

# High-Performance IT

## Best Practice IT Standards

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*Where there are no standards there is only chaos.*

High-Performance IT Health Checks proposes a set of Best Practice IT Standards for IT teams to follow. IT teams tend to use a variety of disjointed technical standards or none whatsoever. This situation leads to IT departments with:

1. A complete lack of professional or industry standards.
2. Multiple standards in use.
3. An absence of good process.
4. Multiple sources of technical truth.
5. Scripts as a quick fix panacea.
6. Production support band aide solutions.
7. A high number of manual fix activities.
8. A lack of automation.
9. Poor systems implementations.

In some of the IT departments and teams that I managed, I noticed there were standards in use that produced significant benefits. These standards became the Best Practice IT Standards – use of these can be directly linked to:

1. Cost savings.
2. Better software implementations (Due to staff training.)
3. Fewer service delivery failures and need for rework.
4. IT intranet as a single source of truth.
5. Automation of recurrent manual activities.
6. Better hardware risk mitigation.

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7. Removal of redundant hardware, systems software, utilities, and tools.
8. Higher-quality projects.
9. Technical excellence.
10. Consistent 99.9% systems availability.
11. Higher staff morale and job satisfaction levels.

When the High-Performance IT process is rolled out, each IT team uses a Current/Target Position template to assess these two positions. The target position is based on the Best Practice IT Standards plus the teams' own functional objectives.

## Best Practice IT Standards

IT Function	Best Practice IT Standards
Service Desk and ITSM	ITIL compliant Service Desk application and ITIL/ITSM Service Management Framework.
Workload Management.	End-to-end process comprised of Gating, Work Management, Work Classifications and Management Reporting.
Process and Intranet	All work is process driven, with documentation management and templates managed in accordance with the Capability Maturity Model (CMM Level 2).  All process, how to guidelines and other documentation sourced only from an Intranet. All documents are baselined with a single production version. The Intranet acts as IT memory and the single source of truth.
Managed Services	Contract Manager with a Outsource Diary, detailed knowledge of SLAs and contract schedules and weekly contract reviews.
Staff Training	Vendor product training.
Infrastructure.	Fleet upgrade strategy.
	Capacity Management function for servers and network.
	Desktop refresh strategy.
	Standard Operating Environment (SOE).
	DBMS management function.
	Server performance management function.
	Formal naming standards for servers and network hardware.
	Policy on use of scripts.
Applications Development. Methodologies.	Tailored SDLCs, Applications development suite, Documented legacy applications. Documented methodologies, guidelines, and policy on use of scripts.
Projects.	End to end project management delivery process with supporting templates, guidelines, and reporting documents.
Project Management Office.	Active PMO (as against passive), project management processes, templates, and guidelines.
Quoting, Scoping, Estimating.	Services catalogue, standard quotation template.
Security.	Five levels of security management with penetration testing.
Change Control.	Change Advisory Board (CAB) with evidential submission criteria.
Disaster Recovery.	BCP, DRP. Testing, back-up site.

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