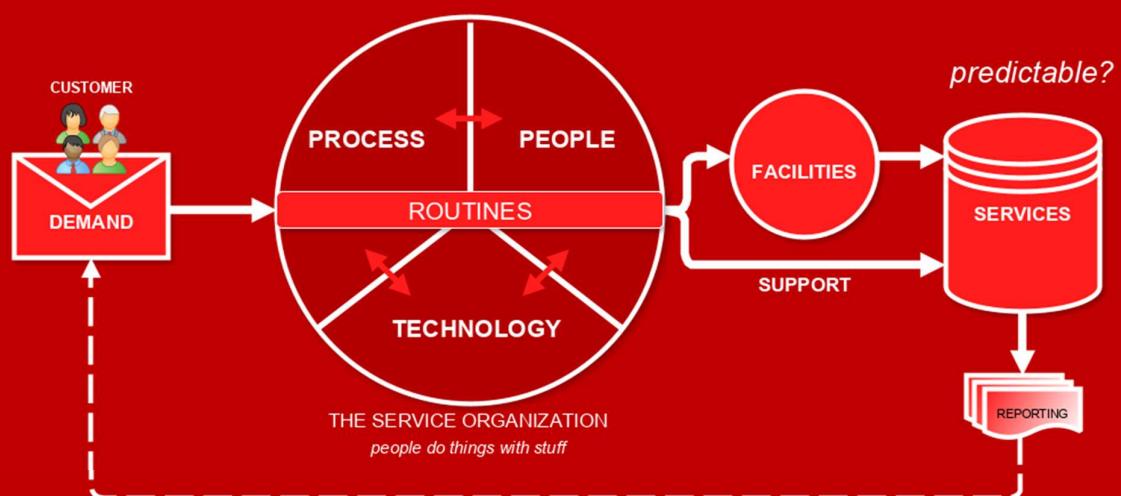


An introduction to USM



FOREWORD

To become a continually and consistently improving service organization, you need a structured approach to the management of your customers, your partners and other stakeholders, your people, your processes, your technology, and your services. USM is a universal management method for service providers, delivering just *that*. USM describes a **service management architecture** and specifies a standardized **service management system**.

For decades, organizations have been driven by *practice*-based frameworks for setting up and improving their service organizations, their routines, and their services. This has indeed provided progress and improvement, but only to a limit.

The limited success of this traditional approach was heavily influenced by a lack of *management* architecture, causing inefficient service organizations that mostly focused on technology, tools and techniques. The USM method was developed to complement these traditional approaches. USM offers the insight that has been missing for decades, and offers a free set of instruments for all service organizations, enabling a simple and structured approach to **Enterprise Service Management**.

First of all, USM defines a *service management architecture*. Applying this architecture – not for the technology or the services but for the *management system* of the service organization – USM defines a standard for a generic management system that can be used by any service organization, whether this is a company, a department or a team.

With that service management architecture and the associated service management system, you lay the fundament for the structure of a successful service organization. Local choices then determine how you organize your own 'floors' on that fundament.

USM can be deployed in all service organizations of any nature. It can be applied for any technology-focused reference architecture (such as TOGAF or eTOM), for any standard (such as ISO27001 or ISO20000), for any combination of practices taken from popular frameworks (such as ITIL or BiSL), or for any popular technique (such as DevOps or Lean).

USM offers an easily learned method based on business principles. With USM, the organization gets in control of its routines in a quick and cheap way,

creating order and tranquility and room for exploiting the creative potential of employees.

A USM deployment works from the idea that an organization only learns to improve its performance if that organization learns to do so with its *internal* staff, preferably on its own. If external support is required, it should only aim at coaching those internal employees, where there is a real need. No expensive consultants who do the work *for you*, but a 100% investment in your own staff.

USM is owned and managed by the SURVUZ Foundation. The Foundation develops and manages methods and instruments that can be used by service providers to improve their performance. The Foundation supports service management experts who want to share their knowledge, based on the Foundation's methods and instruments.

USM is the Foundation's flagship, and the associated products are made available for free as much as possible, on one condition: that the user organizations are willing to *share* their USM experiences with each other.



INTRODUCTION TO USM

The USM method is a universal, methodical approach for managing service organizations. USM describes a standardized **service management system** for setting up the organization, the processes and the technology of a service provider. USM offers an easily learnable method based on business principles and an explicit **service management architecture**.

***Service management architecture:** a set of rules and guidelines for organizing and managing a service organization, that enable that organization to make consistent decisions in the future.*

The method is suitable for service organizations that want to be **in control** of their routines, their management and their performance, creating peace and quiet, exploiting the full creative potential of their staff.

With USM, selected **practices** from frameworks can be realized as required, in a step-by-step approach.

USM provides the standard **management system** that can be used to comply with the requirements of any (ISO) standard.

USM can be deployed by **any service organization** you can think of: healthcare, government, finance, IT, education, telecom companies, etc.

Where does USM come from?

USM (Unified Service Management) was developed in 2015 as the next step in the evolution of service management methods that started in the early nineties of the last century. The method is based on Systems Thinking - the system theory that says that a system consists of coherent components, none of which can reproduce the functions of the integral system on their own.

A system is a whole that consists of parts, each of which can affect its properties. Each part of the system, when it affects the system, is dependent on the other parts for its effect. No part of the system, or any combination of parts, has an independent effect on the system. Therefore a system is a whole that cannot be divided into independent parts. A system is not the sum of the behavior of its parts, it's the product of their interactions.

[Prof. Russel Ackoff]

An IT service organization can make software available, but without the associated *hardware* that software cannot do anything... And even if the software runs on suitable hardware, without a *network* it does nothing... And even if the software runs on that hardware in a network, without *administrators*, nothing will work... And even if there are competent administrators for that software on that hardware in that network, without the right *routines* it does not deliver the intended results... *A function of a system cannot be produced by parts of that system, but only through the cooperation of the components of that system.*

Service management system: *The coherent system of organization resources used to realize the goals of a service organization in an effective and efficient way.*

This way, USM puts business **principles** in a coherent, methodical approach, to be used by a service organization for setting up its management system. These principles can be combined with any framework or any preferred combination of practices (Figure 1).

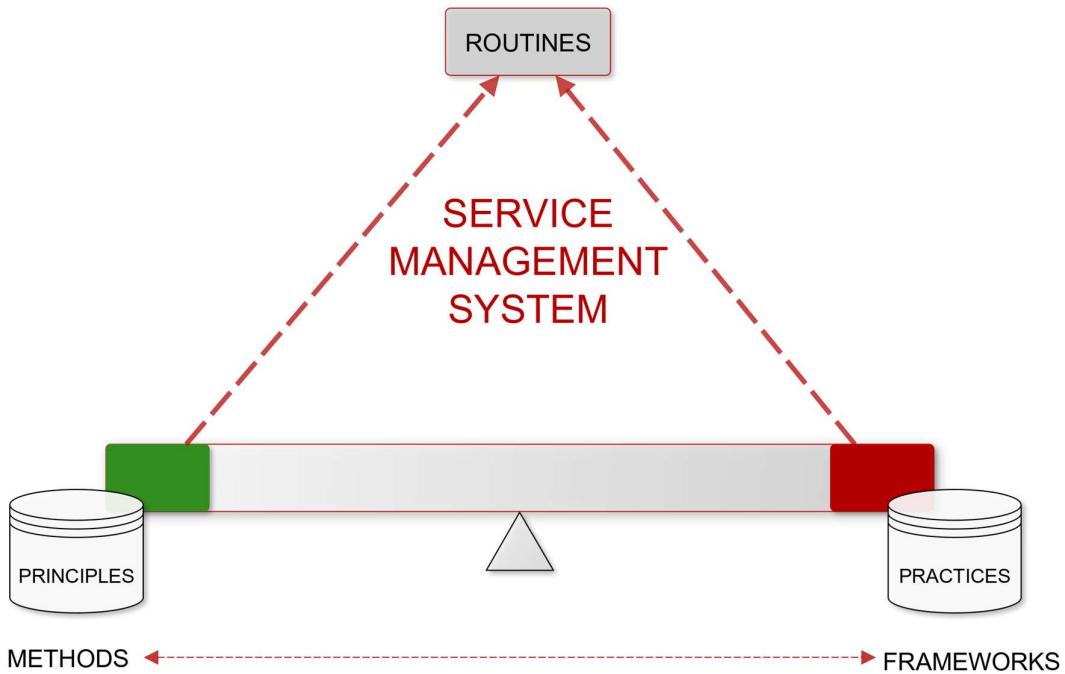


Figure 1. The routines in a service management system are created from a combination of principles and practices

Why USM?

It is not the daily job of a manager to develop such a structured approach - a service management system – by himself. USM provides the standard for that.

Basically, USM can be used for three goals:

1. **assessing** the internal routines of a service provider: USM is the reference model of a mature service provider
2. **improving** the internal routines and the performance of a service provider (a service organization or a support team)
3. **outsourcing** (here USM is the reference model of a mature *supplier*)

Who is USM for?

USM can be deployed in **all service organizations and teams**, in **all disciplines**, ranging from IT to healthcare, from building management to security, from telecom to government (Figure 2). After all, every service organization benefits from a *service management architecture* and a *service management system* that can be produced with it.

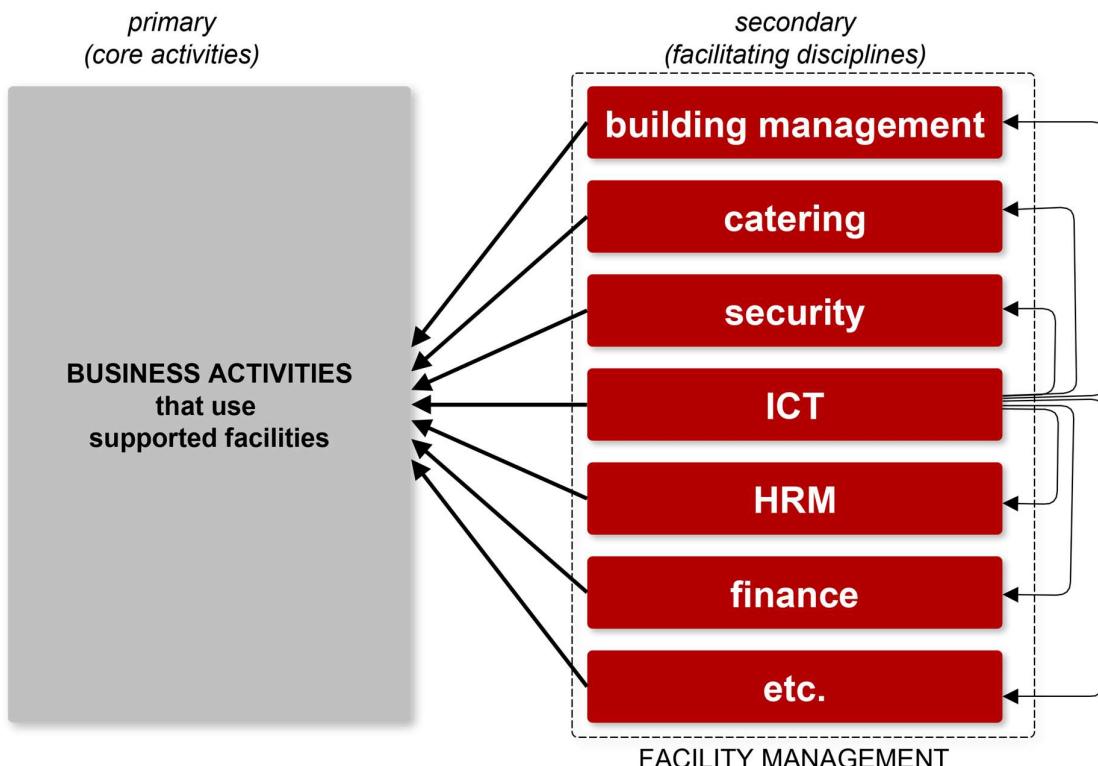


Figure 2. Primary and secondary service disciplines

Even though the organization, the tooling and the services differ for each service organization, the *management* of services is universal.

What makes USM special?

The USM method does not work from **practices** (examples of others' practices) but starts with clear **principles** (see Figure 1). From there, an organization applies USM in a step by step approach towards the desired practices. This makes USM *learnable* and offers essential benefits:

- USM is *methodical* and therefore **universally applicable**.
- USM is *holistic*, it covers all aspects of managing a service organization. That makes USM **integral and comprehensive**.
- USM is (super) *simple*. This means that the application of USM has **low costs**, and anyone can afford it.

In USM's view, the customer is central to the service. The service provider makes a **facility** available for the customer to use. This facility consists of a mix of goods and actions (Figure 3).

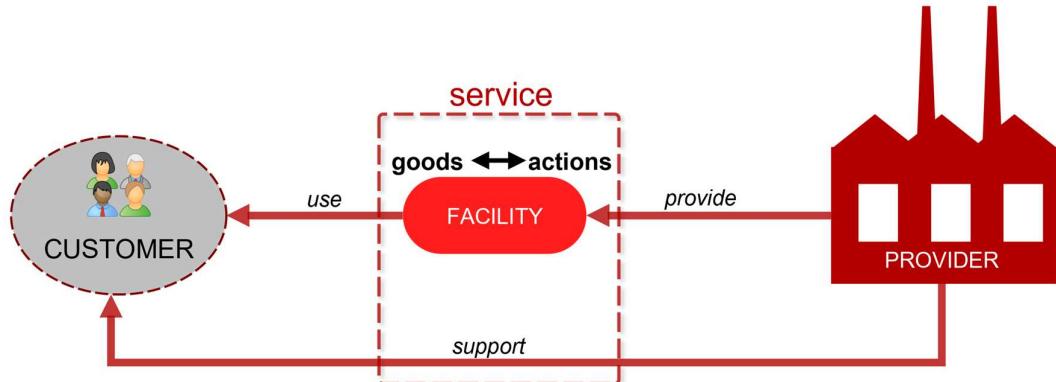


Figure 3. A service is a supported facility

The service provider **supports** the customer in the use of the facility, in accordance with agreements made, otherwise it is not a service. USM defines the *management system* of the service organization (the provider) in the context of that service.

The *routines* in USM are structured in a workflow system that encompasses all activities in a service organization. This workflow system is based on an **integral** and **integrated** process model (Figure 4), consisting of only five non-redundant and customer-facing processes that are the same for all service organizations.

These **five processes** include all activities of the service organization, insofar as they are relevant to managing the service: **agree, change, repair, operate and improve**.

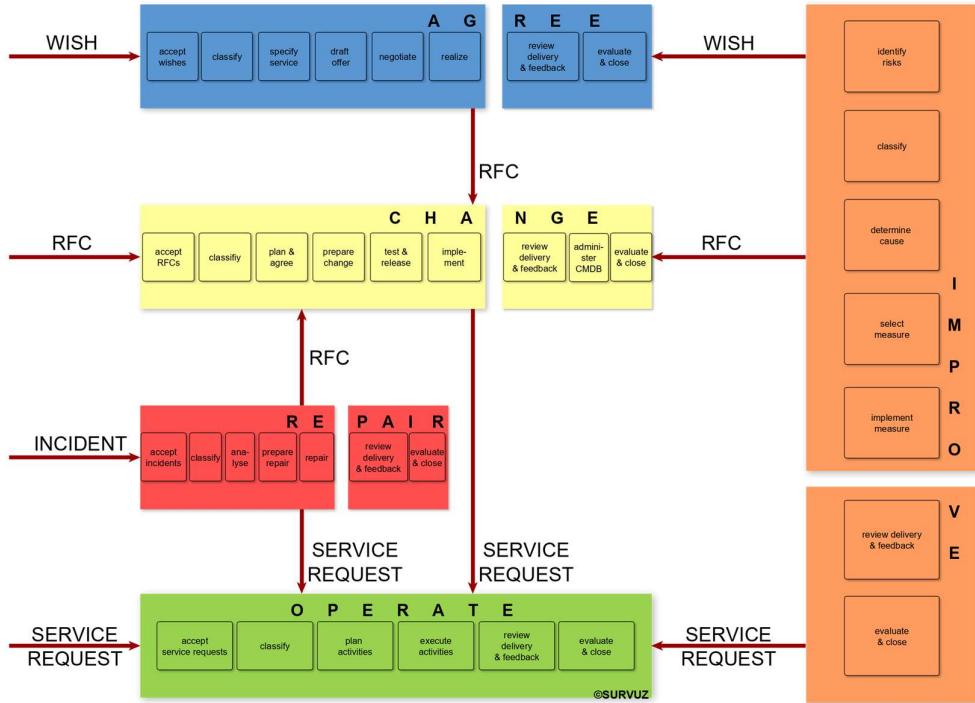


Figure 4. The USM process model: integral and integrated

Because this process model is integral and integrated, there are only **eight workflows** to manage all service management activities in the service organization (Figure 5).

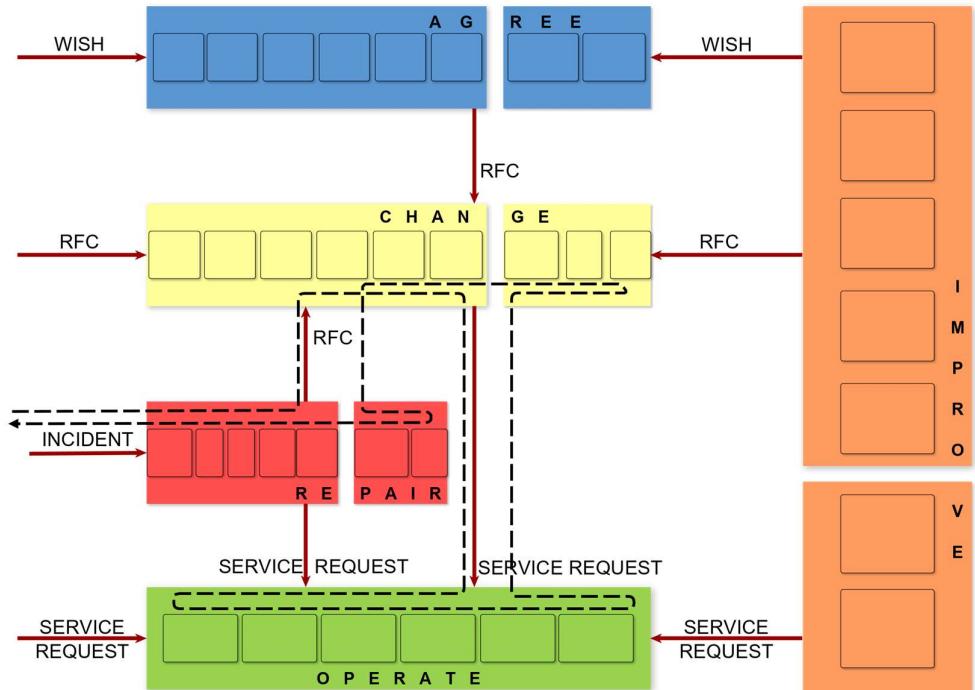


Figure 5. USM workflows are predefined logical sequences of activities in the USM process model

Any local practice is now just an instance of a generic USM workflow (see Figure 6 for an example of one of the eight USM templates).

Existing practices only need to be realigned with the USM logic to establish numerous improvement opportunities. The local tooling should be reconfigured to support eight templates, one for each default USM workflow, to be used as an **Enterprise Service Management** product.



Figure 6. Example of a default workflow based on the USM process architecture

With this clear and simple starting point, any service provider can use USM to *get in control of their routines* and *to set up their tooling* effectively and efficiently. That then opens the door to *service and customer excellence* and innovation, throughout the organization.

What does USM deliver?

The USM method provides the **standardized management system** for any service organization, to manage its people, its processes, its technology and the resulting routines, for managing its services. USM builds that service management system in the *service management architecture* of the service organization, an architecture not for structuring the deployed infrastructure, but for managing the services.

USM not only provides the **building blocks** for the management system of every service organization, but also the standard routine for the integrated improvement of services *with* those service building blocks (Figure 7).

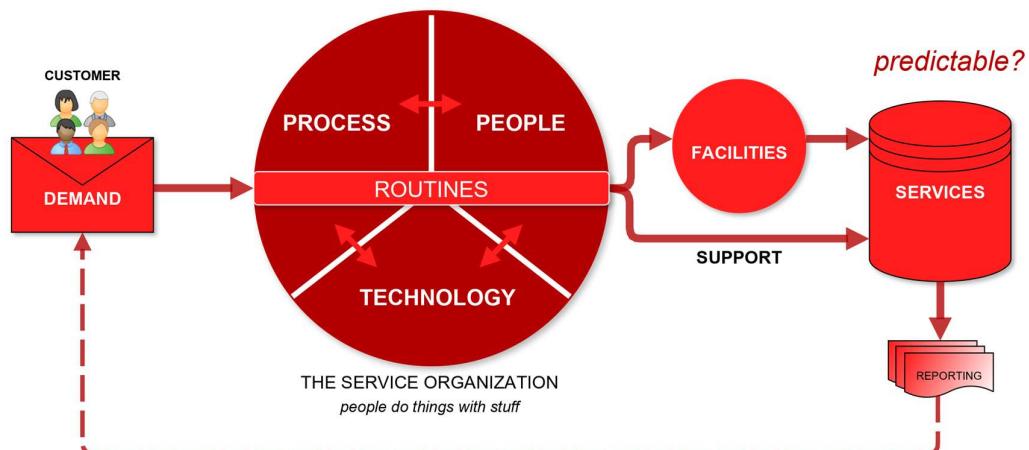


Figure 7. The service organization systematically converts all its customers' needs into predictable achievements

What does USM cost?

There are three different scenarios for applying USM:

- **Scenario 1: "do-it-yourself"**. Read a USM book and apply what you have learned. This scenario costs a few tens at the most, but it often requires additional effort to *converge* the understanding of USM into a shared vision. 
- **Scenario 2: "read and train"**. Having read the USM book, training usually costs a few hundred euros per employee. In the training the participants practice the theory, and through discussions they learn to understand their own problems, using the USM method as the reference architecture. If you have enough in-house experts, you can limit the training to a pioneer group that passes on the knowledge internally. 
- **Scenario 3: "supported deployment"**. Once the organization has acquired the USM knowledge, it can start the USM deployment. Organizations that do not have an internal change manager can hire a certified expert who will act as a coach for the internal staff. This scenario naturally has more out-of-pocket costs. 

User organizations that join the USM user community can use certified, open USM resources (the process and workflow specifications and dozens of templates and guidelines) free of charge, so there are no costs in that material.

SURVUZ Foundation also encourages the development of certified, *off-the-shelf* variants of existing instruments (tools), which are obviously not free of charge, but which save a lot of energy, time and costs in comparison with traditional custom projects.

What are USM products?

The SURVUZ Foundation certifies USM products that support the application of USM, after an audit against the USM architecture. With these products, organizations grow faster, improve more efficiently, and improve further.



Certified products serve as a *service building block* in a local USM deployment. In this way every organization can support its own USM deployment with ready-made tools, to be as building blocks in a LEGO box.

To the extent possible, these products are made available free of charge to USM user organizations. Suppliers of commercial products of course determine their own price for their (USM certified) products.

How does an organization deploy USM?

The previous section describes three scenarios. In all cases, a phased approach supports the practical deployment of USM in the organization (Figure 8). The (guided) deployment of USM follows an iterative, step by step, continuous improvement approach (*lean* and *agile*), leading to controlled improvement.

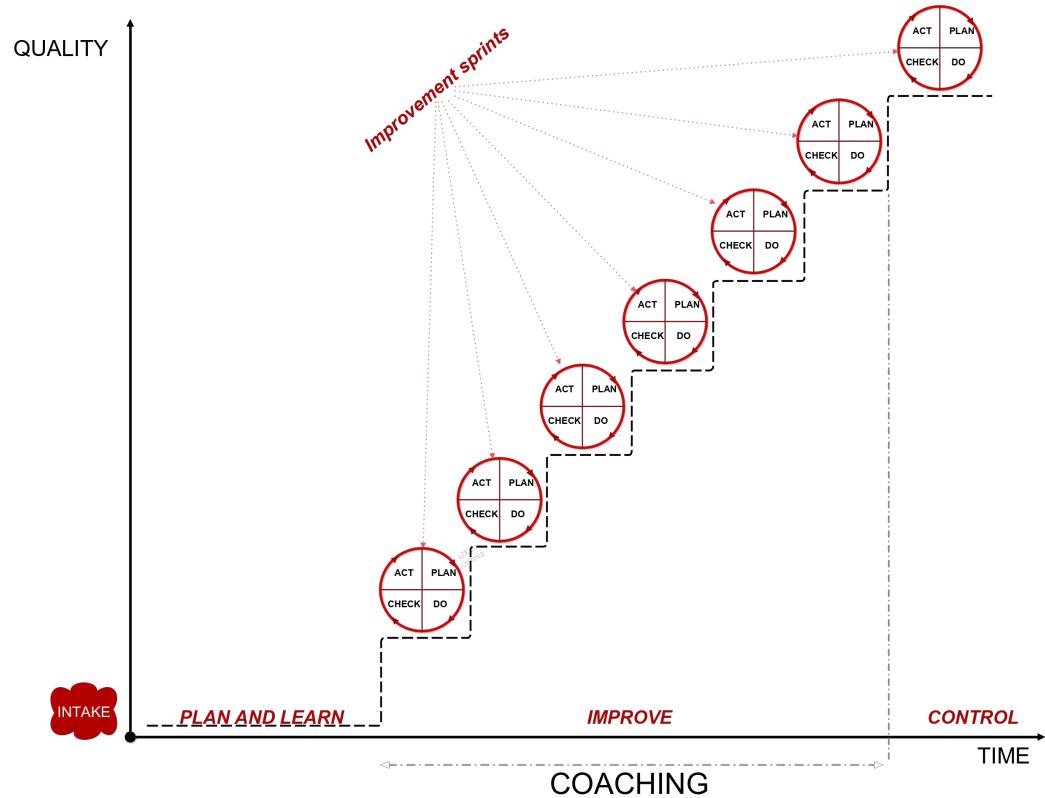


Figure 8. Phasing of the USM deployment

Every service organization can set up its organizational structure as desired (Figure 9), using USM, and selecting and optimizing its own tooling. The USM process model applies to *every* service organization.

This offers great freedom to an organization to tailor USM to its own local needs, structure and culture, while still reaping the benefits of a uniform methodical approach.

The USM method pays a lot of attention to the organizational change involved with introducing USM, in a **people-centered approach**. USM integrates methods and techniques from other disciplines, such as Organizational Behavior Management (OBM), but also generic management skills such as Text Strategy, for effective communication.

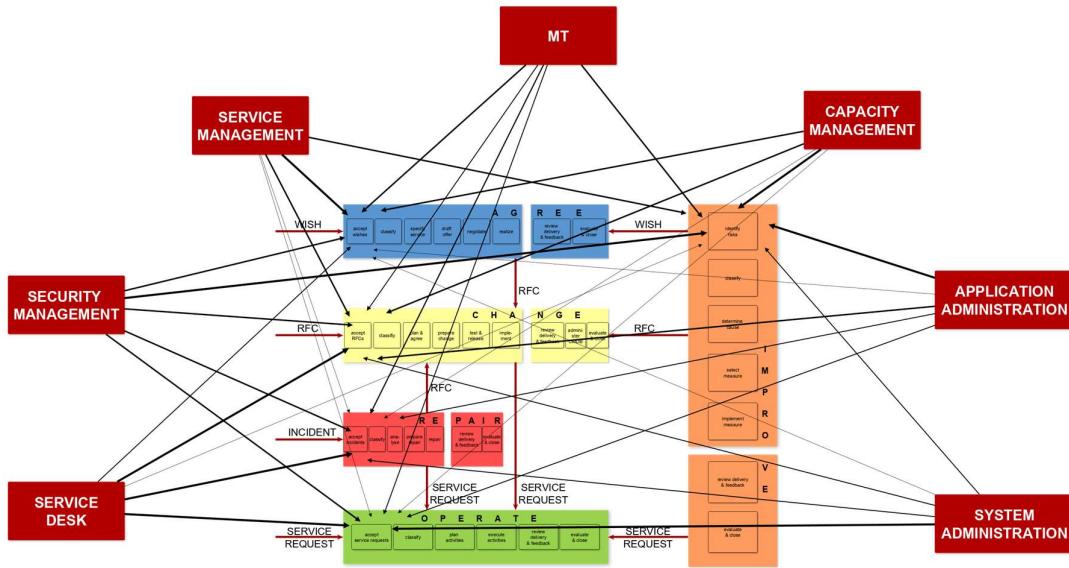


Figure 9. All teams and profiles use the same USM processes

The generic nature of USM brings broad, multidisciplinary deployments within reach, in an **Enterprise Service Management** setting. IT departments are increasingly integrating with other facility disciplines, such as building management, security, HRM, medical technology, logistics, etc. This is increasingly happening in the form of multidisciplinary service teams. **Standardization** is essential for such situations. USM provides the standard link for any chain or network you want to set up.

The USM method supports all these service disciplines, including the business domains, and provides the basis for the required standardization.

The logical order for applying USM is processes -> tools -> organization (see Figure 10):

1. The five USM **processes** specify the eight USM **workflows** for controlling all service management activities. The processes are the common factor for all the teams and employees involved, and – just like a fundament in a building – they need to be shared before you start improving your organization.
2. Select and configure your **tooling** based on that common process and workflow architecture. Because the cooperation between the teams and employees involved is essential for the ultimate service achievements, the involved parties should manage their practices in one and the same tool.
3. Once you've done that - depending on local conditions, insights and preferences – you organize the involved people in "**the organization**". However, that may now be something you can completely avoid, because you've already integrated your routines in a multidisciplinary organization.

A commonly practiced approach is often the other way around: first, we 'reorganize', then the involved staff start using a shared tool, leaving standardization of routines as the last item of the budget.

It may now be clear that this approach is doomed to deliver limited results.

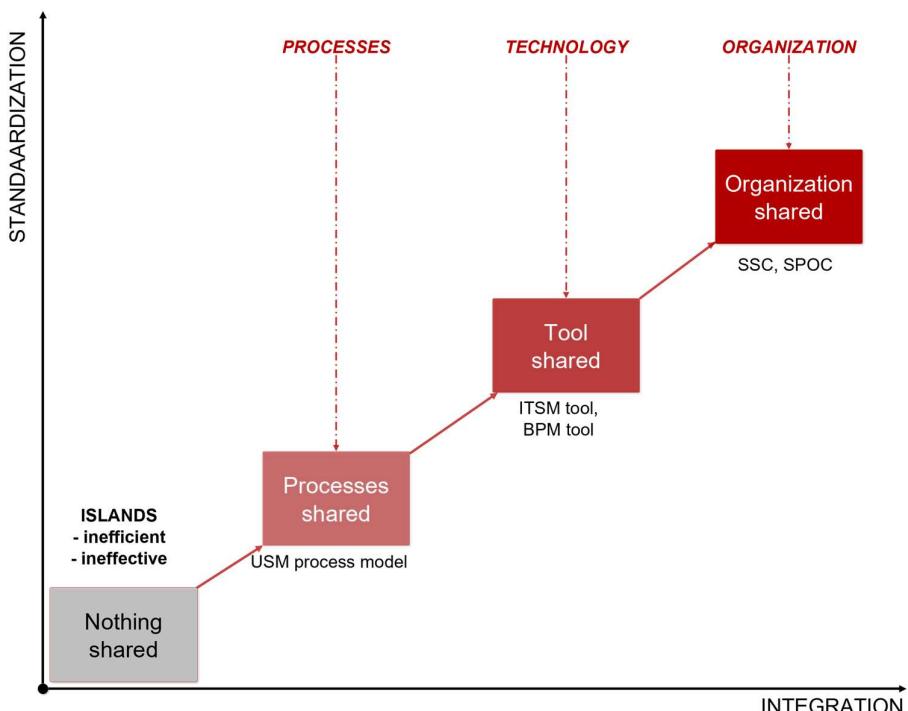


Figure 10. The logical sequence for organizational improvements: processes -> tools -> organization

Who manages USM?

The USM method is owned and managed by the SURVUZ Foundation, as a not-for-profit knowledge base.

SURVUZ accredits parties that support USM, certifies experts who are supporting USM in practice, and makes resources available for the deployment of USM.

Registered user organizations have the certified open USM resources at their disposal free of charge.



Web: www.usm-portal.com

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