

By Larry Klosterboer

Many IT departments try to implement ITIL configuration management without giving much thought to the staffing of the configuration management service. Like any IT task, configuration management requires skilled people with standardized processes, but this aspect is often overlooked in the rush to find the perfect configuration management database (CMDB) tool.

What makes for the most effective configuration management team? The answer will depend somewhat on the size of the IT environment. The essential roles, however, are the same whether one expert plays three or four roles or volume dictates that one role requires two or three people. There are lots of creative ways to deploy these roles across an organization, but here are the essential roles you should consider when embarking on a configuration management service:

## 1 Configuration Management Architect

You need one strong technical leader who can be counted on as the expert in configuration management.

## 2 Requirements Analyst

You do have configuration management requirements, don't you? This person will help you determine all the requirements needed to configure the environment.

## 3 Process Engineer

This may be more important at the onset, but Version 3 of ITIL calls for continuous process improvement.

## 4 Logical DBA

Configuration management is all about gathering, controlling, and accessing information; of course you need a DBA.

## 5 Trainer

Someone will need to create training materials and instruct all of your IT staff in how to access and support configuration management.

## 6 CM Integrator

Every CMDB is built from data stored across many sources. The integrator role supervises the reconciliation rules that bring those sources together.

## 7 Tools Support

Eventually, your entire IT staff will depend on information in the CMDB, and thus on the availability of the tools.

## 8 Impact Manager

This role specifically focuses on helping make configuration data intelligible to the rest of the IT organization. The key task here is to make sure relationships between configuration items are well defined, helpful, and accurate.

## 9 Reporting Support

Because the CMDB is a database, many users will want to create custom queries and specialized reports. Someone who understands the data deeply will help make this possible.

## 10 Data Quality Analyst

ITIL rightly points out that the best practice in configuration management is to constantly verify data and audit the database.

Not many organizations are large enough to have a dedicated 10-member team for configuration management. But anyone serious about building an effective configuration management service should consider who will accomplish these 10 key functions.

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Larry Klosterboer is author of [Implementing ITIL Configuration Management](#), published by IBM Press, December 2007, Copyright 2008 by International Business Machines Corporation. All rights reserved. For more information, visit: [www.ibmpressbooks.com](http://www.ibmpressbooks.com).

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