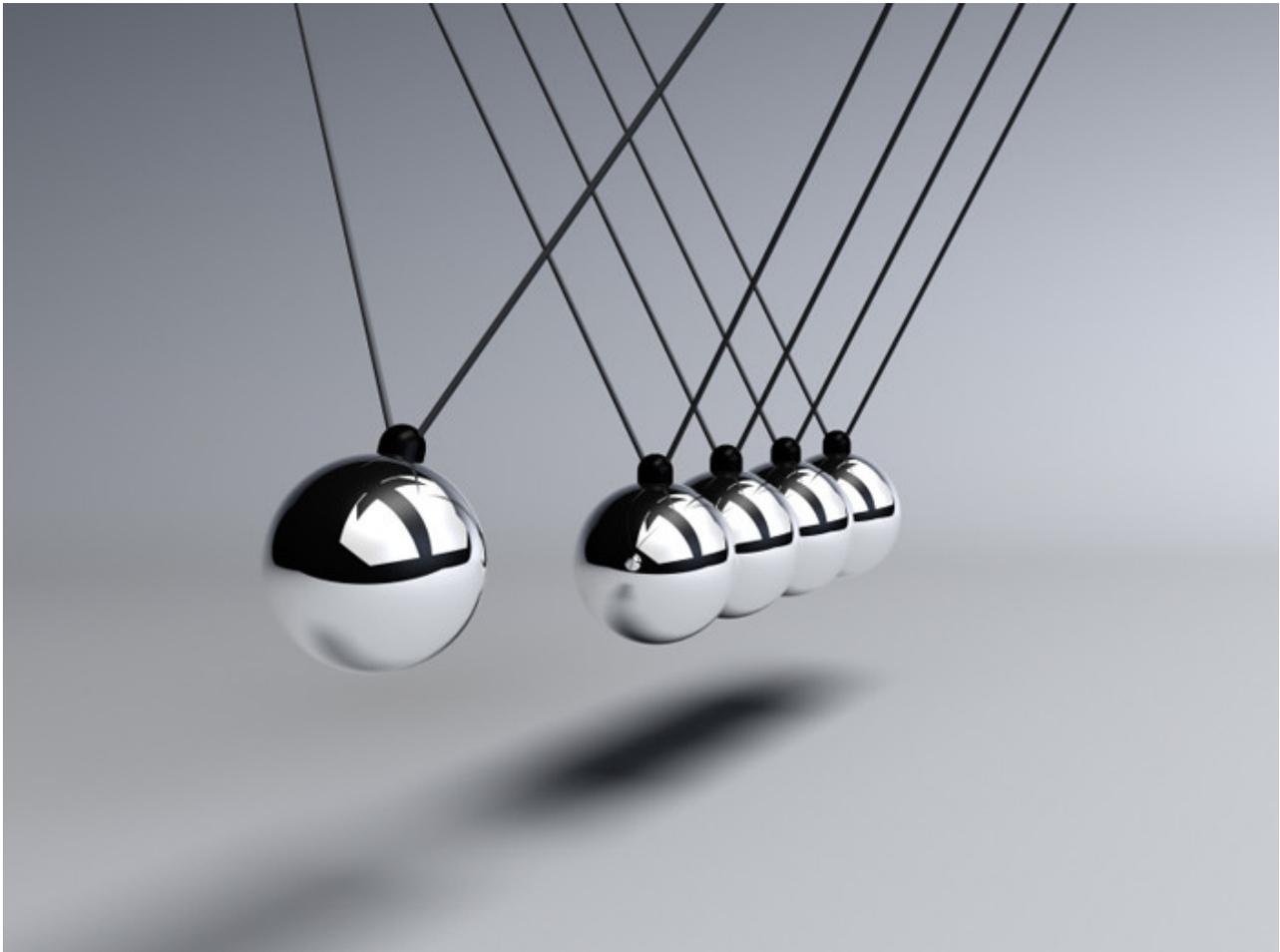


The Cost of Unintended Consequence

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I visited Infosec at Olympia in London this year and it was a good show for me as I was able to achieve my goals for going. What I did notice is the increase in webcam covers being given away, as what better way to get your company name in front of your target customers each and every day.

Starting a new role I was issued with a laptop and all was working as expected, both standalone and when docked. Now, enter the seemingly innocent show freebie webcam cover – no wires, no software and no risk, what could possibly go wrong?

I started to notice odd behaviour when the lid of my laptop was closed and connected to the docking station, but did not immediately associate this with my show freebie. This initially baffled myself and some colleagues and we tried various configuration changes, believing this to be a driver or hardware issue. I eventually identified the cause to be the cover pressing down on my trackpad button when the lid was closed. Issue understood and I used a couple of small sticky rubber feet on the lid to lift the lid sufficiently that my cover could remain in place. My workaround established, now the computer behaves as expected with the lid up or down.

This led me to thinking about the real consequence of my actions and other actions that would affect IT. Time spent on one event means time cannot be spent on another, but how well positioned were we to understand the impact of any service event, in terms of time, cost and the knock-on effect to other services. Most importantly, how would this affect our customers?

The more we can answer yes to the following questions, the closer we will be to offering a better service to our customers. Maturity in service means we are better positioned to serve their needs, moving from reactive to proactive and being better placed to provide the value that they expect.

- **Demand Management** - Do I understand current business priorities and business patterns so as to know what is important to my customer and when it matters to them?
- **Financial Management for IT** - Do I have a good cost model for all services so as to understand what the cost has been in real terms of running services?
- **Service Level Management** - Do I have a good model for measuring and managing the internal and external relationships that exist around my service model?
- **Service Catalogue Management** - Do I understand the relationship between services, how and where they are used and thus the impact of any event?
- **Service Asset and Configuration Management** - Do I have a good understanding of the state of the deployed estate and am I able to detect and manage the change (authorised or unauthorised) based upon good data?
- **Change Management** - Do I have good control on my service changes, so I can effectively trace back against known and approved changes?
- **Knowledge Management** - Do I have an effective method to record and share information useful to IT and customers?
- **Change Evaluation** - Do I check that my changes were successful and capable of delivering the expected value before I push the change?
- **Incident Management** - Do I have an effective mechanism to handle, track and report on the event when detected that focuses on restoring normal service?
- **Problem Management** - Do I have an effective mechanism to seek out issues and fix the root cause before it occurs?
- **Continuous Service Improvement** - Do I have a cycle of improving what my customer wants and providing this in a timely manner?

A lot of processes and some basic questions that each process will help address.

So the next time your customer asks you what is the point of Service Management, do not reel of the definition of ITIL. It is pointless telling them what it is, instead change the context and talk to them about how it will benefit them and ultimately their bottom line. Now you are talking their language and they will listen.