Procedures for issue prioritization and escalation

Issue prioritisation

Once issues are received from users and recorded as tickets, they should be analysed and prioritized based on their impact to the operations of the user departments. For example they can be classified as High, Medium or Low priority based on their criticality.

Prioritisation helps to ensure that the most critical issues affecting operations of the institute are handled first and also ensure efficient use of the available support resources. Reports can be obtained from the system and analysed on a periodic basis to provide visibility on the number of issues raised per system, nature of commonly reported issues, their criticality and how long it takes to close issues. This can inform decisions such as the need for additional support resources to improve user support as well overall health of the software. A system with a consistent high number of critical issues may be and indication of software that required to be upgraded or replaced.

Issue escalation

Ticket escalation is the process followed to move a user issue to a higher-level support agent or manager. The goal of escalating a ticket is to achieve a faster resolution for an issue that may have taken longer to resolve based on its level of priority. There are several steps you can take to improve the ticket escalation process:

1. Understand which issues require escalation.
2. Define clear roles and responsibilities in the support process.
3. Automate your ticket escalation process. This can be through defining timelines for various status of tickets. For example new issues that have not been responded to within a specific timeline can be escalated.
4. Allow the support team to escalate their issues from multiple channels.
5. Keep users informed about the ticket progress.

The escalation process clarifies the boundaries and channels of decision-making throughout an organization in order to solve the problem quickly and with clarity.

Escalation management is also a process put in place to deal with incidents and problem management within a system, ensuring problems get resolved and issues are addressed at the right level.

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