

EXCLUSIVE RESEARCH

How Performance Management Delivers Accountability

After many years of deployment and lessons learned, C-level executives focus their PM initiatives to grow revenues and profits.

THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT EXCHANGE

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ELECTRONIC VERSION AVAILABLE

For a PDF version of this document, please visit The Performance Management Exchange Web site at knowledgecenter.businessweek.com/performancemanagement.

HAVE A QUESTION? WEBCAST COMING

A Webcast based on the research project, featuring research program participants, will be conducted in the spring of 2007. Please visit this Web site for more information: knowledgecenter.businessweek.com/performancemanagement.

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METHODOLOGY

BusinessWeek Research Services (BWRS) launched a research program in February 2007 to determine C-level executives' views on performance management (PM) and its use and value to a company. The goal of this research program was to develop insights and ideas on how companies can achieve profitable growth by optimizing performance management and extending PM accountability throughout the business.

This white paper, "How Performance Management Delivers Accountability," reviews some of the data and provides insights and analysis about the information collected. As part of an extensive series of articles, white papers, audiocasts and a Webcast for senior executives, it shares the most important insights gleaned from the research. "The Performance Management Exchange," an exclusive Web site dedicated to this program, includes additional data and insights.

knowledgecenter.businessweek.com/performancemanagement

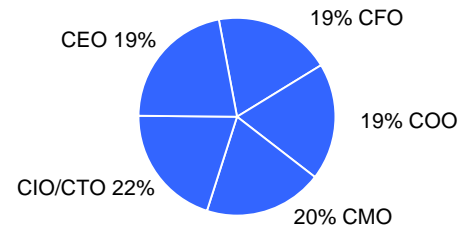
This research program included both quantitative and qualitative components:

1. An online survey of C-level executives from large and midsize companies who are members of the BusinessWeek Market Advisory Board, an online panel of more than 18,000 business leaders and executives. A total of 317 C-level executives across the globe were surveyed in February 2007. Approximately 20 percent of the respondents were either CEOs, COOs, CFOs, CIOs or CMOs. For more information about the demographics, please refer to the charts.
2. In-depth telephone interviews with senior officials at large and midsize companies known to be actively involved in performance management as well as using related analytic tools and applications. The companies involved include:
 - 1-800-FLOWERS.COM
 - Allstate Insurance
 - Energizer
 - Holt Cat
 - ICO Holland
 - Maine Medical Center
 - TD Ameritrade
3. Interviews with leading independent consultants and industry analysts to provide context and additional insights.

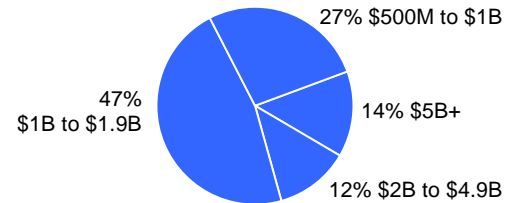
This research project was funded by a grant from SAS but was written independently of the sponsor by Chris Rogers, director of primary research at BWRS. The editorial department of BusinessWeek was not involved in this project. For more information about this project, please contact at chris_rogers@businessweek.com.

CHART 1

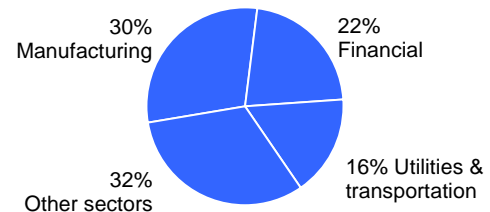
Here are the demographics of the 317 survey respondents by title:



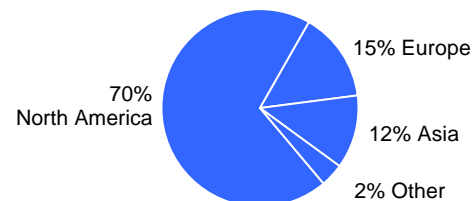
And by the annual revenues of their organizations:



The respondents represent a broad array of industries...



...from around the world



N=317

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

Source: BusinessWeek Research Services and SAS, March 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- More than half of the survey respondents' companies have fully implemented and are practicing performance management. Another 36 percent are in the initial execution/implementation stage of PM.
- Large companies plan to shift from a bottom-line emphasis to a balance of the top line and bottom line during the next 24 months.
- A majority of C-level executives at large and midsize companies consider PM to be extremely important for them to achieve their strategic net-income goals.
- More than two-thirds of CEOs say that PM had a "positive" impact on shareholder value.
- About half said that a culture of accountability was one of the biggest benefits of implementing PM.
- Roughly four out of 10 C-level executives are worried that an excessive number of KPIs or other metrics is an obstacle to PM success.

INTRODUCTION

CEOs are focused on growth, but not for growth's sake—their mantra today is “profitable growth.” They want to spur both the top line and the bottom line simultaneously, according to the 317 C-level executives responding to the March 2007 survey. However, they know this will be no easy feat in a fast-changing, 24/7 global economy. Achieving this goal means accurately gauging what actions drive revenues and slash costs. It requires having processes in place that ensure those actions are executed in a timely manner. It means taking care of the business at hand today while also anticipating and preparing for the changes that will be necessary tomorrow.

For many companies, the drive for “profitable growth” requires a profound shift in corporate culture—from backward-looking and reactive to accountable, innovative and proactive. At the heart of this shift is performance management (PM).

PM consists of initiatives to maximize the effectiveness of every aspect of an organization. These initiatives are designed to manage organizational effectiveness—performance against stated objectives—through the integration of technology, processes, people and methodologies.

Manufacturing supervisors, for instance, use PM to optimize production levels based on customer inventory and demand. Marketing managers pinpoint their most profitable customers and target campaigns to reach them through PM. From optimizing sales to supply chains to finance, performance management is helping organizations seize opportunities and thwart problems.

More than half of the survey respondents' companies have fully implemented and are practicing PM. Another 36 percent are in the initial execution/implementation stage (see Chart 2, “Most Companies Rely on Performance Management”).

These organizations have high aspirations for PM—they expect it to increase shareholder value, develop better risk management, provide deeper operational insights and improve budgeting and forecasting. According to C-level executives responding to the survey, PM is the best way to drive both top-line and bottom-line growth at the same time. In their view, other initiatives, such as new product development or Six Sigma, tend to skew toward either revenue generation or cost reduction. This is telling because the move to PM corresponds with another survey finding that large companies plan to shift from a bottom-line emphasis to a balance of the top line and bottom line during the next 24 months.

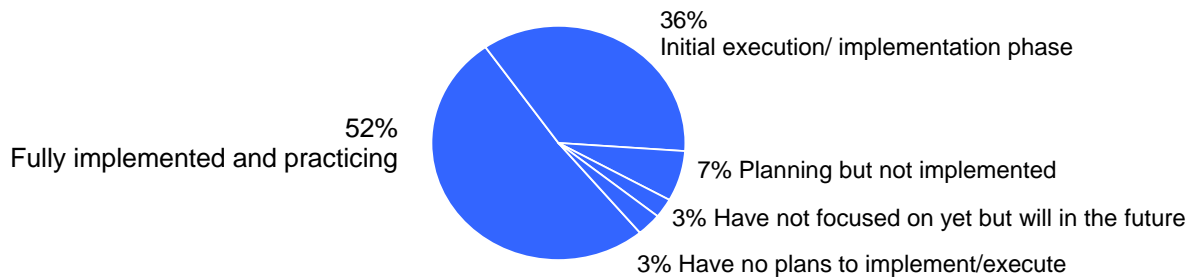
“Over the past three to four years, the focus has been entirely on cost reduction,” says Tom Davenport, a professor of management and IT at Babson College and author of the book *Competing on Analytics*. “Now companies realize they need to get back into the innovation business.”

In light of that, it's no wonder a majority of CEOs, CFOs, CIOs, CMOs and COOs at large organizations consider PM to be extremely important for them to achieve their strategic top-line as well as bottom-line goals.

This report examines how top companies have overcome obstacles to build effective performance management environments. It looks at the ways in which leading practitioners of PM have aligned processes and embraced accountability. These companies have developed cultures that focus on continuous improvement, using predictive analytics to uncover new opportunities. They've also navigated through the stumbling blocks of PM, including excessive key performance indicators (KPIs). As a result, they are seeing growth in the top line, in the bottom line and in shareholder value.

CHART 2

Most Companies Rely on Performance Management



N=317

Note: Total exceeds 100% due to rounding

Source: BusinessWeek Research Services and SAS, March 2007

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ALIGNMENT

C-level executives who were surveyed gave performance management two solid “A”s—saying “accountability” and “alignment” are the two greatest benefits from these initiatives (see Chart 3, “PM Drives Accountability and Alignment”). A whopping 56 percent depend on PM to drive accountability, while the other top benefits follow in a steady progression of 48 percent to 42 percent:

- Helps bring a culture of measurement/accountability
- Articulates, communicates and aligns strategy
- Identifies, quantifies and prioritizes improvement opportunities
- Provides a vehicle for decision making

CHART 3

PM Drives Accountability and Alignment

When asked to rate the greatest benefits of performance management on a scale of one through seven (with seven indicating great benefit), survey respondents indicated a wide range of benefits (% checking 6 or 7).



N varies between 310 and 317

Source: BusinessWeek Research Services and SAS, March 2007

Taken together, what do these payoffs say about implementing PM projects? “The issue isn’t having enough data,” Davenport says. “It’s about having a process in place where you take action on the data in a dependable and serious way.”

Some companies, for instance, have created metrics to determine which branch offices are unprofitable—but then failed to close those offices, partly because no one in the company was rewarded or punished based on the branch offices’ performance. For effective PM programs, “you need clear lines of responsibility,” Davenport says.

Mark Graham Brown, a consultant and author of three books on balanced scorecards, says creating a culture of accountability is a matter of three simple steps, which are rarely followed:

1. Set clear and measurable goals and expectations for employees, with little overlap in responsibilities.
2. Develop a scorecard for all employees that provides data on key performance measures at least monthly.
3. Provide personal and powerful positive and negative consequences for good and poor performance via promotions, perks, compensation and performance ratings.

At Maine Medical Center, a 606-bed tertiary care and teaching hospital in Portland, Maine, this formula is followed for everyone from the CEO to the physicians and nursing staff. Executives use a scorecard to gauge performance against predefined targets, while individual physicians and nursing supervisors look at a dashboard to see how effectively they’re treating their patients as compared to other caregivers. The PM initiative has allowed Maine Medical to identify best practices in clinical areas like administering intravenous drugs, which has reduced the number of patient infections as well as the average length of a patient’s stay.

According to J. Peter Chingos, acting director at Maine Medical’s Center for Performance Improvement, viewing these individual reports on a daily basis helps staff meet their overall goals—but, more importantly, it makes them understand the importance of their contributions, leading to increased job satisfaction.

“We’ve developed a culture of accountability, which has turned into a great motivator of improvement,” he says. “What better motivator could you have, after all, than saving lives?”

M. C. Sankar, vice president of enterprise applications development at TD Ameritrade in Omaha, Nebraska, notes, “We tie pay to corporate results, even down to the lowest level associates, to some extent.” He adds, “In my past life, a boss told me if you want to change behavior, you need to incent the right behavior.”

DRIVING SHAREHOLDER VALUE

All that incenting coupled with performance management is paying huge dividends for large companies—literally. More than two-thirds of the CEOs who were surveyed say PM has a “positive” impact on shareholder value (see Chart 4, “PM Drives EPS”).

This finding corresponds with a recent study by The Hackett Group that found companies with world-class PM generate 2.4 times greater equity market returns than typical companies in their industry over three years, including stock price increases and dividends.

According to Hackett’s Chief Research Officer Richard T. Roth, world-class PM practitioners have shaken off the corporate obsession with quarterly numbers and transformed their planning process from “a painful chore into a valuable tool that helps them chart a course looking toward the future.”

The problem with most PM initiatives to date is they tend to be backward-looking and are sometimes poorly thought out. Roth notes that forward-looking companies develop balanced scorecards and a PM framework that combine historical information, such as financial and operational results, with more predictive data. They also tend to embed more nonfinancial information in reports, appreciating that the information needed to guide decisions is complex and varied. Most of all, these companies spend time homing in on metrics that tie to strategic goals.

Among companies with lesser PM efforts, “the metrics can be arbitrary,” Babson College’s Davenport says. “They measure customer loyalty without any sense if customer loyalty is truly a driver of financial performance for their business.”

This speaks to the historical gap between mere reporting and predictive analytics, which fuses PM with advanced business-intelligence tools to decide the most profitable courses of action. “For some companies, predictive analytics will not be just a nice-to-have capability, but the basis for competition,” Davenport says.

He points to Hilton Hotels, which has determined that a 5-percent bump in customer loyalty translates into a 1.1-percent increase in revenues. Those kinds of cause-and-effect metrics are the Holy Grail of PM, and more companies are chasing them.

Holt Cat, a \$1 billion distributor of Caterpillar equipment based in San Antonio, is searching for that crystal ball through its PM initiatives. “Being reactionary isn’t a choice,” says company Controller Paul Hensley. “We have to be proactive and look into the future.”

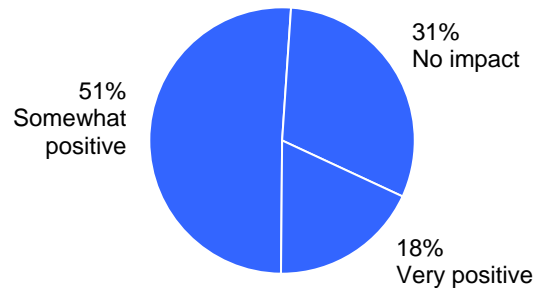
Thanks to the fast-growing Texas economy and a series of acquisitions, Hensley notes, “We’ve been doing so well that people here would give each other high fives and slap each other on the back all the time, but the question was whether we were doing as well as we could have.”

When Holt Cat launched a PM system for budgeting, the emphasis was not on historical data but on forecasting trends. Now Holt Cat is combining its own data with external data such as interest rates, the price of oil and new home starts in Texas. Taken together, this information will show the company where to target efforts to increase sales.

CHART 4

PM Drives EPS

More than two-thirds of CEOs said that PM had a positive effect on shareholder value (% of respondents).



N=51 (CEOs)

Source: BusinessWeek Research Services and SAS, March 2007

IT’S ALL ABOUT CULTURE

Though mindful of the benefits of PM, companies face numerous challenges in successfully implementing PM. Culture, too much data and a lack of data are the primary culprits (see Chart 5, “Barriers to PM Success”).

Steve Williams, president of DecisionPath Consulting, says successful PM hinges on strong, consistent leadership; effective program management; and a business-driven PM design approach. “The leadership is required to bring about the often-substantial cultural changes, which boil down to changing the way organizations use information to improve profits,” he says.

After that, effective program management synchronizes and ensures the effectiveness of the business process change. The last piece is a business-driven design approach that combines strategic alignment, business processes, KPIs and business-intelligence elements to ensure the key processes that affect the bottom line are being managed.

“Companies often invest in technologies as a way to improve business performance before they fully invest in understanding their core business processes, and they are then dismayed when their technology investments fail to deliver ROI and their business performance fails to be measurably improved,” Williams says.

Part of the issue is that many C-level executives don't appreciate the importance of creating a culture of accountability, although its absence is related to most of the PM obstacles C-level executives identified, from “culture doesn't support measurement” to “lack of collaboration.” Despite that, only 45 percent of the COOs surveyed and more than a third of the CEOs consider culture as an extreme obstacle. In contrast, most consultants say culture is overwhelmingly the primary stumbling block for PM—and cultivating culture starts at the top.

“If the CEO does not get actively involved in the process, there will be differences in how PM is practiced throughout the company and in the importance of the process,” says Gregg Stocker, managing director at the Netherlands-based ICO Holland, one of the largest global suppliers of high-quality powders and related services to the plastics industry. “Just saying it is important will not make it important. It requires consistency in emphasizing its importance as well as continual interest in how the process is being implemented.”

Randy Benz, vice president and CIO at St. Louis-based Energizer, says leadership and culture are the key factors because PM initiatives must become part of the corporate fabric. “Performance management isn't a big-bang process,” he says. “It's a continuous improvement process. You are constantly tweaking, so it has to be something that you do in the normal course of business.”

Benz points out some “tweaks” that reflect this approach:

- Encourage information sharing. “When knowledge workers publish information, they need to do it in a consistent way, so others in the organization can easily evaluate and compare that information.”
- Stress the small stuff. “You get big payoffs from technology like filtering and searching, which allows decision makers to find information they need, rather than focus on trying to find huge nuggets of information that change the course of the business.”
- Appreciate process. “When people talk about PM, immediately we want to leap to measurable things like metrics and scorecards. At Energizer, we spend a lot of time working with our teams, sharing information about workflow and business processes first.”
- Stay current with technology. “Every time you implement a new piece of technology, it forces you to look at your processes.”

CHART 5

Barriers to PM Success

Culture, a lack of data or too much data are the most frequent obstacles to PM success, according to respondents. They rated various obstacles on a scale of one through seven, with seven indicating the largest obstacle (% checking 6 or 7).



N varies between 310 and 317

Source: BusinessWeek Research Services and SAS, March 2007

Ameritrade's Sankar agrees that PM requires an ongoing education effort, often about these little things. “The first challenge is simply to remind and remind people to go to dashboards and scorecards for information rather than using old tools like spreadsheets and e-mail,” he says.

To sustain the continuous focus and discipline that PM demands, leaders must decide what kind of culture they need to develop—and shake off old ingrained habits that work against it. For example, in the survey, executives expressed their desire for top-line growth. They also said top-line growth requires gaining new customers, and less than half of respondents think their companies do this well. Then the respondents noted top-line growth requires innovation, but fewer than four out of 10 said they do this well.

How does this play into typical approaches toward PM? When companies develop metrics for innovation, they often focus solely on product development rather than processes and services, significantly reducing their potential benefits. “You also need to have a culture of innovation and accept failure,” Babson College's Davenport says. “A lot of companies aren't comfortable with that.”

WHAT TO MEASURE?

"Once an organization develops a vision of becoming a different type of organization, and strategies are defined for achieving this change," consultant Williams says, "the progress needs to be measured on a daily and weekly basis so that unsuccessful strategies can be discovered early on and changes can be made." He adds: "This boils down to having the right metrics."

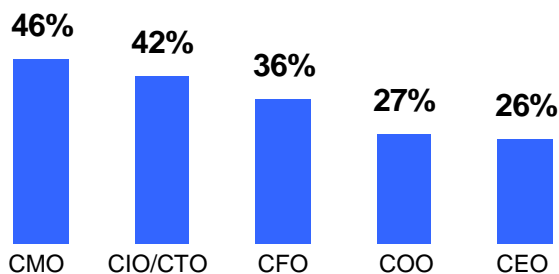
And therein lies another issue. It's become a corporate cliché that to improve, you need to measure. Even while embracing that concept, C-level executives express the difficulty of knowing exactly what to measure. And so, typically, they measure so much they are incapable of determining what any of it means.

Across the C-level suite, excessive KPIs remain a towering concern (see Chart 6, "Metrics Madness"). Nearly half of the chief marketing officers responding to the survey say this is an extreme obstacle, as they try to steer their departments to accountability after traditionally regarding their efforts as more art than science. CIOs and CFOs come next in line in appreciating this problem, with 42 percent and 36 percent, respectively, considering excessive KPIs a key obstacle.

CHART 6

Metrics Madness

Concern about excessive key performance indicators (KPIs) varies across the C-suite (% of each title rating excessive KPIs as an extreme obstacle).



N varies between 306 and 315

Source: BusinessWeek Research Services and SAS, March 2007

Experts say nine metrics at each level of the organization is sufficient. ICO Holland, for example, uses a mere eight KPIs focused on four key areas—process, product, people and markets. And Stocker would like to reduce even that number to allow ICO's leaders to truly understand the business and the levers that lead to success.

"If we are improving in our KPIs, then the general indicators such as revenues will follow," he says. "If our initiatives are progressing but our KPIs are not showing improvement, then we are probably working on the wrong initiatives."

That kind of discipline is unusual. Companies often have many more KPIs, inhibiting their ability to understand their data and take quick, decisive action. A leading consultant says she encountered one company with 84 pages of metrics, all but guaranteeing the data would go unused. She calls this widespread problem "metrics madness."

Other analysts estimate that 80 percent of companies use metrics without any idea how they correlate to financial performance. "Identifying the appropriate metrics for an organization is a very difficult process," one expert says. Each business process should be mapped to create metrics to identify leading indicators. And then the metrics need to roll up from the bottom. But which metrics need to roll up, and to whom, remains one of the many questions companies must ponder when putting together PM projects.

Consider responsiveness and agility—the ability to react quickly to seize opportunities and avoid threats. It's hard to imagine many companies in this Internet-speed age that don't want to be agile. Yet only 38 percent of CIO/CTOs say their organizations excel at that crucial trait. All other C-levels are even more concerned about their inability to act quickly, with fewer than one in three CEOs confident they run agile organizations. This finding speaks to the interplay of performance management, culture and proper measurement.

"For years, companies have been talking about empowering people," Energizer's Benz says. "Usually, this means, 'I want to empower people as long as I bless every decision they make.'"

This commonplace attitude can fly against the kind of nimble culture necessary for many businesses to succeed. "If you want to improve execution at the customer level, you need to equip the customer manager with the information he needs and let him handle the situation," Benz says. Too often, he finds, PM has been an exercise in letting metrics flow from customer-facing workers to middle managers, where the information stalls, while the front-line worker waits impatiently for the manager to give him the answer the worker already knows is correct.

"This doesn't mean you should have everyone running amok and doing their own thing," Benz says. "But you don't need to over-complicate this. Don't lose sight that performance management is about giving people the best information to make the best decisions. Don't make this a technology exercise—look at this from the eyes of users of information, and consider what they need, and you'll be successful."

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

C-level officials have the solution to a big problem right under their noses. They want to grow their revenues but are leery of wasting money in the pursuit of top-line growth. Most have been using performance management tools and techniques for several years to improve efficiencies and otherwise optimize processes that directly affect the bottom line. Now they need to more fully consider how to achieve their strategic revenue goals with PM.

As they assess their opportunities to affect top-line growth with PM, C-level executives need to keep in mind the following obstacles:

- If the corporate culture isn't ready for this type of accountability, the effort will lag.
- The PM program must be driven from the executive suite, with the CEO as chief promoter.
- Too many metrics is worse than not enough metrics.
- Think through the business strategy and tactics before deploying technology. Fix the workflow and process glitches before you automate.

Sponsor's Statement—

THREE LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Is your organization simply monitoring performance or actively improving it?

In the BusinessWeek Research Services survey, more than half of the respondents said their companies have fully implemented and are practicing performance management (PM). Most said PM is extremely important to them for achieving strategic goals. They have high expectations that PM will deliver new levels of accountability and alignment.

Is it? And if PM is improving shareholder value, could it be even better? The answer depends on just what flavor of performance management these companies have “fully implemented and are practicing.” Companies tend to progress through three phases of performance management, each one a necessary precursor for the next and a necessary element of a complete PM approach.

1. SEE IT - CREATE TRANSPARENCY ACROSS THE ENTERPRISE

First is the issue of gaining **transparency** across the organization, which is frequently hampered by issues of data overload, lack of integration and dubious data quality. More than one in four companies surveyed by SAS cited data inaccuracy as a major obstacle to performance improvement. Less than half perform data cleansing and rationalization (Performance Improvement Survey, BetterManagement.com, April 2006).

The sheer volume of information, little of it correlated or validated across departments, makes it difficult to know where to focus. What's important? What factors really drive success? What are the impacts outside your hierarchy of control?

These data integration challenges may be endemic, but they can be addressed by available technology. The more enduring challenges are cultural. Siloed systems, applications and thinking make it difficult to rally momentum for companywide goals. A political culture of “me first,” coupled with lack of accountability, actually motivates people to drive for individual achievements rather than for collective success. As companies attempt to run leaner than ever, employees are more likely to exhibit survivalist behavior rather than big-picture selflessness.

Do all employees even know what the big picture is? If they don't, and they aren't held accountable to it, they can hardly be expected to care. Corporate strategy must be clearly articulated, then translated into measurable results and then communicated effectively to everyone in the organization. “Performance management is about giving people the best information to make the best decisions,” said Randy Benz, vice president and CIO of Energizer. Everybody must understand the vision and how each person's daily activities contribute to it.

2. MANAGE IT - ALIGN RESOURCES AND PROVE IMPACT

This brings us to the next value proposition of PM: **alignment**. Align all departments toward top-level strategy, using linked scorecards, dashboards and metrics that account for interdependencies among functions.

Tracking cost at an activity level, managers can more accurately identify how budget allocations support strategic goals. With a deeper understanding of the work force, managers can better deploy talent for win-win outcomes. Understanding the IT portfolio, managers can more efficiently deploy technology to support business priorities and so on. The objective is to align the right resources to work where they can maximize results.

The company that achieves this level of PM is well-positioned for competitive advantage and better profit margins. It can modify course as necessary, with agility, to reflect changing conditions. However, its advantage may diminish as competitors follow suit.

3. IMPROVE IT - PREDICT, MODEL AND OPTIMIZE FUTURE OUTCOMES

The most effective organizations will exploit PM at an even deeper level – to proactively **improve performance**, not just report and control it. Such organizations will use PM to better understand not just what happened in the past and how to align resources to be more efficient in the present, but also what is likely to happen in the future. Predictive insight enables enterprises to identify opportunities and threats ahead of the pack.

This quantum leap is attained by embedding analytics into PM. Analytic techniques for modeling, forecasting and simulating potential outcomes answer critical business questions. “What drives process variability, and how does it affect resource consumption and profit?” “What are the characteristics and real drivers of ‘lifetime value?’ “Exactly how does our risk appetite factor into business decisions?” “What is the quantifiable relationship between metrics and objectives?” “Where do I need to improve and by how much to achieve our goals?” “Which customers, suppliers or events could expose the company to loss or unacceptable risk?” “What will happen if we change course in this way, considering multiple variables?”

If asked, most executives would say their organizations use analytics to understand performance, and they’d be right, to a degree. But there are many levels of analytics. Often analytics are applied to niche business issues but not at the strategic level. Or they might be used to pursue metrics that may or may not influence success, or might not influence success in expected ways.

Applying a diversity of analytics to business problems enables managers to determine whether they’re chasing the right metrics, fully assess the impact of changing KPI values, quickly anticipate future challenges and opportunities, and respond more rapidly with fact-based decisions.

Each successive capability – transparency, alignment and improvement – should be an integral part of the PM program and platform. The message from the BusinessWeek Research Services survey is that C-level executives understand this reality very well. PM should serve as the guiding mechanism to not just optimize performance by function or department, but also to bring the entire organization into balance and alignment for genuine improvement.

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