# Can IT people be service managers?

Ivor Macfarlane

IBM

# Are the needs that different?

- Service managers
  - Happy to be low profile
  - Oriented to another's (the customer's) hopes and desires
  - Concerned about the end product – the service
  - Not focused on the means – the application and technology
- Allowing customers to take the means for granted by understanding the ends



- IT people
  - Fiddlers
  - Fixers
  - Seeking challenges
  - Enjoy understanding how

- Fire-fighters at heart
- Happy when things break

# IT people need new perspective – Customer Focus

- ## First steps
  - Who is the customer?
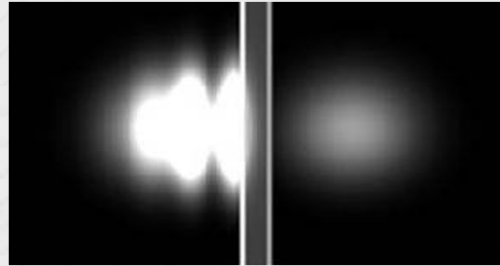  - What do they get from us?



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# Diversion into magic

- "Any suitably advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic" – Arthur C Clarke
- Customers have a right to treat technology as magic
- Maybe even an obligation?

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# Attributes of good service manager?

- Intuition and/or Understanding
  - of customers' situation and requirement – and relative priorities
  - Ideally spotting needs the customer doesn't know they have
  - Other stakeholders too?
- Value invisibility and the right to magic
- 'nice disguise = you've failed'
  - Seeing bridge
  - Liking the editing
  - Are we on a cloud?

# Management support

- Encourage thought and awareness of 'bigger picture'
- Interpret, describe and communicate customer perspective and needs
- Empower - and support OR properly direct
- Don't ignore the obvious sources
  - Customers
  - Users
  - Stakeholders
  - Service desk
  - Grapevine and gossip

# Management role: setting the scope:

- Recognising the need
- Understanding who the players are
- Establishing channels (including funding)
- Realistic targets
- Enough knowledge
  - Too much wastes time, money and expectation
  - Too little drives mismatches between supply and need
- Knowing the boundaries
  - What you know
  - What you don't know
  - What you can know
  - What you can't know  (at least not beforehand)

# Establishing what is needed

- Getting the truth from people
  - Enough information
  - Alternative sources
  - No blame
- Measuring things
  - Real targets
  - Not because you can
  - How – and who - measured
- Acting on what you learn
  - Or stop finding it out
  - Trust your self and your people

# Is this what you have now?

- Technology

- Process

- People

- There are tools that can help
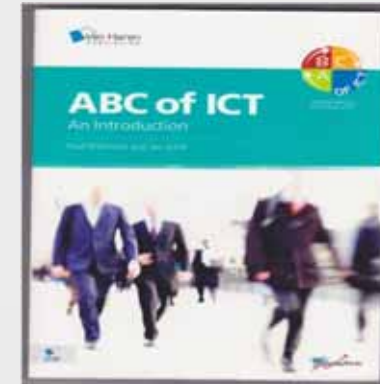




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# Doing the wrong things

- Typical IT approaches to service management
- Doing the wrong things very well
  - Just about making how you deliver easier
  - likely to improve service providers life and not make service worse
  - Short term perspective
  - has some merits for second division people
  - Risk avoidance but at a cost
- But do remember Hippocrates
  - First do no harm
  - Not as true in other circumstances

# Direct role, action, responsibilities & consequences

- Changing things requires changing things
- Emphasising service management (note absence of IT)
- Setting more customer related metrics and targets
- Success may not always be the shape you expect
  - An example – North West Memorial hospital in Chicago
    - **Strategy** – Align your goals with the business and build a framework that will keep it moving.
    - **Outcome Improvement** – Transform improvements in process into improvements in business outcomes through aggressive goals.
    - **Process Improvement** – Identify and improve troubled areas and begin to socialize the concepts of service management.

"IT became major recognized risk to the organization."
Was this a Problem Statement? - No  a success statement!

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*it*SMF

# Good may be - up, down, both or neither
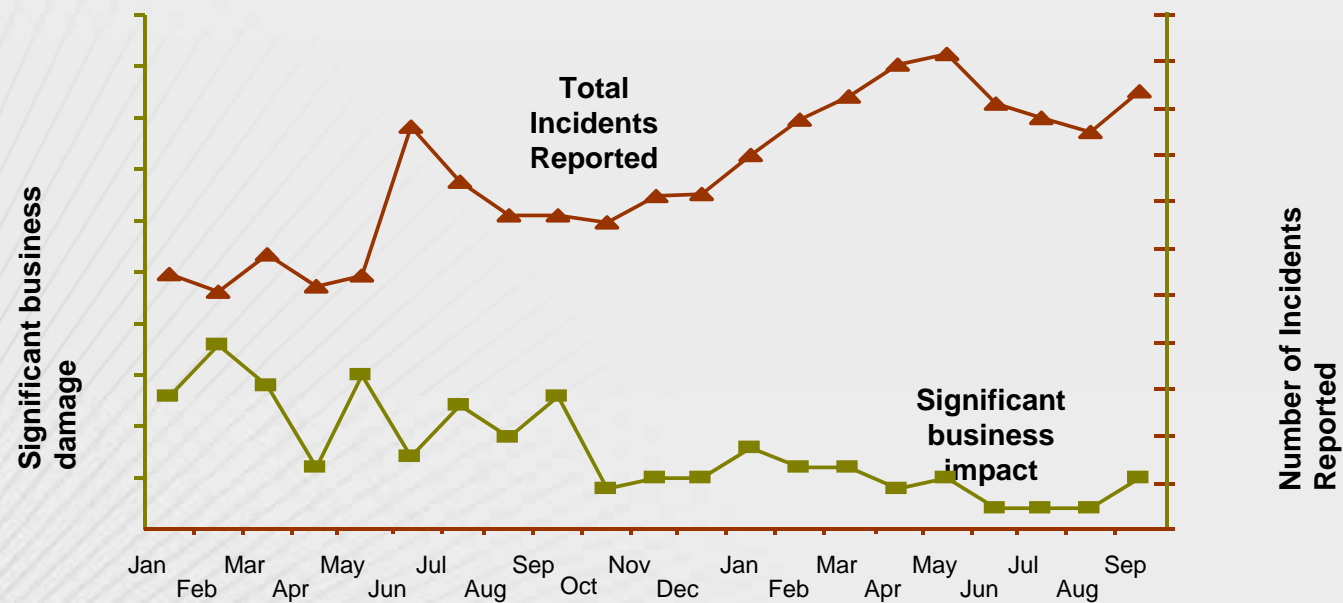


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# Making change stick

- Remember service management is not a project
- Tomorrow they'll want something different


Food by Luciana Abreu, 2008

# Scope of the changes needed

- IT people
  - Really believe that invisible = good
  - Understand that they are in service management (as well as IT)

- Customers
  - Must play an active role
  - involve other stakeholders
    - Know who they are
    - encourage them to realise it too
  - Peripheral stakeholders – like finance - can destroy good work

# What could possibly go wrong?

- Resistance
  - Everyone hates change
    - Too much effort
    - Not enough fun
    - Why should we care?
  - My job is IT, not finance or production or HR
  - What have they ever done for us?
- Defensiveness and Misunderstandings
  - We work in IT – so our success is about doing IT well
  - We do our job well – I have ticks against all my objectives for last year
  - Trying to care about customers without knowing who they are
  - Measuring the wrong things
  - Doing the wrong things

# How it might happen?

- High level statements and visibility
  - process owner -> service owner – as key role
  - Mission statements talk of what is done, not how
  - Any mention of 'benefit' has to say who receives the benefit
    - Northwest hospital again?
- Measuring the right things
- Customers seeing what they pay for – and paying for it
- Spreading the word
  - Workshops
  - Simulations
  - Exchanges and visits
  - secondments

# Recommendations

- Please use this Recommendations slide if the Action Plan slide does not suit.
- You can use both if you like.

# Recommendations
## Go forth and manage services

- It's really just a matter of looking in the right direction

- And seeing what is actually there.

# Additional Resources

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Web:
www.ibm.com/smarterplanet/servicemanagement

Look there for information and blogs ☺