Should I get ITIL® 4 certified? (By Bob Rice, President of the itSMFusa Atlanta LIG)

ITIL® 4 was formally released on February 28, 2019. The ITIL® 4 Foundation certification is currently available with the advanced certifications planned for 2019 Q4. But what about those who are in the process of ITIL® v3 certification? Should they wait for the rest of ITIL® 4, or continue along the path they have already begun?

First, a couple of important points about the ITIL® 4 certification scheme:

- Unlike ITIL® v3, there is not an ITIL® 4 Foundation Bridge certification and exam. However, some training vendors are offering an abbreviated ITIL® 4 Foundation class as a bridge class for those that have the ITIL® v3 Foundation certification and are very familiar with it.
- The "Managing Professional (MP) Transition certification will act as the ITIL® 4 bridge certification and exam for people who have achieved either the ITIL® v3 Expert certification OR have achieved at least 17 points in the ITIL® v3 accreditation scheme. (That means you don't have to be an ITIL® v3 Expert to take this certification.)

What will drive your decision about continuing with ITIL® v3 certification versus starting ITIL® 4 certification if you already have an investment in ITIL® v3? The simplest answer is, "time". The ITIL® 4 advanced certifications will not be released until 2019 Q4. The existing ITIL® v3 certification scheme will continue to be available for some time after that. AXELOS has committed to providing at least 6 months advanced notice before discontinuing the ITIL® v3 certification scheme, so it is reasonable to expect that ITIL® v3 certification will be around for a while. During the transition from ITIL® v2 to ITIL® v3, there was a 1 year overlap where both certifications were available. If that holds true for the ITIL® v3 to ITIL® 4 overlap, then it is reasonable to expect that the ITIL® v3 scheme will be available through the end of 2020.

For example, if it reasonable for you to reach 17 credits prior to the discontinuance of the ITIL® v3 certification stream, then that is probably the best route to continue, especially if you are within 2 or 3 courses/certifications. Then taking the ITIL® 4 Managing Professional Transition course and certification exam would allow you to "bridge" to the ITIL® 4 equivalent certification/designation. Otherwise, to reach the ITIL® 4 Managing Professional certification/designation level will require 5 ITIL® 4 courses (including ITIL® 4 Foundation), effectively starting over with ITIL® 4.

There are 2 "designations" that are supported by certifications in ITIL® 4. They are 1) ITIL® Managing Professional (MP), and 2) ITIL® Strategic Leader (SL). To achieve each designation, you must obtain the supporting certifications. Details regarding the ITIL® Managing Professional can be found at https://www.axelos.com/certifications/itil-certifications/itil-managing-professional-itil-4, and details regarding ITIL® Strategic Leader can be found at https://www.axelos.com/certifications/itil-certifications/itil-strategic-leader-itil-4.

About the author: Bob Rice is the owner and president of Silver Creek Solutions, LLC. Bob specializes in IT consulting including ITSM, Organizational Change Management and Lean Services. Bob is an AXELOS partner and provides consulting services and ITIL® v3 and ITIL® 4 training.