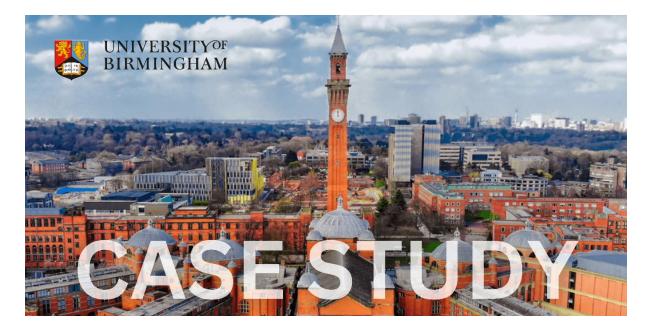Passionate about enabling people and organisations to achieve extraordinary things.

University of Birmingham

Business Games

CASE STUDY

Harnessing the value of ITIL at the University of Birmingham

At the time of contacting Quanta, Birmingham University was already demonstrating excellent IT service delivery aligned to certain aspects of ITIL®. Although already aware of ITIL, they were not fully realising the value it could bring and as such didn't always appreciate that there's much more to delivering a service than simply delivering a service!

The IT services management team recognised the need for a universal level of ITIL understanding and had committed to getting everyone to foundation level. The more senior members of the team were all too familiar with how dry and theoretical ITIL training could be and as such management were looking for a hands-on learning experience that would Harnessing the value of ITIL at the University of Birmingham.

To fully engage those receiving it. It was important that all people attending the training would walk away knowing fully what ITIL can do for them and having an appreciation of what they are doing and the impact has upon the delivery of IT services.

To achieve this, the University of Birmingham approached Quanta, who suggested running a series of their ITSM ThirdBrain™ Simulations, Apollo 13 and Operation Aftermath. These simulations would bring ITIL to life and position the University of Birmingham IT department into real-life situations, allowing them to experience real-world challenges but in safe and controlled environment.

How Quanta helped…

University of Birmingham required knowledge on how to implement specific ITIL processes, in a practical way. To enable this, Quanta ran two separate events: Apollo 13 and Operation Aftermath, to different but overlapping audiences. Both of the practical scenarios took participants through the implementation of ITIL processes, experiencing for themselves first-hand the benefits they delivered. The hands-on involvement really brought home to the team that if they embraced ITIL, they would not only be adding more value to the University but also it would "make their lives easier too.

Apollo 13 was the first to be delivered to members of the service desk team, along with selected second line support staff who together took on the role of Mission Control. As the two teams worked closely with each another, it was essential for the simulation to blend the practical aspects of ITIL, whilst highlighting the importance of working as a team. Apollo 13 focused on the incident and change and problem management areas. After a pre-mission briefing took place it was decided that team members were to be assigned roles that they were not usually involved in; this helped everyone to gain a better appreciation of all the other roles involved within the IT department and their importance. The second phase of the training, Operation Aftermath, was delivered a few months after Apollo 13, allowing enough time for ITIL to be fresh in the delegates' minds but also give them the time to realise the practical benefits that ITIL brought via their exposure during Apollo 13.

As Operation Aftermath is a full service lifecycle simulation, some of the more junior team members didn't attend Operation Aftermath because of the processes it covered. For example, it introduced elements such as financial management and change, areas not covered at all during Apollo 13. After each round of Operation Aftermath, a continual service improvement session was incorporated, which allowed the team to look back on how things could've been done better, ready to implement them into the next round.

> *"Adam's commitment and vested interest really got people engaged and everyone remained enthused for the whole duration of the sessions. The simulations are really well designed and engaging, and the practical elements were extremely useful. The ITIL journey, so far has been excellent, if I was to rate the sessions against other training I've been on it would be right up there at the very top in terms of the benefits we have realised!"*
>
> Ian Bowman, IT Manager, University of Birmingham

And the benefits…

The University of Birmingham have gained a much stronger appreciation of what and why they are doing certain actions and the reasons behind why they are delivering IT services in the way that they are. Team members feel more empowered, leading to better job satisfaction, which in turn has made the delivery of services far more efficient than before.

They are also actively implementing change with the knowledge gained from the simulations. Some of the lessons learnt have even influenced the university in ways they didn't necessary expect; for example, the major reconstruction of their office layout, which as a result of the simulations now sees people sitting in areas, which before the simulations might not have been obvious, but creates ITIL process efficiency and encourages interaction between people who don't normally work together.

The University of Birmingham have begun the journey of creating a highly proficient team for the delivery of IT services and the simulations have kicked started this evolution but there is still a long way to go. This is why we are working alongside them throughout their transition with such things as more simulations, bespoke ITIL workshops and certified ITIL training.

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