

BEST PRACTICE NEWS

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Dear Customers

2007/08 was an exciting year which saw ILX Group going from strength to strength.

We launched a brand new product – Programme and Project Sponsorship Qualification (PPS), which is accredited by the APM Group and can be taken via e-learning or by instructor-led training and we have featured in the press a lot with contract win announcements such as Solihull Council.

The aim of this newsletter is to update you on what has been happening within ILX Group and to update you on new developments and contract wins, as well as providing you with information about the Best Practice Industry.

Have a great Summer.



Ken Scott, Chief Executive



Brand New
Qualification



Programme and Project Sponsorship Qualification (PPS)

In today's modern world organisations are continually moving forward, changing, reviewing and updating their capabilities on a regular basis. The implementation of new strategies and initiatives will typically be delivered by targeted programmes and/or projects.

Such programmes and projects require a leader and champion to sponsor and take accountability for successful delivery.

This programme has been developed to provide a clear understanding of what is required in the key role of Programme or Project Sponsor. It addresses the key questions not only of "What should I be doing?" but also "What is an appropriate level of my involvement?" and "What should others be doing for me?"

Course Content

This e-learning course consists of four complementary modules, detailed as follows:

Module 1. The Role of the Sponsor

- What should we do?
- Why are we doing it?
- What do I need?
- What will stop me?

Module 2. Working With People

- Who and how?
- Identifying and overcoming resistance
- Communication and rapport
- Building the right team

Module 3. Identifying and Establishing a Programme/Project

- The environment
- What is the target?
- How can I be sure we can deliver?

Module 4. The Delivery Journey

- Staying in control
- Is it good practice or not?
- Am I being told all I should be?
- Reaching the destination

Accreditation

This e-learning course prepares participants to sit the new APM Group Programme and Project Sponsorship Qualification. The format of this exam is as follows:

- Complex multiple choice
- Scenario-based
- 10 questions
- 90 minutes
- 65% required to pass

Duration

This full course can be delivered by CD-ROM, network or intranet, and provides training equivalent to a two day classroom course.

Why IT Needs Business Support: the case for comprehensive IT Training

There is a common feeling amongst many IT managers that they are not given enough training and support to do their job properly. When given the time to attend a training course, it often conflicts with work pressures or an IT crisis requires them to stay at the office. What are the business ramifications of having an IT department that is not fully skilled?

Eddie Kilkelly, Managing Director, ILX Group plc (ILX), looks at this issue and outlines the business benefits that can be realised by providing IT with comprehensive training and support.

Articles about 'bridging the gap' between IT and business commonly focus on how closer alignment would help the business get what it needs from IT, such as software that fulfils a business need, or streamlined processes, for example. They tend not to examine what IT needs from the business – such as a training

programme that keeps skills relevant in the fast moving world of technology – and the negative impact that this misalignment can have on the business as a whole.

A neat illustration of this is a recent independent survey by Vanson Bourne about the adoption of ITIL® Version 3.

67% of IT managers and directors said they are simply not equipped to change over to ITIL Version 3

The study, which questioned 100 senior IT managers and directors from a variety of industries, also showed that, of the 62 per cent of businesses that are planning to migrate to ITIL® Version 3, only 17 per cent have any timeline in place for doing so, with only one per cent scheduling the change over in the next six months. In fact, 67% of IT managers and directors said they are simply not equipped to

change over to ITIL Version 3.

ITIL® provides a systematic approach to the provisioning and management of IT services, from inception through design, implementation, operation and continual improvement. ITIL® Version 3 was launched last year to provide an integrated service lifecycle approach to IT Service Management.

In an environment where business profitability and stakeholder loyalty is dependent on the high availability, dependability and security of IT services, it is perhaps unsurprising that the survey showed seven out of every ten senior IT managers and directors believed that having staff qualified in ITIL® would give their business a competitive edge.

The research suggests that a common barrier to adoption of the ITIL® Version 3 are lack of comprehension from the business – with 54% of IT managers and directors claiming that the benefits of ITIL® were not fully understood by management. However, an even bigger issue, as reported by 57% of senior IT managers and directors, is lack of support from the business for training, resulting in staff being too busy to take time off work to train. This is certainly borne out by our own experience, where we see a definite desire to adopt ITIL® Version 3 amongst IT professionals and yet an equal amount of hesitance from the business. As a direct result of this, adoption of ITIL® Version 3 is being hampered and the benefits of ITIL®, which include optimal service provision, reduced costs and improved use of skills and experience – are not being realised by business.

What is ITIL?

IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) is an integrated set of best practice recommendations with common definitions and terminology. ITIL covers areas such as Incident Management, Problem Management, Change Management, Release Management and the Service Desk. ITIL® Version 3 was launched on 30th May 2007 to provide an integrated service lifecycle approach to IT Service Management.

This discord between the business and IT is well documented and yet we do have a powerful example of what can be achieved when IT and business work together to solve an issue that is a threat to the productivity of the business.

Y2K: A global problem – drawing upon past experiences

As the Millennium approached, the impact of losing access to computer facilities was realised, quantified and plans were made to avoid disaster, or at the very least to recover quickly. In the face of the threat, companies and organisations worldwide checked and upgraded their computer systems.

When the clocks rolled over into 2000, no significant computer failures occurred which was primarily due to the fact that business and IT worked so closely together. The threat was clearly recognised, staff were trained, preventative action was taken in advance, and the vast majority of issues had been fixed correctly. However, the successful handling of Y2K has also had an unexpected downside: it has made us all complacent when it comes to the 24/7 availability of our corporate computing systems.

In reality, 'disasters' happen on a small scale every day, with systems failing for a number of reasons, ranging from

computer equipment or network failure, misconfiguration and 'fat fingers' through to human error, fire, flood or theft of equipment.

Although some may balk at the idea of the temporary loss of service provision being classified as a business disaster, the real and hidden costs of an outage should not be underestimated. For example, when email goes down, in addition to the lost revenue and productivity there is the 'cost' of user confidence or even the credibility of your organisation (in so much as to external parties the company appears not to have robust IT systems).

Improved IT service translates to improved business practices and benefits the bottom line

However, the story of optimal service provision is not just one of avoiding disaster. By integrating business strategy with IT service strategy, the business will be able to realise many benefits including cost savings, standardised processes, enhanced productivity, improved communications and workflow... the list goes on. The key point to be made here is that improved IT service translates to improved business practices and benefits the bottom line.

Training Solutions

IT Managers are aware that to constantly deliver optimal service provision, their staff must be highly skilled. They need to have those skills constantly refreshed and updated to remain relevant. They need to understand business priorities and to fully understand their job. In short, they need top quality training on an ongoing basis.

Many IT managers often feel that they are not given enough training and support to do their job properly, and when training is offered IT staff are not given the adequate time, space or framework required to make learning a success. For example, when employees are given time off to attend a training course, in the best case scenario it may conflict with work pressures or in a worst case they have to remain at the office as there is an IT crisis.

This can be an incredibly frustrating situation as, without a fully skilled staff, the IT Managers are aware that they run the risk of exposure to more issues and also that time spent fire-fighting is not being spent improving service provision and benefiting the business.

IT staff are a critical part of the infrastructure and it is often not feasible to release them from the office for days

On the other hand, the IT staff are a critical part of the infrastructure and it is often not feasible to release them from the office for days at a time, a problem which is exacerbated by the simple fact that training scheduling can not take into account unforeseen crises.

In order to address these issues, forward thinking organisations are looking at ways to enable IT staff to get the comprehensive knowledge and skills they need without physically removing them from the office. These organisations are taking a blended approach to training.

ITIL® provides a systematic and professional approach to the management of IT service provision. Adopting its guidance offers users a huge range of benefits that include:

- **Reduced costs**
- **Improved IT services through the use of proven best practice processes;**
- **Improved customer satisfaction through a more professional approach to service delivery**
- **Standards and guidance;**
- **Improved productivity;**
- **Improved use of skills and experience**
- **Improved delivery of third party services through the specification of ITIL® or ISO 0000 as the standard for service delivery in services procurements.**

Source: Official ITIL® website: <http://www.itil-officialsite.com/home/home.asp>



2008 sees big changes for ITIL®

After a total refresh of the ITIL® suite of literature last year and the introduction of ITIL® V3, 2008 now sees the ITIL® qualifications being renamed.

The ITIL® Diploma will be called the ITIL® Expert and the ITIL® Advanced Diploma is now the ITIL® Master.

As well as the name changes, the target dates for release of the ITIL® V3 Intermediate exams are:

October 1, 2008

Service Lifecycle Modules:

- Service Transition
- Service Operation

Service Capability Modules:

- Service Offerings & Agreements
- Operational Support & Analysis
- Release, Control & Validation

January 1, 2009

Service Lifecycle Modules:

- Service Strategy
- Service Design
- Continual Service Improvement
- Managing Across the Lifecycle

Service Capability Modules:

- Planning, Protection & Optimization

New MD for Best Practice



Eddie Kilkelly, who was previously Operations Director for Best Practice and a key force behind the division's recent success and development, has taken over as Managing Director.

Eddie has been involved in the Best Practice industry for over 15 years. During this time he has worked as both a Project and IT Service Manager and more recently as an implementation consultant providing support to organisations who have adopted the use of Best Practice methods including PRINCE2™, MSP™ and ITIL®.

Eddie worked for many years with the UK Ministry of Defence where he managed the implementation of IT applications and infrastructure throughout Europe and latterly provided guidance to defence-wide programmes as an internal consultant. Since leaving the MoD in 1998, Eddie has worked extensively throughout the training and consultancy industry with a client list that has included Barclays, HBOS, Siemens and DHL. Eddie is responsible for all aspects of delivery of Best Practice training and related consultancy provided by the ILX Group including e-learning, instructor led training and blended workshops.

Free PRINCE2™ & ITIL® Awareness Seminars – August

ILX is running free ½ day PRINCE2™ and ITIL® seminars throughout August in Nantwich and Milton Keynes

These seminars provide the ideal opportunity for those who want to understand ITIL® and PRINCE2™, the different training paths and whether they are the right qualifications for your team or your business.

Our speakers are experts in their fields and will be able to answer any questions about PRINCE2™ and ITIL®, the various qualification routes and the steps required to implement.

To find out more visit www.prince2.com/prince2-awareness-seminar.asp

SUPPORTING YOU!

ILX has developed the online **Best Practice Bookstore** to enable you to purchase additional manuals to support your training, whether it's using e-learning or attending instructor-led courses.

Call or email for our latest brochure
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Email: sales@bestpracticebookstore.com
or visit: www.bestpracticebookstore.com



ILX GROUP BRIDGES THE ITIL® SKILLS GAP FOR SOLIHULL COUNCIL

ILX wins contract to standardise & up skill all ICT staff to ITIL® Version 3

Tuesday 25th March 2008, ILX Group plc (ILX), the training services company that provides flexible training services through traditional classroom, workshops, multi-media training and e-Learning is assisting Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to even out the different skill levels across its Information Communications Technology (ICT) staff. The contract, implemented in January 2008, involves putting its ICT staff through ITIL® Version 3 foundation training. The training programme encompasses all members of ICT including Service Desk, Application Developers and Project Managers training.

Andrew Kirk is the ICT Quality Manager for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, describes the situation before the ITIL® implementation, "There were scatterings of knowledge of ITIL®. Some people had done ITIL® Foundation years ago; some knew a bit, others to whom it was an acronym. We put it out to tender and various companies came back with tutor based training, but we decided to go with ILX because of its e-Learning option.

Putting our people through classroom training would have been impossible. People didn't have to book on the course and then disappear out of the office for three days. They could train at their own speed. ILX Group offered us the best value and flexible approach – and in fact saved around 60% compared to tutor lead provisions."

The timing of the implementation was fortuitous as the Council was in the process of rolling out their Oracle learning management (OLM) system. ILX's ITIL® solution integrated excellently with the Oracle system which held all employee training records. "The ILX system had to be compliant with the Oracle product as once it is installed the Oracle system takes over the management of the training product," explains Andrew Kirk.

It was the blended learning aspect that attracted Solihull Council to the ILX Group. "We knew we were going to be using the classroom training for some areas. ILX gave us the blend that we required. Some of our people are doing it at home, we've put some PCs in a quiet area so

people can go and use it. It's as flexible as we can make it," says Andrew Kirk.

The contract does not include examination costs, but as Andrew Kirk says, "ILX gave us a very economical way of getting people through the training as everyone is doing it at their own pace. We've been able to prioritise groups that need the knowledge first, so for example the service desk needs to have the knowledge as quickly as possible so they are beginning it first. By the end of the year I expect everyone to have completed the training."

Seven out of ten IT managers say they are not equipped to change over to ITIL® Version 3, according to research from ILX Group plc. This is despite the fact that the same number of IT managers (61 per cent), believe that having IT staff qualified in ITIL® gives businesses a competitive edge.

Eddie Kilkelly, Managing Director of the Best Practice Division within ILX Group concludes, "It is encouraging to see that companies such as Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council are providing their staff with the support to make the transition over to ITIL® Version 3 as smooth as possible. The fact that the organisation was trialing the Oracle system and our product could be integrated so successfully was extremely positive and made the implementation very satisfying for both parties."

ILX ENABLES SUSSEX HEALTH INFORMATICS SERVICE (HIS) TO SAVE SIGNIFICANT FUNDS AND IMPROVE TRAINING PROVISION & DELIVERY TO 25,000 NHS USERS

ILX e-learning courses enable the UK's largest HIS to support staff development and career progression within the NHS

Thursday 17th March, ILX Group plc (ILX), the training services company, has enabled Sussex Health Information Service (HIS) to achieve significant savings while greatly enhancing training provision for its 400 staff. Sussex HIS is the UK's largest HIS and is using flexible e-learning courses delivered online via ILX's Best Practice Portal to aid staff progression, and support front line carers to deliver enhanced patient care.

The portal framework has enabled Sussex HIS to create a unique learning pathway to project management, stipulating that users must progress through the APM Introductory Certificate (APMIC), through PRINCE2™ Foundation to Managing Successful Programmes (MSP™) Foundation. This approach ensures that staff can offer sound project management skills and methodology which in turn supports front line NHS carers to deliver enhanced patient care through the application of the latest technology.

Wendy Dearing, Senior Lead for Training, Change & Process Continuity, and Head of Education Training Development (EDT) for Sussex HIS said, "Delivering best practice e-learning courses via the ILX portal has really enhanced our training provision. We now have central visibility of the access, progress and

performance of our 25,000 users, based over 17 sites. Access to courses is improved, and an internal survey has shown that our pass rate is still as high as it was with the classroom-based approach. The significant cost savings and the ability to provide more training to greater numbers of staff is a huge bonus, especially for an organisation such as ours."

Sussex HIS is using ILX e-learning courses to provide staff with competencies that are a requirement of the mandatory Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF), a structure that supports personal development and career progression within the NHS. "The ILX portal is not only helping us to ensure that our staff are effective, but also supporting their development. If there is a gap between the skills or knowledge that an individual needs for a position – either their current one or one they hope to progress to – then we can quickly and easily deliver training to that individual, in their own time, at their own pace and at their own desk," continued Dearing.

Sussex HIS is offering its e-learning courses via the ILX portal to its two neighbouring HIS in Kent and Surrey. Although separate organisations, they share a close working

relationship. "The ILX portal has provided us with a way to deliver the benefits of e-learning to our partner organisations, enabling us to share both best practice and cost savings. This is excellent practice; after all, if we in the informatics service don't fully embrace new forms of learning, how can we expect anyone else in the NHS to?" concluded Dearing.

The Sussex Health Informatics Service (HIS) provides IT and associated services to NHS member organisations across Sussex.

Eddie Kilkelly, Managing Director of the Best Practice Division within ILX Group said, "There is a compelling business case for using best practice e-learning courses and Sussex HIS provides a great example of this. Not only did they solve the immediate problems they had with visibility of staff progress, but actually enhanced the standard and scope of their learning programmes while saving significant funds. We're really proud to have been involved in that process."

The ILX best practice portal offers a range of fully accredited project, programme and IT service management training, aimed at all levels of students to access on demand any time. In addition to APMIC, PRINCE2 Foundation and MSP Foundation, the portal can also give students' access to ITIL® V3 Foundation and Finance for Non-Financial Managers courses.

The portal is available to new and existing customers through an annual licence based on the number of access keys purchased. This pricing structure will give customers flexibility when purchasing the licence, as there is no restriction on course titles that can be used.