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# Supply Chain Review

## April 2011



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### CEOs least likely to want change: poll

**April 7, 2011**

It's often the CEO who least understands the benefits of business improvement programs according to a new study. The poll of 20 Australian companies undertaken by business improvement specialists Oliver Wight, suggests those within the supply chain are most likely to pursue change.

"Integrated Business Planning (advanced S&OP) and Supply Chain Optimisation managers often see problems in the business manifested first hand," says Oliver Wight Partner James Small.

"However, supply chain doesn't always get a seat at the executive table and that is a problem because C-level buy-in is crucial for business improvement programs to succeed," he says.

The poll also reveals 'business excellence' as a term became devalued prior to the economic downturn, but is now a more compelling issue for many organisations.

The qualitative telephone study was conducted to investigate how attitudes to business improvement have been affected by the global recession.

The results show in the years before the downturn, some organisations were put off improvement programs by the apparent complexity and cost.

Significantly the research also suggests the benefits of sustaining business excellence had been previously been obscured by economic buoyancy; because in good times, average performance is accepted as good enough, and business excellence merely a 'nice-to-have'.

"This was a straw poll, rather than a quantitative study," Small says.

"But there is consistency in the feedback and it is evident that business improvement has often been seen as a cultural leap rather than a cultural shift, and as a result, too difficult to do."

The survey finds 'seeing is believing' when it comes to business improvement.

"Those organisations that had embarked on transformation programs before the recession and achieved a level of excellence, are now feeling the benefits," Small says.

"The feedback suggests these organisations have fared much better than others because they are better at managing the supply chain.