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QUESTION NO: 1

Scenario

A company provides an internet-based gift delivery service which is highly dependent upon IT services provided by the internal IT organization. A year ago the customer payments service that supports the gift ordering website regularly experienced poor availability. The organization hired a service management consultant to assess why the IT services were performing poorly and to rectify the situation.

As part of the solution, the consultant implemented service level management and adopted the role of interim service level manager. Service level agreements were negotiated with the business and agreed. The necessary underpinning agreements were negotiated and put in place. Regular monitoring and reporting was implemented. Monthly service review meetings with the business unit managers were established to discuss IT service performance and any issues and improvements. Within a year of the start of the initiative the gift ordering website IT service was performing at 98.7% availability, a significant improvement.

This month's service review meeting was attended by the chief executive officer (CEO) after concerns were expressed about the most recent availability figure for the customer payments service, which was 94%. This covered the period which included one of the traditionally most popular gift ordering times. The consultant stated that the poor availability was almost entirely due to an incident that occurred during one of the busiest periods and, as a result, the overall monthly availability percentage was low. Initial investigation has shown that the service desk used the SLA to designate the incident as a 'Priority 2'. This was however lower than the 'Priority 1' the business believed the incident should have been. The subsequent delay in restoration of the service meant some customer orders were lost.

The CEO reminded the consultant that a repeat of such an incident would not only have a major effect on monthly revenues but also seriously affect the company's reputation. The consultant agreed that this was unacceptable and committed to review this issue and report back to the CEO.

Refer to Scenario

A. The SLM should agree with the business managers to set up a service improvement plan (SIP) to address the issue. Differing views relating to the cause of the low availability mean it should be investigated thoroughly to establish whether the slow restoration of service was due to a lack of understanding by the service desk, incorrect service level targets in the SLA or simply that, owing to the type of failure, restoration was always going to take that length of time. Appropriate action can then be taken to rectify the issue.

B. The issue is with the service desk and its incorrect interpretation of the SLA and failure to escalate the issues. The SLM should agree to set up a SIP for the service desk. The operational level agreement (OLA) with the service desk should be reviewed to ensure that it underpins the SLAs. The SIP should include the retraining of the service desk staff. A complete review of the service desk tools should ensure that they can be used to prioritize incidents correctly by passing through targets agreed into the priority matrix of the toolset.

C. The issue is clearly a breakdown in understanding regarding the critical business periods and the matching of these to the availability targets in the SLAs. The SLM should agree with the business managers to set up a SIP to investigate the issue. The SLAs should be reviewed with the business to ensure that they match with the business needs and, if necessary are updated. Review and update any underpinning agreements as necessary to ensure that they support the targets in the SLAs.

D. The SLM should conduct an investigation by reviewing incidents and problems. Ask the IT service desk and support staff what ideas they have to resolve the issue. Review the impact on all other SLAs. OLAs contracts and procedures. Review the maturity associated with the service level management process and take steps to improve this process if necessary. Create a SIP with an associated business case for presentation to the chief executive officer (CEO).

ANSWER: A

QUESTION NO: 2

Scenario

A financial services organization has undergone a period of rapid expansion. From its operating base it has expanded to serve customers in over 25 countries spread around the globe. There are plans to enter more markets in the next 12 months.

The key stakeholders involved in the global expansion project have briefed the chief information officer (CIO) on the plans. They have identified IT service performance as one of the major threats to the plan. The CIO has been under pressure from the board due to poor IT service performance in the previous six months. The chief concern has been significant performance variations in network connectivity and communications.

The organization currently has three contracts with different local external suppliers in operating markets supporting three IT network hubs. Whilst the suppliers are all happy to follow local internal IT processes, getting the three to work together on incidents or changes has proved increasingly difficult.

A number of outages have resulted in a blame culture where even the local internal IT departments have been sympathetic to their service providers, resulting in strained relationships between these internal departments at an operational level.

Other issues encountered at one or more locations have included:

- Long-term service improvements have been sacrificed in favour of short-term fixes that avoid the payment of contract penalties by the suppliers
- Changes in ownership of the customer relationship by the suppliers

The CIO believes that a lack of communication between suppliers has been the key cause of failures.

All three supplier contracts are due for renewal in the next 12 months. After consultation, a decision to re-tender for network services has been taken by IT, and approved by the CIO and the board of directors.

Refer to the Scenario.

When considering suppliers, which one of the following options would BEST ensure that network issues are addressed in order to meet the needs of the financial services organization?

A. Consideration should be given to entering into a partnership with three local suppliers who have worked together before in similar circumstances. This will ensure both communication and local cultural differences are addressed.

Supplier management should have a single, defined local point of ownership with responsibility granted for operational management of issues.

The threat of contractual penalties should be removed to encourage suppliers to think longer term about sustainable service improvements.

Suppliers will commit to the use of local IT processes to ensure compliance and good communication.

Suppliers are to ensure that staff engaged in the contract (in particular the account managers and customer service managers) are fully ITIL trained so they understand and can implement service management best practice disciplines.

B. Consideration should be given to entering into a partnership with a single supplier where mutual trust and a good relationship can be established.

Supplier management should have a single, defined point of ownership within each country to manage all local operational issues.

A risk-reward framework should be mapped out as an incentive for the supplier to solve local issues.

A strategic alignment should be sought with the supplier where values, goals and cultural fit are similar to that of the financial services organization.

The supplier should set up its own dedicated global account management team to deal with transition and on-going issues by working with local IT support teams.

C. Consideration should be given to entering into a partnership with a single supplier where mutual trust and a good relationship can be established.

Supplier management should have a single, defined point of ownership with local responsibility granted for operational management of issues.

A long-term, risk-reward framework should be mapped out to encourage the supplier to work towards sustainable service improvements instead of shorter-term quick fixes.

A strategic alignment should be sought with the supplier where values, goals and cultural fit are similar to that of the financial services organization.

Implementation of a joint partnership team to initially ensure a smooth transition of the service to the new supplier and to subsequently manage on-going service improvement.

D. Consideration should be given to re-contracting with the three current local suppliers. There is no suggestion that they are technically incompetent; it appears to be communication and local cultural differences that cause problems.

Supplier management should have a single, defined local point of ownership with responsibility granted for operational management of issues.

The threat of contractual penalties should be removed to encourage suppliers to think longer term about sustainable service improvements.

Communication issues should be addressed by ensuring all incidents are reported to a single global service desk that the financial institution should implement.

Suppliers are to ensure that staff engaged in the contract (in particular the account managers and customer service managers) are fully ITIL trained so they understand and can implement service management best practice disciplines.

ANSWER: C

QUESTION NO: 3

Scenario

A flower delivery company introduced ITIL-based service management processes 12 months ago.

One major benefit of the associated service improvement initiatives was that the service availability of the business critical on-line flower ordering IT service increased from 97% to 98.9% over the last quarter. This exceeds the service availability target of 98.5%. Last month, reports were circulated showing the availability improvement.

The service level manager is chairing a service review meeting to review the progress and report upon this achievement. The customer managers acknowledge the improvement but despite the reports of improved service availability, a major service outage occurred during the busiest week of the year when over 25% of the annual business revenue is normally earned. Although IT dealt with the outage satisfactorily, the loss of revenue and credibility in this mission critical, high-visibility trading period are serious concerns. The customer managers are concerned that the reporting does not seem to reflect this or their actual perception of the service.

Agreement is reached at the meeting to address two primary concerns:

1. Service availability targets for the mission critical periods are to be revised.
2. Amended and more representative business reports are to be produced.

Refer to the Scenario.

Which one of the following options will BEST ensure that the primary concerns related to the revision and reporting of targets are addressed?

- A.** Determine what information each IT team can provide regarding the collection and reporting of component availability. Implement revised mechanisms for the analysis, calculation and reporting of service availability. Ensure that event management is implemented to trigger alerts in response to availability issues. This will allow for reactive measures to be introduced so that, if services fail to meet their availability targets, proper actions can be taken to mitigate future failures.
- B.** Meet with the customer managers to conduct a thorough review of all services and document all revised service level requirements (SLRs), ensuring that business impact and seasonal variations are taken into account. The SLRs should be transformed into a balanced scorecard of service targets with a dashboard for reporting purposes. Mechanisms should be agreed and implemented to collect, analyze and report against the agreed service targets using the change management process. Reports should be circulated to customer managers five working days in advance of service review meetings.
- C.** Meet with the customer managers to review and document their availability requirements, ensuring that business impact and seasonal variations are taken into account. Review the monitoring and measurement mechanisms and ensure that they can measure both component and end-to-end service availability. Agree the revised service availability reporting requirements with the customer. Agree and revise service level agreements and operational level agreements as necessary and implement any changes to the monitoring and reporting mechanisms using the change management process.
- D.** Review the requirements for service availability against the data collection and measurement currently provided by the IT teams. Design availability metrics and controls to report any variances at the monthly service review meetings, as well as how these variances will be addressed in the future. Internal IT staff and a customer manager will attend the service review meetings. All changes have to be agreed in the service review meetings before any actions can be performed, thus forcing the customer to come to the meetings and reach agreement before any improvement work or change can occur.

ANSWER: C

QUESTION NO: 4

Scenario

A travel company specializes in providing complete holiday packages to meet customer requirements. There have been instances over the past year where the business has been unable to process holiday bookings due to failure of the IT services. Sales have been lost and the failure has been raised at board level. The IT director has assured the board that the situation will be rectified.

Most holiday bookings are made either by telephone via the company's call centre or through a dedicated website. Both interface with the same back-end booking-processing service. Apart from the call centre and website, the main business services map onto organizational departments and cover: marketing, finance, business operations and central administration.

After some initial investigation within the IT organization, it is clear that the intermittent failures, which were related to a lack of capacity, have occurred during exceptional peak holiday booking periods. The IT organization is not certain when or if these are going to occur in the future. Some booking periods are predictable, such as those associated with promotional offers. Other patterns are totally unpredictable as they often coincide with bad weather being experienced where customers live.

You have been asked how the activities of demand management, based on ITIL practices, can be used to address this issue.

Refer to Scenario

Which one of the following options is the BEST set of actions required to resolve the issue?

A. Identify the pattern of customer enquiries for holiday bookings and the resulting volume, frequency and location of staff activity. Document these as patterns of business activity (PBA) Gain an understanding of the different roles that are performed by staff from all business units and how these relate to the PBA for all business processes.

Use this information to identify any shortfall in capacity and create cost estimates of additional resource required to enable the IT services to meet the PBA. Recommend that, where PBA are very predictable, investment should be made in additional resource.

Where PBA are unpredictable, the risks associated with failing to meet demand should be discussed with the business managers, and mitigation actions agreed.

B. Identify the pattern of customer enquiries for holiday bookings and the resulting volume, frequency and location of staff activity. Document these as PBA.

Gain an understanding of the different roles that are performed by the call centre staff and how these relate to the PBA for the call centre business processes.

Use this information to identify any shortfall in capacity and create cost estimates of additional resource required to enable the IT services to meet the PBA.

Discuss the risks associated with failing to meet demand with the business managers. Reach agreement on how to avoid a repeat of the IT failures caused by demand at busy periods.

C. Identify and understand the PBA resulting from metrics of all the IT services. Ensure that the volume, frequency and location of service use is taken into account.

Gain an understanding of how the PBA relate to the use of the IT assets especially the hardware and software that may be the cause of the IT failures.

Once these activities have been completed, the PBA will be used to plan and implement sufficient capacity to meet all demand at all times.

Discuss the risks associated with failing to meet demand with capacity management and technical staff. Reach agreement on how to avoid a repeat of the IT failures caused by demand at busy periods.

D. Immediately implement demand management, document the process and allocate roles and responsibilities.

The demand manager should initiate an activity to identify and understand user profiles resulting from business use of the IT services. Code the user profiles linking them to the associated business roles.

Match the user profiles to the IT services and analyze any shortfall in capacity required to meet the business objectives.

Create a business case for the additional resource required to exceed the business demand for the IT services to account for unpredictable business activity.

Work with service portfolio management and financial management to agree on the approval of the investment and initiate the project to acquire all the additional resources.

ANSWER: A

QUESTION NO: 5

Scenario

A clothing manufacturer has made a decision to supplement factory-based retail outlets by opening a series of stores at out-of-town shopping malls.

The internal IT organization provides support to many mission-critical business systems for both the manufacturing and retail operations. It must increase its portfolio of services and service options to meet the planned new expansion. Typically, the business is subject to seasonal patterns of demand, which recently have begun to exceed the capability of some of the IT services. This has led to periods of poor performance of some of the critical systems and therefore to degraded service quality. In periods of minimal demand, there is a surplus of capacity and performance is optimal.

There is concern that the additional business demand from the new stores will exacerbate these service performance issues.

The board of directors, made up of representatives from each business unit, has asked for a review of the business supply and demand issues currently being faced by the IT organization. Many service management processes have been implemented including service portfolio management and capacity management. However, IT does not have a demand management process.

Additionally, performance levels on many of the supporting services have remained unchanged for the past 3 years, even though some may now be less relevant to the overall performance of the critical services.

Refer to the Scenario.

The review of the supply and demand issues concluded that the implementation of a demand management process could help the IT organization address the issues. Which one of the following options provides the BEST solution to both the problems currently being faced and those related to the proposed expansion?

- A.** The service portfolio should be reviewed and an analysis carried out of each business unit's requirements in order to understand their patterns of business activity (PBA) and corresponding usage of the IT services. Differentiated service offerings should be developed to match PBA; this will make better use of available IT resources. Supporting service performance targets should be amended to reflect these changes. Work with business relationship management and capacity management to develop long term plans to meet the extra demand resulting from the company's expansion plans.
- B.** An analysis should be carried out of each business unit's patterns of business activity (PBA), and appropriate services for each business unit selected from the service catalogue. In conjunction with the finance department, a revised cost model should be introduced to allow for the fluctuation in usage and costs. Differential charging should be introduced to address the issues of service quality.
- C.** The service portfolio should be reviewed and an analysis carried out of each business unit's requirements to understand their current usage of the IT services and where seasonal variations lead to fluctuations in usage. Discussions should take place with the business units to impose limits within specific time periods for each business unit's usage of IT services. Work with business relationship management and capacity management to develop long term plans to meet the extra demand resulting from the company's expansion plans.
- D.** The service portfolio should be reviewed and the business unit's cumulative service usage should be reviewed, monitored and analyzed. Work with the business to develop short-term measures to manage demand for the IT services, such as delayed or batch processing of retail transactions. Service levels should be reviewed to take into account changes to supporting service performance targets and, where applicable, agreements should be updated through change management.

ANSWER: A