

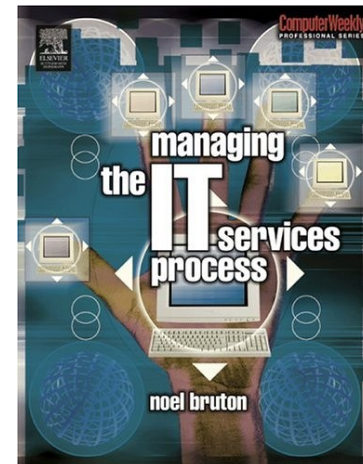
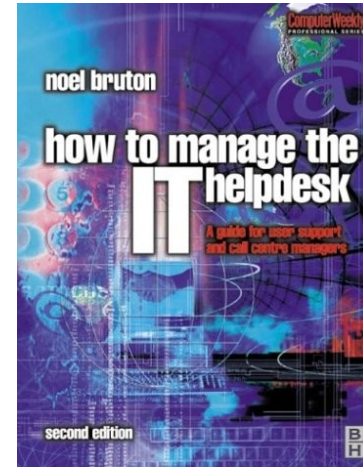
Putting the HELP back into the Service Desk

Noel Bruton

Independent IT Support Management Consultant
and Trainer Since 1991

The IT Support Improver

- Consultancy and guidance
 - Project / call-on
- Interim Manager
 - Cultural / operational change
- Process design
- SLA authorship
- ITT's
 - E.g. outsourcing, helpdesk software
- Custom IT support training
- Staff operational training
- Author of industry texts
- Independent
- Worldwide renown



Service Desk Genesis

- ITIL V2 ‘function’
- Became fashionable post HITS reinvention
- Popularity largely vendor-driven
- Replaced ‘Helpdesk’ as IT support provider
- Seen as internal rebranding opportunity
- Coincided with increased automation and centralisation

Service Desk Benefits

- One-stop shop for users
- Broadened service portfolio
- Suggestion of ‘industry standard’
- Broad official recognition
- Entry route for non-technicians
- Resource efficiencies, reduced costs
- Convenient home for ‘miscellaneous’ IT functions
- Opportunity for outsourcing

Abuses, Mistakes, Consequences

- Dumping ground for unpopular IT services
- Allowed recruitment of non-technical staff
- Limited salaries and career opportunities
- Often decreased overall average FTF
- Wasted skills - technicians in clerical jobs
- Unchallenging work increasing stress
- Made a strategic resource dispensable

The Turning Tide

- Report shows new optimism in IT support
- ITIL V3 abandons practical guidance to Service Desk
- SDITS shows ‘Helpdesk’ re-emergence
- ITSMF admits ITIL now “part of the wallpaper”
- Vendors starting to differentiate again
- Reappearance of non-ITIL training

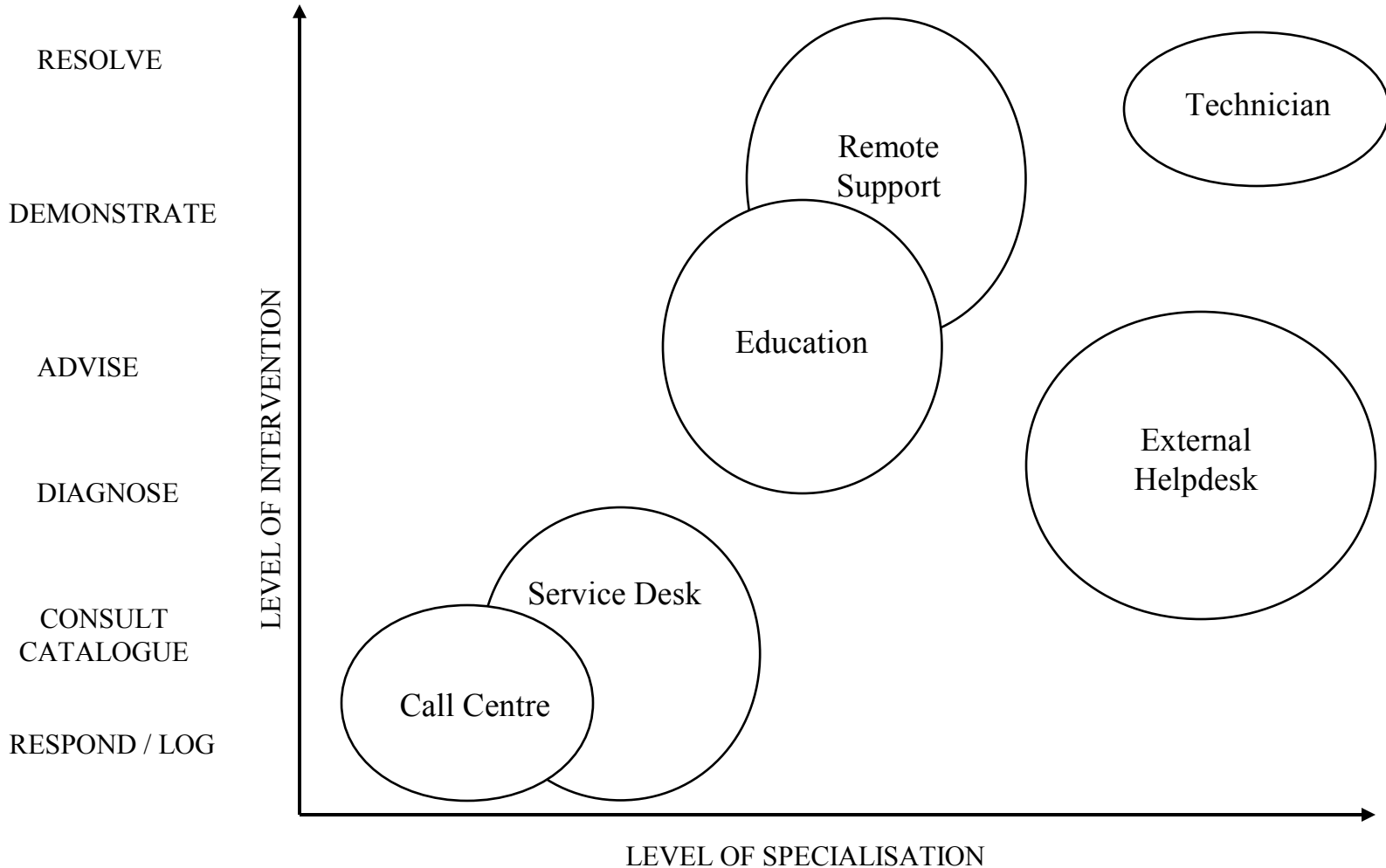
Our Opportunity

- Do it by our design, not corporate prescription
- Dynamism – no point waiting for ITIL endorsement
- Open up to new influences and skillsets
- Expect and use new tools functionality
- Restore the technical imbalance
- Own it rather than process it
- Assist rather than serve

What sort of 'help'?

And how much of it?

Varieties of 'Help'



‘Help’ Level – Influencing Factors

- Sophistication of userbase
- Perceived cost / budget ownership
- Acknowledgement of customer needs
- Understanding of / policy on responsibilities
- Skills availability
- Distance
- Supported product - verticality

Who Owns the Problem?

- Definition needed
 - If Customer
 - Then we provide assistance – we're a support service
 - If Support desk
 - Then we provide solution – we're problem solvers
- Implications for:
 - Costs, esp. headcount because of call length
 - Staff training and expectation
 - Customer expectations
- Beware hyperbole & misleading marketing

Implications

- Service Desk and Helpdesk:
- Continuum



- Fundamental differences at extremes
- Impact on customer and business model
- Impact on customer and staff expectations
 - Clarity essential

Customer Expectations

- Different voices, uniform service?
 - “Doesn’t matter who you talk to” - yeah, right
- Report or resolve the problem?
- Reassignment always inserts a delay
 - Idle user resource costs money
- ‘Tell me how’, ‘show me how’ or ‘do it for me’?

My Ideal

- Productize levels of ‘help’
- Find out which ‘products’ customers want
- Staff and train accordingly
- Separate clerical and diagnostic functions
- Automate and in/outsource clerical as much as possible
- Merge and rotate first and second lines
- Ditch ‘ServiceDesk’ name (*sorry, Howard!*)

Putting the HELP back
into the ~~Service Desk~~
~~Helpdesk~~
~~IT Assistance~~
~~User Continuity~~
Tech Support!

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