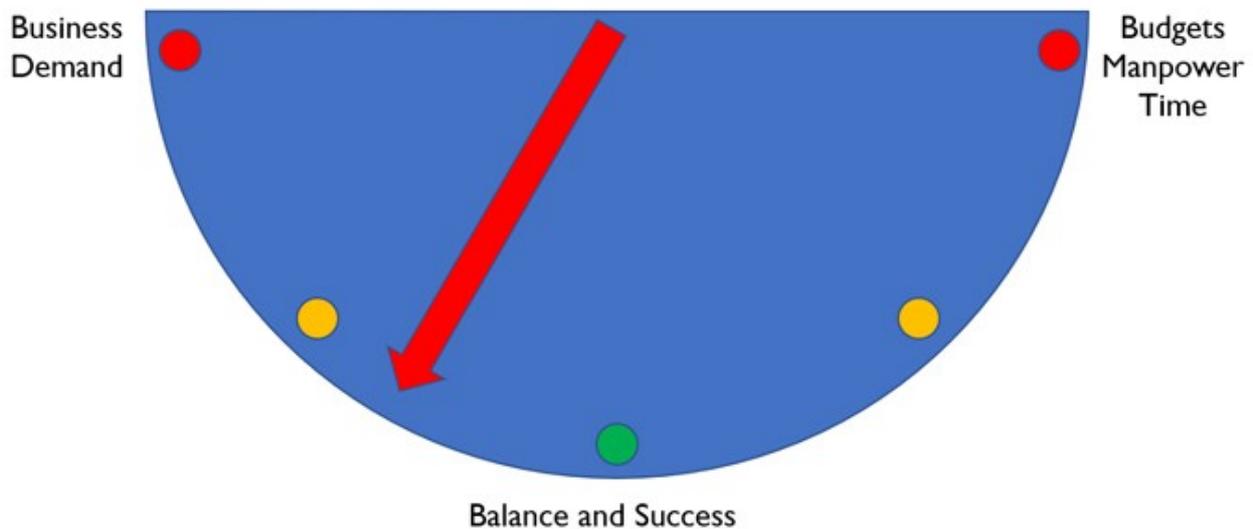


The Value of Service Management

[linkedin.com/pulse/value-service-management-clive-porter-brown](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/value-service-management-clive-porter-brown)



The purpose of technology is to enable a business to be agile and profitable by ensuring data is available to the right people at the right place at the right time, enabling informed choices to be assessed and effective data led decisions be made. The goal of “Digital Transformation” is to achieve this by leveraging cloud-based services rather than favouring traditional on-premise services. This in turn offers flexibility and the opportunity to reduce your overall cost of delivery.

The role of IT and Service Management? Bringing the business and IT together, making sure that required technology and services meet the business need and what is used is in place and effective, delivering on the strategy and enabling the vision of “Digital Transformation” to become a reality.

The service management framework confirms or establishes relationships, identifies requirements and manages the transition of services to operation. The framework in turn ensures the solution is fit for use and purpose, thus realising value from investment. By knowing what is in place, where and how it is used, a solid foundation is created for the business to progress to a future target state. This target state is where required services can be deployed easily, managed and improved. Helping to eliminate waste and in so doing maximising the business investment.

A reliable service management framework also becomes a repeatable format for customer service across the business. The same principles and processes that drive IT can be harnessed for use across other areas of the business such as finance and HR. This in turn enables collaboration through a common shared framework that becomes pervasive to the business.

For a small business, the demands on technology have parallels with that of larger corporations, albeit on a different scale. The smaller business may be less able to formalise due to more stringent financial and operational constraints, although their small size also adds to their agility. Whatever the type or size of business, the key is to take the step back and not be caught “being busy” with what IT think needs to be done.

Regardless of size of operation the question of process engineering also comes to the fore. Having a formal process is good, but the value of fully customising to every situation has to be questioned.

Best practice advocates the use of Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) applications. The COTS application does everything the same way for every customer. Best practice also reinforces that every business is unique and thus a framework rather than a methodology is offered. So, what is really different and where can commonality be leveraged? What is unique about a business is the product or service that it produces and the data generated, but to deliver that can follow a common path.

Service management processes can be templated, with a standard service model working for the majority of businesses. Larger fragmented businesses also benefit, establishing common tools across the organisation, putting them on the path to reducing their complexity. Execute iteratively, do not to seek perfection, establish a repeatable process and look for balance that does not add excessive bureaucracy.

So why is any of this important and why should it matter for a business? Quite simply a service model creates repeatable methods to remove waste, track assets, issues and risks. It tells the status of what is working and what is not. It generates qualitative data for the business that represents the current state and planned future state for the business. The data underpins the business case and becomes the foundation of continuous improvement, making services more effective without seeking perfection and putting effort into unused or unwanted functionality.

By tracking assets and services the business can avoid replication of their service portfolio. The state of software and hardware assets can be reviewed, helping to ensure key costs around licensing and maintenance are under control and tracking to budgets. This data will add substance to the business plan and support the forecast.

The net result is IT working in harmony with the business and this makes business initiatives such as Digital Transformation and Industry 4.0 stand a better chance of success.