grove Method isn't flashy. It doesn't promise overnight results. But it does offer something far more valuable: a way to lead IT from a place of credibility—not chaos.

And here's the truth: this work is not theoretical. It's already happening. Quietly, strategically, and successfully inside teams that have decided they're done with duct tape fixes and vanity metrics. They've stopped chasing approval and started earning trust. And the results are transformative.

If you're ready to join them, here's how to get started:

Your Next Steps

Read *The Grove Principles for ITSM Excellence*

This book lays the foundation. It walks you through 10 clear, field-tested principles that define high-trust, high-alignment IT service delivery. Think of it as your philosophy guide—your new lens for evaluating decisions, policies, and performance.

Print or eBook: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FJ26QMYR>

PDF: <https://dayonereadylabs.com/products>

Work through *The Grove Method for ITSM Excellence (Workbook)*

This is where things get tactical. The workbook gives you the 90-day roadmap, templates, and daily moves to bring the Grove principles to life. It's not a checklist—it's a transformation plan built for real-world teams.

Print or eBook: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FJ26QMYR>

PDF: <https://dayonereadylabs.com/products>

Complete a Grove Maturity Assessment

- ***If your Grove Score was low:*** Use the whitepaper to understand why trust—not tools—is your next transformation lever.
- ***If your Grove Score was moderate:*** Use the whitepaper to map your next 90 days.
- ***If your Grove Score was high:*** Use it as a team-read to spark alignment conversations across leadership.

Get your Score and Path forward recommendations at <https://dayonereadylabs.com/survey1>

Share This Paper and Start the Conversation

Nothing changes until leaders start asking better questions. If this message resonated with you, share it with your team, your boss, or your CIO. Bring it to your next strategic planning meeting. Use it as the conversation starter you've been waiting for.

We don't get to choose the past we inherited. But we *do* get to choose what we do with it now.

You don't need to be a CIO to lead this work. You just need to be the one who cares enough to ask, "What if we tried a different way?"

That's how transformation begins.

And when it does, Grove will be ready to help.

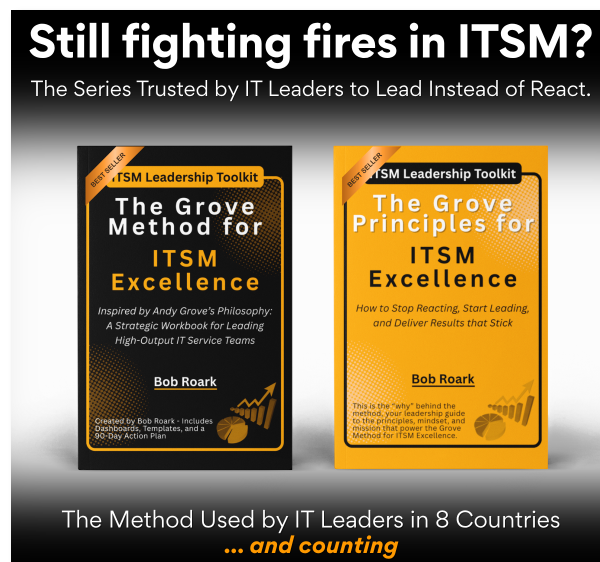
The Next Step Isn't More Tools. It's More Alignment.

If this paper struck a nerve, you're not alone. You're part of a growing movement of IT leaders who are done duct-taping dysfunction.

Done treating symptoms while ignoring the source. Now's the time to turn that clarity into action.

Get the Tools: Including to spot—and start fixing—what's misaligned in your environment. Unlock the **Grove Series**:

- **The Grove Method** – Actionable 90-day playbook to lead high-output ITSM teams including access free templates, Strategic Inflection Radar, Grove-Style Task Matrix, Weekly Output Review Templates, Micro-Certification Planning Grid, Bonus: Pitch Deck to Sell the Method to Leadership.
- **The Grove Principles** – Mindset and strategy to transform reactive IT into trusted business alignment including: The 8 Grove Principles for building high-trust, high-output teams, How to identify inflection points and lead your org through them, Why most ITSM efforts stall and how to fix them with structure, Strategic frameworks to shift from reactive support to proactive leadership, and Real-world lessons from ITSM leaders who've lived the change.



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Because better alignment doesn't start with new tech. **It starts with you.**

Acknowledgments

This white paper was shaped not just by research, but by real-world experience and the countless service leaders who continue to push IT forward—often without credit or support.

Gratitude goes to the frontline teams, ITSM leaders, and educators whose stories, challenges, and quiet innovations influenced every chapter of the Grove Method. Their resilience and creativity are at the heart of this work.

The structure and flow of this document were also influenced by the narrative principles outlined in Andy Raskin's *The Greatest Sales Deck I've Ever Seen* (2018). While not a sales pitch, this paper borrows from his emphasis on tension, clarity, and transformation to frame the inflection points that matter most in IT leadership.

I also acknowledge Charles Joseph Minard's 1869 map, whose powerful visualization of Napoleon's Russian campaign remains one of the most compelling examples of data storytelling ever created. His work continues to inspire clarity and precision in how we communicate complex journeys—whether military or ITSM.

I first encountered Charles Minard's legendary 1869 infographic through a post by Ian Pruden on LinkedIn which led me down a path of deeper exploration into visual storytelling in IT leadership.

Finally, thank you to the readers—many of whom are fighting the same battles described in these pages. You're the reason this work exists.

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About the Author

Bob Roark is an executive IT Service Management strategist, leadership advisor, and founder of DayOneReadyLabs. With over 30 years of experience leading IT service and operations teams in enterprise, education, and government sectors, Bob has developed a reputation for transforming chaos into clarity and translating strategy into sustained results.

Bob's practical frameworks have helped organizations move from reactive service models to performance-driven cultures. His signature approach, *The Grove Method for ITSM Excellence*, draws on the operational philosophy of Intel's legendary CEO Andy Grove and has been adopted by IT leaders seeking faster wins, stronger teams, and lasting value.

A frequent mentor to new managers and a trusted voice in the ITSM community, Bob is known for making complex leadership problems simple, actionable, and human. His tools, workbooks, and coaching systems are designed not for theory, but for leaders who are ready to move.

He lives in Colorado, where he continues to teach, build, and help leaders lead better from day one.

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