How do I troubleshoot ServiceNow issues?

What are the benefits of troubleshooting?
While the Now Platform® is built to be robust and stable, issues do happen. When you learn to troubleshoot, you can recognize and resolve issues quickly. Organizations with good troubleshooting skills reap benefits including; improving first call resolution and time to resolution, avoiding unnecessary escalations, and developing knowledge articles that will ultimately deflect incidents. The most effective way to troubleshoot is to follow a standard intake process consistently, and to create an issues response team. The response team develops and follows a process for escalating issues to the right parties, and it ensures that service level agreements are met.

Who is included in the issues response team?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platform owner</td>
<td>Owns platform health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developer</td>
<td>Adheres to tech governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Monitors logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service desk</td>
<td>Follows SOPs, process guides</td>
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What is an intake process and what should it consist of?

It's important to gather enough information to log a case and start diagnosis when a user reports an issue. Create a standard intake process so your service desk can consistently collect the information that will help with issue resolution.

Here is an example list of questions for an issue intake process:
- What did you do to trigger the issue (i.e., full steps for reproduction)?
- What is your username and location?
- What time did the issue occur?
- Can you reproduce the issue consistently?
- Have you had this issue for a while, or is it something new?
- Do other users in your location have similar issues?
- Do you see the same issue when working with other websites?
- What client are you using (i.e., hardware/operating system/browser)?
- Do you still see the issue if you use another machine?

Download a process template from Now Create to get started.
How do I troubleshoot ServiceNow issues? (Continued)

Why and how do I create standard troubleshooting processes?

You should have a standard troubleshooting process for your most common issues to improve users’ service desk experience. Start by identifying your most common calls. You can do this by running reports to determine your top five cases/incidents based on key words (e.g., slowness, unable to log in, access denied).

Your process should include the questions you need to ask, decision trees, and escalation paths to guide the service desk or support engineers during issue investigation. This will also help if you need to log a case with Now Support because you will already have the appropriate information.

What does a troubleshooting process look like?

Below is an example troubleshooting process. Each step shows a sample scenario where a caller has complained of slow response time and how it might be handled.

1. **Review all the gathered information.**
   - A caller has reported that ServiceNow is slow. The service desk technician completed the intake questionnaire.

2. **Develop a theory.**
   - Since other users at that location are affected, there could be a network issue with that location.

3. **Test the theory.**
   - The service desk contacts the network team to see if there are any errors at that location.

4. **Refine and retest your theory.**
   - The network team confirms there is no issue with the network at that location. Next, the service desk asks an admin to look for a slow-running job. Other locations are offline, so they haven’t reported slowness yet.

5. **Develop a solution.**
   - The service desk found that a scheduled job to send emails is taking up most system resources. The team decides to cancel the job and schedule it to run during off hours.

6. **Document the solution.**
   - The service desk creates a knowledge base article to document the solution or documents a known error with the current workaround until there is a permanent solution.

Related resources

- Best Practice resources – ServiceNow instance performance administration
- Fine-tune your ServiceNow platform with regular performance administration
- Knowledge Base – Implementing a maintenance plan
- Knowledge Base – NowSupport Performance

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