

From ITSM Academy's Webinar on June 19, 2008. Presenter was Michael Cardinal.

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CONCEPTS & TERMS

How would the speaker define policy, standard, and guidelines?

Start with the dictionary definition for terms. Next, really look at what you mean – a policy has to be around those things that your organization wants to see done consistently. Standard equates to those things for which you want standardization and repeatability.

How critical do you think it is that everybody really understand the language and terms the same way when working on a project such as an ITIL initiative?

ITIL is a **language with its own technical jargon or vocabulary**. Language is our fundamental means of communication. It's absolutely vital to get onto the same page. Without this common understanding, it can be like having French, German, Russian, Spanish, and English all being used in the same conversation. Later, you may realize you were really "violently agreeing," while really agreeing on concepts but using the same terms in different ways.

What is the best way to teach IT staff with no knowledge of ITIL to use terms in the same way?

Get people together and talk through various frames for a word. Have people bring examples of how they think they would use that term. ITIL provides dictionary definitions, but is not prescriptive on how you adopt and adapt. Document it and put it in a place where everybody can get to it and see it.

In Latin America people say, "I have a doubt," while in English we say, "I have a question." These are two very different concepts. How do you suggest addressing differences such as these?

As in any situation, a literal translation won't suffice. The way people become fluent in languages is to stop trying to remember the dictionary definition of words and start thinking in conceptual frames. To get better clarification, ask people to explain to you the context in which they're trying to use a term. Go beyond the words that a person uses, and find out what they "mean" or are trying to convey. Once you get to the meaning you will be able to reconcile differences in terminology.

By dictionary, do you mean ITIL glossary?

Yes. The ITIL Glossary will provide the dictionary definition, but will not provide the context for you. You need to provide that in your own organization.

Is it best to do training first and then establish the glossary?

Yes. Learning terminology is big part of framing. The Academy offers a number of classes, and one focus of those classes is to provide contextual frames for various ITIL terms. The glossary then becomes the collection of terms, definitions and contexts.

What other groups in the business need to be trained in the definitions?

Everybody, from the most basic 9-to-5 worker up to senior management. This has to become part of your DNA. If you're an overseas organization or do overseas work, it's very helpful to know the native language even if conducting a meeting in English. You gain value by becoming fluent. In the same way, you need to become fluent in ITIL.

PUBLICATIONS

Are there references for additional reading?

Yes. I suggest you look at various frameworks, for example, MOF. These will each give you context and meaning for terms. Unfortunately, there is no one work that brings all these terms together.

ITIL® COURSES AND CERTIFICATION

There were no Course or Certification questions during the Webinar.

ISO/IEC 20000 COURSES AND CERTIFICATION

There were no ISO questions during the Webinar.

MOF COURSES AND CERTIFICATION

There were no MOF questions during the Webinar.