

Help Customers Save Money and Boost IT Service Reliability with MOF 4.0

Are you looking for a way to help your customers deliver reliable, cost-effective IT services? Or maybe you need a little help yourself—something to make it a bit easier to get through a tough day of solving problems. If you are, then Microsoft Operations Framework 4.0 foundation-level training might be just what you're looking for.

With the release of MOF 4.0 this year, MOF now integrates community-generated processes, governance, risk, and compliance activities, management reviews, and Microsoft Solutions Framework (MSF) best practices. In short, it's a framework that provides guidance across the entire IT service lifecycle. Better yet, it offers that guidance in a language that's clear and easy to understand. As Jayne Groll of ITSM Academy, a MOF training partner, puts it: "We consider MOF 'Service Management for the masses.'"

So, how do you get MOF 4.0 training? The answer depends in part on your needs and preferences and to some degree on whether you are a gold certified partner, or a registered or certified partner. Regardless of your circumstances, however, getting training is easy and straightforward.

If you are a gold certified partner, contact Sean Earp, who is the Global Technical Readiness Program Manager for Microsoft's gold partner program. You can email Sean at searp@microsoft.com, and he'll put you in touch with one of his team members or a Microsoft training partner who can deliver MOF 4.0 training.

Another great option is to engage with a MOF 4.0 training partner who is certified through EXIN, the Examination Institute for Information Science, which is a global, independent IT examination provider.

You also can contact Microsoft Services for the training, through your Microsoft technical account manager (TAM) or other Microsoft representative. Just ask for the Microsoft Operations Framework 4.0 Foundations Workshop, which is a two-day, instructor-led workshop that introduces the framework and delivers process knowledge that students can use immediately.

Among the EXIN MOF 4.0 training partners who have finished their accreditation process and are now offering MOF 4.0 training is ITSM Academy, a full service provider of IT Service Management (ITSM) education and advice.

According to ITSM Academy's Jayne Groll, her organization "sees MOF as a strong addition to our education and certification portfolio. We believe that is important for organizations to explore multiple frameworks when building their Service Management programs. We are excited to educate our clients about MOF so that they can leverage its practical, prescriptive approach and question-based guidance into new or existing Service Management initiatives," Groll says.

"MOF's lifecycle approach complements ITIL v3, supports ISO/IEC 20000 and can be applied to any organization, regardless of size, industry or platform," Groll says.

To date, ITSM Academy has conducted two MOF Foundation courses with a 100 percent pass on the certification exam. Class attendees represented a wide range of Service Management experience—from those with no prior knowledge through ITIL v2 Service Managers and ITIL v3 Experts.

“Each class included lively discussions about utilizing MOF in client organizations, building custom frameworks with guidance from multiple Service Management frameworks and applying MOF to organizations with limited human, financial, and technical resources,” Groll says. “Learners found the Manage Layer particularly valuable with its focus on Governance, Risk, and Compliance, Change and Configuration Management, and Team role types and accountabilities. All in all, feedback about MOF and the MOF Foundation course was positive and enthusiastic.”

Whether you opt for training from a training partner or from Microsoft, be sure to look into certification. The MOF 4.0 foundations training prepares you to take the Foundation Certificate in Microsoft Operations Framework V 4.0 (MOFF.EN) exam offered by EXIN. EXIN, because of its reputation as an experienced and independent examination institute, manages the certification program.

By the way, if you do any training, Microsoft’s relationship with EXIN represents a great opportunity for you, because EXIN also manages the accreditation of MOF 4.0 training providers. If you become an EXIN training partner, you will get the core course material Microsoft provided for MOF 4.0 free of charge. EXIN will accredit the providers offering MOF training in order to safeguard and guarantee the quality of both the trainers and the material they use. Accreditation of training providers is useful for potential students since it ensures that the training courses provide sufficient preparation for the exam.

Microsoft provides course materials to prospective Accredited Training Providers (ATP) via EXIN upon request. The material is about 80 percent complete and includes a comprehensive slide set for training purposes. ATPs are then encouraged to use this basic course material to create more detailed courseware needed for the accreditation of MOF Foundation classes.

If you do decide to become an EXIN ATP, here are some important points to remember when applying for MOF accreditation:

- All organizations seeking EXIN accreditation must apply to become an EXIN Partner. This is a simple registration procedure to ensure that EXIN’s general quality requirements are met.
- The training provider must sign and submit a non-disclosure agreement to EXIN before any materials will be released.
- The training provider must agree in a statement of intention (e-mail or letter) that by receiving these materials, they will complete the courseware and submit it to EXIN for accreditation.

For more details about EXIN accreditation, visit the EXIN Web site at www.exin-exams.com. The complete Accreditation Manual can be requested by sending an e-mail to service@exin-exams.com.