



## ARE PEOPLE THE NEXT 'KILLER APP'?

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Quintica SA, the service management solutions specialist and IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) software developer, has acquired accredited ITIL training and consulting company, CSMG Management Consulting, for an undisclosed sum.

Despite all the furore over the importance of customer service many companies are still just paying lip service to the concept. An illustration of this was encountered the other day when fielding a call from a potential client.

This organisation wanted to swap out its existing help desk tool and adopt a more customer focused approach. However, no staff education was envisaged because "service education and training staff is of no interest because the technology will drive the people and provide the improvements required".

Part of the justification for this point of view was a high staff turnaround. The inherent contradiction did not appear to register with the caller. Perhaps the fault lies with some of the marketing efforts of the IT industry. How many times have you heard that "this great new technology will save costs by improving productivity and reducing the staff complement" - or words to that effect? The reality is that technology is nothing more than an enabler. The people who make it work are the critical cog - and perhaps the least acknowledged component, as this example tends to suggest.

Fortunately, such short-sighted views are the exception rather than the rule. Most organisations today are fully cognisant of the role well motivated and service aware people play in delivering excellent service and a successful service improvement project.

Useful guidelines for companies faced with the challenges of service management can be drawn from the experiences of others. Almost without exception, success has been defined by:

- Investing in staff education
- Treating service management as a formal project
- Focusing on process and soft skills
- Taking time to understand customer needs
- Honesty about strengths and weaknesses
- Tackling people issues head on
- Being prepared to challenge (and change) existing practices

While this may sound like quite obvious many an IT manager can relate to Voltaire's observation that common sense is not so common. Still, it is worth noting that these issues, along with others that can make or break a service management exercise are well documented in the IT infrastructure library (ITIL).



Taking Voltaire's observation one step further, what is ITIL if not just simply put, "documented common sense". People with best practice common sense ARE the next "Killer App"

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