OGC Successful **Delivery** Toolkit™
Office of Government Commerce

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10 The Business Perspective

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The Business Perspective approach to the delivery of IT services focuses on the key principles and requirements of the business organisation and their operation. Especially to understand how they relate to and interface with the provision of IT within all areas of Service Management. This awareness of the business enables Service Management to ensure the most effective relationships, interfaces and delivery, which is aligned to the business, and so maximising business benefit that can be delivered by IT.

The objectives of the Business Perspective approach to delivering IT services are:

- To enable IT personnel to understand how they contribute to business objectives

- To enable IT personnel to deliver/improve IT services to underpin business objectives

- To enable IT personnel to assist the business in maximising the exploitation of IT

- To enable a complementary and integrated culture with the business

- To influence, innovate and enable Change for business advantage

- The alignment of IT with the business.

Effective processes ensure that IT services are aligned to business requirements and that the supplier elements also underpin and support that alignment. It is therefore essential that partnerships are forged between IT and the business, and IT and its suppliers to ensure that a "**business-led**" IT organisation develops.

To be effective this approach consists of a number of processes aimed at aligning the business and IT. The alignment does not just cover current, but also future ICT systems and IT services. There is therefore a requirement for alignment at strategic, tactical and operational levels as illustrated in Figure 10.
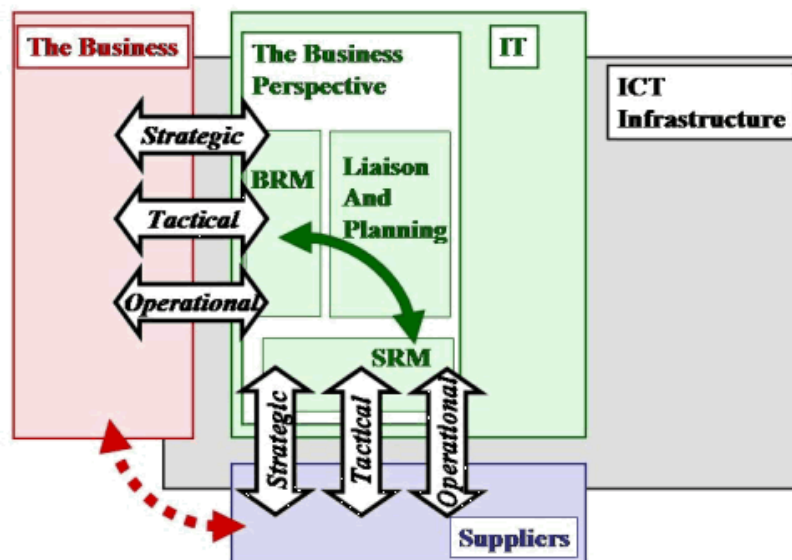

Figure 10: The Business Perspective

To achieve this alignment of interests a number of process areas and roles need to be considered. The key processes are:

- Business Relationship Management (BRM)

- Supplier Relationship Management (SRM)

- Review, planning and development of IT

- Liaison, education and communication of IT.

Developing and nurturing relationships with Customers has always been an important issue for all organisations. It is just as important for IT service providers to develop relationships with their Customers and business managers. It is equally important for them to develop relationships with their major suppliers, especially where aspects of the overall service are outsourced to these suppliers and they have a direct interface to and a direct impact upon the quality of service delivered to the Customers and the business. Establishing BRM and SRM processes is the preferred method of achieving this.

It is crucial that the people working within the BRM process appreciate the value of IT and its role within the business value chain and continually publicise this and reinforce the message of business and IT alignment. They need to have synergy and empathy with the business units and represent their views to the rest of IT.

SRM needs to ensure that supplier relationships are maximised to business advantage. This includes recognising the need for different types of suppliers together with their appropriate relationships, a Supplier Catalogue, the contract lifecycle, integration of suppliers into the "**end-to-end**" Service Management processes and supplier performance management.

Effective relationships at operational, tactical and strategic levels between the business and IT, and IT and its suppliers can also ensure effective and innovative use of IT for business advantage, e.g. identifying new technologies, facilitating business transformation and meeting ever increasing, rapidly changing business demands.

It is key for IT organisations to endeavour to align their organisation, delivery and culture as closely as possible to that of the business. Close alignment can achieve significant benefits for the business, especially in areas such as continuity, risk, Change and SLAs, bringing improved delivery focus and achievement of key business objectives. Alignment needs to start at the top, with alignment of IT strategies, governance and culture to those of the business. IT management needs to review their organisation and services against the business and improve business alignment through CSIPs.

At tactical and operational levels, in terms of managing IT service provision, alignment and business involvement must be considered for all process areas within Service Management. This ensures "**end-to-end**" integrated processes delivering the advantages of synergy and partnership working across the organisation. The approach also considers use of the Service Catalogue and SLAs to market IT and its services to the business, together with management of new service introduction, business expectations, continuous improvement and the development of organisational culture.

The Business Perspective approach also focuses on liaison between the business and IT, improving information flows, planning business communication, and particularly co-ordinating the activities of the BRM and SRM processes to ensure consistency of approach.