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Author:	<>

# **Release & Deployment Management – Best Practices**

## Document Control

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### Document Version History

This table shows a record of significant changes to the document.

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change

### Approvals

This table shows the approvals on this document for circulation, use and withdrawal

Version	Date	Approver	Title/Authority	Approval Remarks
1.0				
1.1				



# Table of Contents

**Document Control .....2**

**1. Release & Deployment Management Best Practices.....5**

# 1. Release & Deployment Management Best Practices

Best practices are those real practices that have delivered efficient, effective, and excellent results in the IT processes and real operations.

Best practices for Release and Deployment management processes and operations can be defined as mentioned below:

## **Release planning is a must for every major and minor release**

Release analysts should do appropriate planning, before the release plans, packages and builds are sent for testing to avoid wastage of time and efforts. Planning should involve analysis on aspects like:

- What requirements are there for the release, determine which release units to be included in the release and to include complete application and related components into release to ensure proper testing.
- Release dates of major releases.

## **Building release packages**

The release team must document the manual processes and procedures required to deploy the release into production (or remove it as necessary) in addition to any technology solution, along with the exact order of execution and success indicators of the steps.

The documentation created as part of the build stage should include details of how to monitor and check the effectiveness of the release and how to recognize and react to problems.

## **Release test plans and review test results**

Adequate testing on release is a mandatory activity that should happen without a miss. All the testing work should happen in coordination with SVT process.

Once the build is ready, tests need to be performed to verify in the functionalities of the release are in line with the change objectives. Depending on the nature of the change the test requirements like System integration tests, functionality tests, and UAT/Pilot tests should be performed defined by the SVT process.

## **Assess the deployment readiness**

Assessing the deployment readiness should involve:

1. identifying the people (deployment stakeholders) who will be involved in the deployment,
2. taking a baseline of the current configuration before the deployment can start on the

production Environment which will be useful when the roll-out fails.

3. conducting post deployment test on the production environment and the test results to review the release acceptance criteria.

### **Documentation for deployment**

Release notes should be prepared with the content of known issues/bugs identified during the testing and should coordinate with SACM team to strategize for the release documentation updates in CMS/CMDB.

### **ELS the most important role in Release management**

ELS team should provide the support to support staff by providing knowledge sessions and training on the release and the technicalities involved in fixing issues. Also, known bugs, known issues should be explained to resolve any knowledge transfer or training gaps.

### **Release closure**

Release Coordinator should ensure:

- that all affected CIs (which were created/modified) during deployment are updated correctly in CMDB.
  - that all related release documents are updated correctly in CMDB and are linked to appropriate CIs.
  - All new KB articles prepared during the ELS phase are to be updated at the appropriate location in the SKMS so that those can be easily reused later by the operations/support staff.
  - Analyze the Deployment and ELS Completion reports and results and discuss with the release team to identify what went correct and what went wrong in the release cycle.
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- **Documentation of lessons learned**  
Documentation of lessons learned should be a must, and should be submitted as knowledge articles to verify and validate them and to publish them in knowledge base.
  - **Have a unified calendar with complete visibility**  
Having an integrated calendar accessible to change, release, and other operational teams like incident and problem would be very helpful to see planned changes and releases by time, day, week and month.

- **Participation of release management staff in service improvement meetings**  
Participation of release staff in service improvement meetings is very vital to understand the priorities and goals of IT organization and accordingly release management staff should align its operations. Also release staff can provide many great inputs for improving the IT service delivery.
- **Regular meetings with other ITSM process owners**  
Regular meetings with other ITSM process owners should happen continuously to update the trends and patterns of releases and the concerns of EU's and customers.
- **Maintenance of ITSM process owners and onsite technicians contacts list**  
Maintenance of ITSM process owners, onsite technicians and service owner's contacts details, and being up to date is a must which will enable the change management staff to do the planning & coordination with other service transition stakeholders.
- **Access to KEDB, CMDB, CMS and SKMS**  
Release management staff should have access to KEDB, CMDB, CMS and SKMS; accessibility to these tools will help the staff to understand the impact of a release, associated services, SLAs associated, financial value, etc. and will help them to evaluate the risks associated.
- **Regular training sessions**  
Training sessions on release management process, policies, procedures and technical knowledge is a must which should happen at regular intervals.  
Most of the delays and discrepancies in release management operations happen due to unawareness on process, policies, and procedures; hence, it is a mandatory objective for IT management to conduct training sessions which can bring thorough awareness to all stakeholders. Management should also conduct exams and assessments to evaluate the proficiency of the staff, and reward them with some gifts or incentives.