ITIL – Release and deployment management: roles and responsibilities

Release and deployment is primarily responsible for managing all aspects of the end to end release process. The Release and Deployment Manager will report to the Service Transition Manager as will the Service Test Manager. However, these roles should, wherever possible, be undertaken by separate people to ensure that there is always independent testing and test verification.

The Release and Deployment Manager

The Release and Deployment Manager is responsible for the planning, design, build, configuration and testing of all software and hardware to create the release package for the delivery of, or changes to, the designated service.

The Release and Deployment Manager has the following responsibilities:

- Manage all aspects of the end to end release process
- Update service knowledge management system
- Ensures coordination of build and test environments teams and release teams
- Ensures teams follow the organisation’s established policies and procedures
- Provides management reports on release progress
- Service release and deployment policy and planning
- Deals with release package design, build and configuration
- Deals with release package acceptance including business sign off
- Deals with service roll out planning including method of deployment
- Deals with release package testing to predefined acceptance criteria
- Signs off the release package for implementation
- Deals with communication, preparation and training
- Audits hardware and software before and after the implementation of release package changes
- Installs new or upgraded hardware
- Deals with storage and traceability/auditability of controlled software in both centralised and distributed systems
- Deals with release, distribution and the installation of packaged software

However, some of these responsibilities will be delegated to the relevant release team sub-process.

The Release Packaging and Build Manager

The Release Packaging and Build Manager has the following responsibilities:

- Establishes the final release configuration (e.g. knowledge, information, hardware, software and infrastructure)
- Builds the final release delivery
- Tests the final delivery prior to independent testing
- Establishes and reports outstanding known errors and workarounds
- Provides input to the final implementation sign off process
The Release Packaging and Build Manager cannot perform this role in isolation. Other functions with which there will be significant interface are:

- Security management
- Test management
- Change and service asset and configuration management
- Capacity management
- Availability management
- Incident management
- Quality management

**Deployment roles**

Deployment staff have the following responsibilities:

- Deal with the final physical delivery of the service implementation
- Coordinate release documentation and communications, including training and customer, service management and technical release notes
- Plan the deployment in conjunction with change and knowledge management and service asset and configuration management
- Provide technical and application guidance and support throughout the release process, including known errors and workarounds
- Provide feedback on the effectiveness of the release
- Record metrics for deployment to ensure within agreed SLAs

**Early life support roles**

It is often believed that early life support starts when the service has actually been transitioned into operational use. This is not the case. Early life support should be considered as an integral role within the release and deployment phase.

Early life support staff have the following key responsibilities:

- Provide IT service and business functional support from prior to final acceptance by service operations
- Ensure that the service desk have an appropriate handover and training
- Ensure delivery of appropriate support documentation
- Provide release acceptance for provision of initial support
- Provide initial support in response to incidents and errors detected within a new or changed service
- Adapt and perfect elements that evolve with initial usage, such as;
  - User documentation
  - Support documentation, including service desk scripts
  - Data management, including archiving
- Embed activities for a new or changed service
- Deal with formal transition of the service to service operations and CSI
- Monitor incidents and problems, and undertake problem management during release and deployment, raising RFC’s as required
- Provide initial performance reporting and undertake service risk assessment based on performance
Build and test environment roles

The build and test environment function is primarily to ensure that all the relevant people have the appropriate environments, test data, versioned software etc., available at the time that they need it and for the right purpose. As environment resources are normally limited, this role performs a coordinating and sometimes arbitrary role to ensure that resources are used to maximum effect.

Build and test environment staff have the following key responsibilities:

- Ensure service infrastructure and application are built to design specification
- Plan acquisition, build, implementation and maintenance of ICT infrastructure
- Ensure build delivery components are from controlled sources
- Develop an integrated application software and infrastructure build
- Deliver appropriate build, operations and support documentation for the build and test environments
- Build, deliver and maintain required testing environments