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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to deepen the understanding about the factors that contribute to a successful sales and operations planning process. The study investigated sales and operations practices of six large Finnish corporations. The focus was to assess case companies' current sales and operations planning practices, and to find out a sophisticated sales and operations planning maturity model, which would provide guidelines for process improvements.

The research methodology in this multiple case study is qualitative. The theoretical part discusses the concept, process phases, and success factors of the sales and operations planning process. The empiric data was gathered through conducting semi-structured interviews at six manufacturing companies by interviewing seven representatives. The research contains an analysis of case companies' current sales and operations planning practices, and recommendations for future process improvement in form of S&OP maturity model.

The research revealed that the companies have a general interest in the improvement of the sales and operations planning process because of its central role of the company's business planning. It also revealed that via the sales and operations planning process companies' are able to coordinate their internal and external supply chains effectively. The concrete outcome of the thesis is a suggestive sales and operations planning maturity model that can be considered as a tool to assess and to find out improvement areas for future operations.

Key words	supply chain planning, sales and operations planning, business process maturity, success factor
Further information	