



Eight HabITs of the Successful ITIL Expert

Julie L. Mohr, Principle Research Analyst & Author
BlueprintAudits.com

Are you on a path to become an ITIL V3 Expert? You are not alone. Many consultants, practitioners and job seekers look at this certification as a means to improve their work and IT opportunities. How can you successfully prepare yourself for the long and arduous road to certification? Follow these simple habits of the successful ITIL Expert.

Habit #1: Remember Your Foundation

It may be months even years since you took your foundations course. If you show up to an intermediate course, you are expected to remember the concepts taught to you in your foundations course. If you don't remember the content, review it prior to class. You should not be struggling to remember common and simple concepts. Instead you are building upon the foundation of knowledge you already learned.

Habit #2: Choose Your Path Wisely

Nothing is more frustrating than sitting in a class you just paid a lot of money to take only to find that it doesn't meet your needs. The capability courses are very focused on a process approach at a detailed level. If you are the Change Manager you want to take the Release Control and Validate course that focuses on only on Change Management but also on all the other processes that have significant relationships and dependencies with Change. The lifecycle courses are focused on how to manage and successfully implement the phase of the lifecycle. They focus on principles, policy and structure of a successful implementation. Two different focuses, two different core sets of material – make sure you take the right class.

Habit #3: Forget Bridging Over

A bridge course does little to prepare you for a successful career or in how to leverage V3 successfully. It basically fills in the gaps but leaves huge holes in understanding. If you need a quick fix, it is the cheapest path to take. But if you truly want to know the material and plan on leveraging the information to consultant to design and implementation, forget the bridge and start from scratch.

Habit #4: Choose Your Trainer

Trainers come in all shapes and sizes. I have learned from the masters who have very little teaching ability but a lot of practical experience. I have also worked with those who know ITIL out of the book but have no idea

how to implement it in an environment. You want a guide to ITIL that can challenge you to learn the material but at the same time provide you with an environment where you also learn how to analyze and apply the concepts successfully in your work.

Habit #5: Leave Work Behind

The biggest mistake learners make is not showing up and actively participating in their training experience. You have one chance to throw yourself into the material with an ITIL expert who can answer your questions and challenge you professionally. Show up, participate, have fun and learn. Not only will you be more successful but so will your fellow learners. Pay attention to the process of learning as you play an important role. Put the pagers, phones and laptops away and focus.

Habit #6: Apply, Analyze, Describe, Demonstrate, Distinguish, Justify, Produce and Decide

The ITIL Intermediate courses are to be taught at Bloom's Taxonomy levels three and four. This is not memorization and regurgitation as you did in the foundation class. This requires you to apply ideas, principles and theories in situations and analyze by breaking down into constituent parts to make the significance of the whole clear. These are all active verbs that require you complete attention and they require you to actually do something. The courses all have practical assignments where you have to apply the ITIL concepts and materials to scenarios.

This work is where the learning takes place. It also is the most effective part of exam preparation. Memorization will not help you pass the exams.

Habit #7: Create Mindmaps

Not all learners are visual learners. The idea of creating a visual representation of the material may seem difficult and may even be unfruitful. When you create a mindmap it forces you to not learn concepts in isolation of other concepts but to instead figure out how the ITIL framework works as a holistic system. It is as much about the relationship of the concepts as it is the concepts themselves. When you understand the relationships you are better prepared to understand – if something is failing, what is the true impact of that failure at the service, process, component and human level.

Habit #8: Read the ITIL Books

Most of the courseware providers interpret the ITIL material for you. Some of the information can be lost in translation. Reading the actual ITIL books and spending the money to invest in the library is a good thing to do. The books can be a difficult read from time to time, but if you read the material prior to taking the class you will be prepared to ask better questions and challenge the content to effectively create change in your own environment.

Good luck in your ITIL Expert journey and remember these simple habits for a fruitful and enjoyable ITIL experience.



Julie L. Mohr is a Principle Research Analyst and Author at BlueprintAudits.com. She is a passionate organizational change agent providing imaginative insight and dynamic leadership to transform organizations into best practice, customer-focused environments. She has empowered over 50 organizations including many Fortune 100 companies through Knowledge Management, ITSM, IT Governance, organization enhancements, process re-engineering and service level management. Julie has developed a support organization maturity model and audit methodology utilized by thousands of organizations worldwide to identify weaknesses, develop improvement plans and implement IT Governance. Julie is an active contributor to the future development of the industry through speaking engagements at conferences worldwide, researching industry trends and publishing over 150 articles on best practices. Julie is the author of Mapping Support Processes: Blueprint for Success, The Help Desk Audit: Blueprint for Success, The Help Desk Toolkit: Companion CD and The Help Desk Dictionary, and maintains an informative industry portal for practitioners at www.blueprintaudits.com. Julie is a certified Helpdesk Director and certified ITIL® Service Manager/Expert and holds the prestigious GCEIT Certification. She is an expert instructor in multiple industry frameworks including ITSM, KCS and COBIT. She is currently serving as VP of Membership for the itSMF LIG in Sacramento, a faculty member with HDI and participated on the HDI Support Center Certification (SCC) standards committee. She is a member of IEEE Computer Society, National Speakers Association, American Society for Quality, Association for Computing Machinery, ISACA, PMI, HDI, itSMF and the Association of Support Professionals. Julie is a graduate of The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science.