

TOP 5 ITSM BOOKS: WHAT YOU SHOULD BE READING



If you are anything like me, you like to learn and keep up to date with changes in the [IT service management space](#). This knowledge can be helpful, giving you opportunities to improve your own practices. Of course, not everything must be new or reinvent the wheel: if there is something you want to improve, there is a very good chance that someone else has already thought of it—and hopefully written about it!

A wealth of published information is available both online and in books. In this article, I share my top five book picks. These are books that I have read and continue to refer to regularly. These are not necessarily new publications, but they are very relevant to the work we do in service management.

As with any list of this kind, the criterion is personal. These are the books that aren't relegated to my bookshelf. These books comprise the pile of well-thumbed volumes that sit within arm's reach on my desk, or in some cases downloaded on my Kindle. These are my 'value add' books, the ones that clarify my thoughts and help me to focus in on what needs to be done in order to drive improvement.

One caveat: I am not including the [ITIL® core books](#) in this list, or foundational texts from [VeriSM™](#) and other official bodies of knowledge. If you work in ITSM, I'll take it for granted that you own or have access to these. I will say, however, that if you have not read the ITIL4 Foundation, add that to your list!

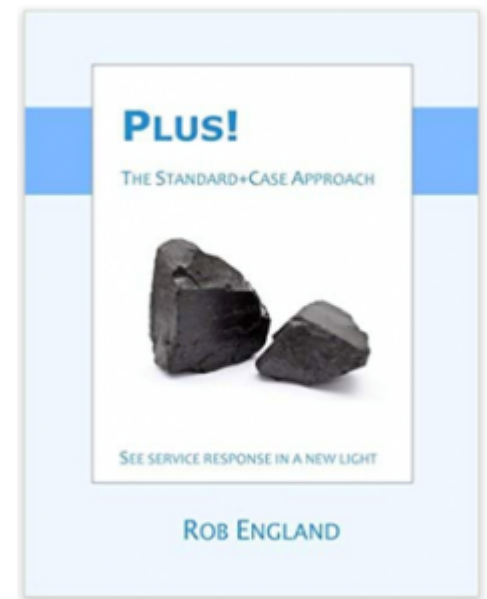
In no particular order, these are the five ITSM books you should put on your wish list.

(This article is part of our [Tech Books & Talks Guide](#). Use the right-hand menu to navigate.)

Plus! The Standard+Case Approach

Rob England

My first time reading [Plus! Standard+Case](#) gave me one of those exciting 'ah ha' moments. Many ITSM practitioners will read this book and realize they knew a lot of this, but didn't know how to explain it. Rob manages, in a relatively short text, to give you the tools you need to dramatically improve your incident practices, lighten your workload, and improve customer satisfaction. If this sounds a bit like a magic bullet, it might because it is!

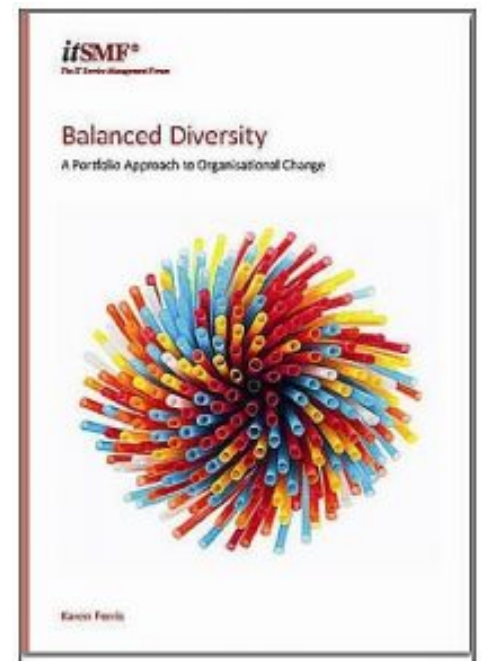


Rob describes Standard+Case as "a synthesis of our conventional "Standard" process-centric approach to responding, with Case management, a discipline well-known in industry sectors such as health, social work, law and policing". If you are involved with responding to situations, at any level, this book will change the way you think and work.

Balanced Diversity: A Portfolio Approach to Organizational Change

Karen Ferris

Organizational change still seems to be the elephant in the room during technology change initiatives. If you don't get it right, no matter how good your new systems may be, you are setting yourself up for failure.



In *Balanced Diversity*, Karen [introduces us](#) to a scalable portfolio of diverse practices that can be used to embed change, both small and enterprise-wide, into your organization. This book translates a comprehensive study of successful organizational change into an actionable methodology for

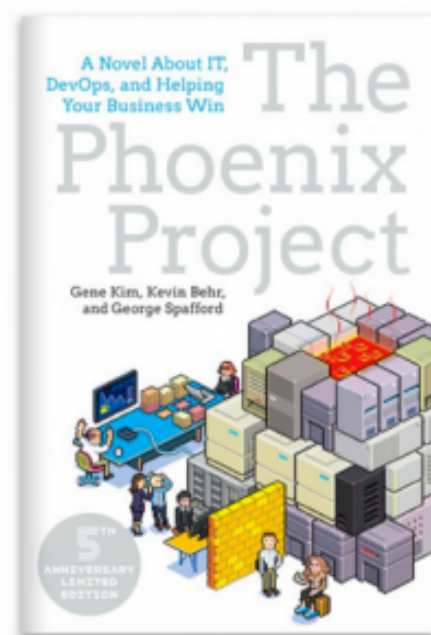
change specifically targeted at the ITSM ecosystem.

In virtually every organization I have worked with, the concepts Karen introduces here have proved invaluable in embedding change successfully.

The Phoenix Project: A Novel About IT, DevOps, and Helping Your Business Win

Gene Kim, Kevin Behr, and George Spafford

Unless you have been hiding under a rock, you've heard about [*The Phoenix Project*](#), a story-based introduction to using [DevOps](#) in IT service management. On my first read, I found myself recognizing the personalities of the characters in the story—I have worked with these people! That's what makes the book resonate with technology workers: we have all met, worked, and battled with these people during our careers.

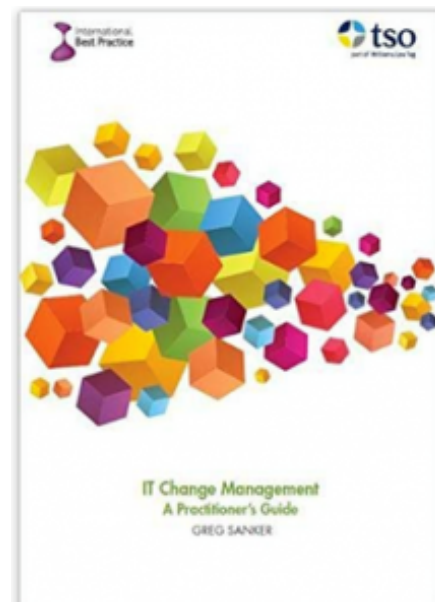


So, why invest time to read this book? Because it introduces new ways of working and cooperating, demonstrating clear, achievable benefits. It also highlights inevitable stumbling blocks you can prepare for. Plus, it is both an easy and enjoyable read that will help you explain why this way of working is changing the face of service management.

IT Change Management: A Practitioner's Guide

Greg Sanker

IT change management is daunting. Get it wrong and either you will expose your organization to the risk of change-related outages or you will impede growth and stifle innovation. In our world, the rate of change is only increasing, so managing change effectively and efficiently is critical to delivering favorable business outcomes.



In *IT Change Management*, Greg demystifies change management, giving a no-nonsense, practical guide to getting it right, balancing risk and reward, and delivering positive results to your organization. Understanding when you can speed things up and when you need to put the brakes on to protect the business is a balancing act—a valuable lesson this book teaches to every ITSM change practitioner.

Basic Service Management

Rob England

Two books by Rob England in the same list! I may seem like a bit of a fan-girl, but Rob has a way of delivering valuable insights in an easily digestible and practical way. [*Basic Service Management*](#) is a book that every rookie in service management should read. Its quick 50 pages introduce key ITSM concepts, then point you towards additional resources to solidify your knowledge.



I recommend reading this before plunging into ITIL or other ITSM bodies of knowledge. It is also a perfect primer for anyone in management who needs to understand the basics of service management. Slip it under the boss's door, or into their briefcase, it's a perfect title for commuting.

I hope you will find some gems of wisdom in these volumes, and I'd love to hear your suggestions for 'must reads'—I am always looking for new ideas. Happy reading!