ITIL®

CASE STUDY

The City of Pittsburgh

› **USING ITIL®4 FOR BETTER PUBLIC SERVICE PROVISION**

PeopleCert

1. INTRODUCTION

Pittsburgh is the second-largest city in Pennsylvania, with an estimated population of 300,000 people. Its city government's Innovation and Performance (I&P) department delivers technology services and support for over 3,500 city workers. The I&P team includes core IT services as well as the Mayor's 311 line, GIS, cable team, cybersecurity, civic innovation, performance improvement, data analytics, and project management services. Until recently, the quality of the IT services and support provided by the I&P department was lacking. Various issues caused the department to be portrayed as dysfunctional, and city workers had little faith in its abilities as a result.

Significant change was needed throughout I&P; this need led to the adoption of ITIL4 service management best practices. This adoption was one of four I&P improvements. It aimed to deliver the quality of IT services and support that the City of Pittsburgh's workers and citizens needed.

The ITIL adoption has not only improved ways of working, with associated time and financial savings, but introduced a cultural transformation. The I&P department is now committed to serving city workers as customers, not just the users of its technology services.

Figure 1.1 Pittsburgh is the second largest city in Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh is the second largest city in Pennsylvania and has a population of 300,000

2. THE I&P DEPARTMENT'S PROBLEMS

Sylvia Harris, the CISO for the city of Pittsburgh, assessed the old I&P department and identified the following issues:

〉 The I&P teams were siloed. IT personnel used to be embedded within other departments, and they were steeped in outdated IT practices such as the waterfall methodology.

〉 There were times when the I&P department agreed to something but did not have the bandwidth to actually do it, and times where they could have easily helped but did not.

〉 The service provision and support were inconsistent.

〉 There was no common language across the different teams, which caused communication issues and confusion.

〉 There were no agreed responsibilities for different request and issue types. As a result, requests and issues were unnecessarily passed between different I&P teams and personnel.

The I&P department lacked consistency, and consequently, their customers lost confidence in their ability to deliver services. As a result, departments would often find their own IT solutions and then expect the I&P department to make them work. This included the procurement of IT devices and third-party services. This, however, was only the internal impact of the I&P department's various issues.

As the I&P department's internal customers serve external customers (the citizens of Pittsburgh), the impact of delays and failures that affect the public can appear in the media, such as IT issues that delay the allocation of permits to citizens.

The bottom line was that **the I&P department desperately needed to be able to provide better IT services and support to the 3,500 city workers across city departments,** including:

〉 Citiparks	〉 Law
〉 Citizen's Police Review Board	〉 Mayor's Office
〉 City Council	〉 Municipal Pension Fund
〉 City Clerk's Office	〉 Office of Equity
〉 Controller's office	〉 Office of Management and Budget
〉 Department of Mobility and Infrastructure	〉 Permits, Licensing, and Inspection
〉 Ethics	〉 City Planning
〉 Finance	〉 Public Safety, Police, EMS, and Fire
〉 Humans Resources & Civil Service	〉 Public Works, which covers pavements and environmental services

3. THE I&P'S LONG ROAD TO IMPROVEMENT

Senior personnel within the I&P department had been trying to decipher how to fix these issues for a long time. Many of the issues were highlighted in a 2016 external audit by Deloitte, on behalf of the Office of Management and Budget. The audit recommended the adoption of formal service management processes and suggested ITIL.

ITIL was well-suited to the I&P department's needs. However, the required improvements were delayed. Change finally started to happen in 2018, when a few I&P team members underwent ITIL training and realized that it could help the department to improve. January 2019 saw the introduction of a new director who had previously adopted ITIL in another organization. He wanted to replicate previous successes in Pittsburgh. The department's leadership team was enthusiastic that he was familiar with the methodology. They knew that the director would support their efforts in adopting ITIL.

4. THE START OF THE I&P DEPARTMENT'S IMPROVEMENT

With the director's backing, Sylvia assembled an ITIL team to gain buy-in and create excitement from everyone in the department for the upcoming changes. The team also acted as a resource that people go to with their questions and issues to discuss how ITIL can be used. It became mandatory for all IT staff to complete ITIL 4 Foundation training, as the ITIL Initiative/Program pursued its new mission of 'the customer is the mission'. Consequently, the I&P department was focused on serving Pittsburgh's workers and citizens better. Although the training was mandatory for all of the department's employees, the test provided at the end of the training was optional. However, thanks to the excellent content provided by Adam Griffith of New Horizons, all I&P staff took the test, passed, and obtained an ITIL 4 Foundation certificate.

ITIL 4 provided the I&P department with a framework to help resolve its many issues. **IT operations went from being individual-reliant to process or practice-based. The I&P department's key improvement objectives included:**

❭ **Saying yes to end-users more frequently**

❭ **Removing silos, which are viewed as a potential risk to successful service management**

❭ **Ensuring consistency, including in terms of ownership and responsibility**

❭ **Speaking the same language across departments**

❭ **Delivering better services and support to all customers**

Initially, I&P personnel had mixed expectations of the changes that ITIL adoption would produce. Due to the mandatory nature of the training, ITIL was initially seen as just another training requirement, rather than something for both the collective, and individual good.

5. SUCCESSFUL ITIL 4 TRAINING

When scheduling the ITIL training, Sylvia and the ITIL team decided to also include employees from City departments other than the I&P department. This presented challenges, from gaining buy-in, to the creative use of vocabulary when engaging with other departments. For example, incident management has very different connotations for police personnel. Therefore, it was agreed that everyone would now work with the same vocabulary.

Senior I&P leadership was also involved in the training, which helped to cement high-level support for the change programme. The ITIL team was even able to involve those who were less technologically proficient. Subsequently, the training events occurred in September, October, and November 2019.

The ITIL team also employed various organizational change management tools and techniques to get people involved in the training events, and the later ITIL-inspired improvements. For example, before the first training event, the ITIL team advocated the value of ITIL 4 training via coffee chats every Thursday. The ITIL team arrived with coffee, gave a presentation that focused on ITIL, and explained what ITIL is for and how it could help everyone. The team used fliers and emails to promote the weekly sessions and eventually the number of participants outgrew the meeting space.

The ITIL team created and displayed posters in the conference rooms. These posters depicted the ITIL guiding principles and acted as a visual reminder to staff in all departments. The seven guiding principles have helped various teams focus on the most important issues as they improve, so they can better support their customers.

Plus, considering the issues with siloed working, the ITIL team agreed that the best way to change habitual behaviours would be to substitute them with something else. As a result, the ITIL training emphasized the negative consequences of the siloed mindset and indirectly suggested replacing it with a healthier culture of continual improvement. Here, Lean gold belt workshops have been offered to teams since July 2018. These provide the opportunity for process improvement mapping, with many I&P process maps created for the first time.

6. THE ROLE OF NEW HORIZONS

Although some organizations might be tempted to procure ITIL 4 training services based on the price alone, the city of Pittsburgh's and New Horizon's approach was far more inclusive; it was more of a partnership than a sales transaction.

New Horizons had been working closely with the city on numerous training initiatives. The lead trainer for the ITIL 4 training was Adam Griffith, who was involved from the beginning in the successful partnership. He surpassed the usual upfront activities, such as supporting sales professionals with answers to product-specific client questions or participating in pre-training conference calls. Adam was, in effect, an additional member of the City's ITIL team.

This involvement continued after training, with Adam acting as an expert advisor to the city of Pittsburgh throughout the initiative. Ultimately, Adam and New Horizons were viewed as an experienced and expert resource, which was available throughout the implementation process. New Horizons was an important partner in the city's success, not just a training provider. Adam played a vital role as a coach and champion, something that is being increasingly seen in large-scale adoptions of ITIL.

7. THE RESULTS OF THE I&P DEPARTMENT'S ITIL ADOPTION

The department's ITIL adoption greatly exceeded leadership's expectations:

〉 **The level of participation, both inside and outside of I&P, was greater than expected.**

〉 **The I&P staff are the same people as before the commencement of ITIL training, but the team now feels more supported by leadership, so much so that they can take the initiative to find solutions autonomously.**

〉 **The ITIL framework has infiltrated communications across the department and with customers. Staff now have the tools to try solutions, create consistent processes, and work collaboratively.**

In terms of tangible benefits, the City of Pittsburgh's adoption of ITIL 4 and the related process improvements resulted in both time and financial savings. In late 2017, as the I&P leadership team planned for 2020, continual improvement was a key strategy for improving not only the way the department worked, but also its service to customers. Since the launch of the 'Gold Belt' process improvement workshop by Heidi Norman, Deputy Director in July 2018, workshops have been offered once or twice per month until early March 2020, with participants invited from across the City. Participants are encouraged to gain a gold belt certificate. Since the workshop's inception, the value of the improvements made by the now 23 gold-belt-certified staff, total over $230,000. The I&P team is responsible for 56% of this total. The communication of these benefits to the Mayor's Office helped to both prove the value of ITIL adoption and the continuation of the city of Pittsburgh's ITIL journey.

In addition to the direct benefits of ITIL adoption, the introduction of ITIL benefited other I&P improvement initiatives, which were the departmental reorganization, network improvements, and technological refresh of the Windows 7 IT endpoints. ITIL was particularly beneficial to the Deputy Director when leading the departmental reorganization task, which involved the adoption of a common language for the creation of job descriptions that clarify who is responsible for each area.

ITIL has also changed the I&P department's approach to service delivery and support. 'The customer is the mission' is at the forefront for all staff, and this is reflected in their actions. IT support has evolved into people support.

Figure 7.1 The effect of the gold belt certificate

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BUSINESS CHAMPION
WORLD CLASS

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The communication of these benefits to the C-suite helped to both prove the **value of ITIL adoption** and the continuation of the city of Pittsburgh's ITIL journey.

8. EXAMPLES OF THE I&P DEPARTMENT'S BENEFITS

I&P staff found that the gold belt training helped them to understand and apply the ITIL principles that they had learned, with the improvements focused on I&P customers.

For example:

❭ creating a template so departments across the City can build and manage their own pages on the City website

❭ streamlining the City Cuts Programme (which provides help to eligible citizens with mowing their lawn) to make it easier to enrol citizens

❭ using GIS to optimize routes and the number of staff needed each day for assessing the equipment needs in over one hundred locations for the conversion to Windows 10

❭ standardizing SLA, SOP, and SOW templates to facilitate the contracting process and improve the business relationships with all City departments

❭ assessing the training room using the 6S methodology (sort, set in order, shine, standardize, sustain, and safety) to improve the user experience.

I&P has found the synergy between gold belt learning and ITIL powerful. The process mapping capability enhances the department's thinking regarding continual improvement, service catalogue management, and other ITIL practices.

9. HOW ITIL HELPED WITH THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

In the first quarter of 2020, the new ITIL-aligned capabilities were seen as key enablers in handling the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. The newly renamed service desk worked closely with the business relationship managers to organize and prioritize a department's requests for the equipment that would allow their employees to work from home. Because of their experience with ITIL, they were able to create processes for receiving requests and providing solutions.

The entire department supported each other and collaborated to assist all of the City's departments. For example, the innovation team created training materials and other documents to instruct users on how to use virtual meeting apps. The communications team created a solution to allow Council members to hold public meetings from home. The infrastructure team worked closely with the CISO to create options for endusers to access the network outside of the infrastructure by distributing RSA tokens.

The City's Chief of Staff, Daniel Gilman, recognized the I&P team's achievements in supporting the city's response to the crisis. He said: 'I also want to take a moment to recognize the absolutely amazing work from I&P. They have basically been able to take an antiquated system and get a whole city operating remotely in ten days.

Dozens of new laptops out, payroll from home, helping boards and authorities work remotely, continuing emergency network repair and rewiring of key facilities, 24/7 support of public safety, 311 reps who have put themselves last so that the council and mayor's office staff and others could work from home first. Dana Robinson and his team have been remarkable.'

10. THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH'S ITIL JOURNEY CONTINUES

The phrase 'ITIL is a journey, not a destination' might seem like a cliché but, given that ITIL is based on continual improvement, it is true. Early in the initiative, the ITIL team recognized the importance of continual organizational learning and change.

As a result, the City of Pittsburgh requested that their training partner, New Horizons, help them develop people into internal ITIL trainers, champions, coaches, and advocates. Hence, at least two ITIL team members were present for every ITIL 4 training event, which improved their knowledge of ITIL. They often co-taught staff by providing valuable internal perspectives, personal insights, exam preparation tips, and details on the next steps for the initiative.

As a result of the successful ITIL training and implementation, I&P wants to resume ITIL training for new hires and for existing City staff, throughout all departments and City authorities. New Horizons is again playing its part and will be involved with the training planning, its delivery, and improvement execution. The department also plans to procure an IT service management solution, to better enable its operations and outcomes.

The ITIL team has continued to lead the progress with ITIL, using the coffee chats as a time to discuss the service catalogue and how teams should document their work. With the reorganization occurring at the same time, teams have already begun to document their work processes, as some of these things would transition to new teams.

The director has created a space for a change register to assist in the approval and documentation of changes to a standardized process. I&P also began using Microsoft SharePoint as a centralized place to keep policies and processes, and to submit change requests.

The gold belt workshops have been very popular. For example, the Department of Public Works requested that all their staff undergo the process improvement training. Other departments have also requested to attend classes. All this is the result of the ITIL training and I&P's willingness to become the best IT department in the city.

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