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STREAMLINED IBP CUTS COSTS, IMPROVES MARKET RESPONSIVENESS

When recurring planning processes balloon in size and length, companies risk losing focus and wasting enormous amounts of time and money.

A leading food manufacturer found its integrated business planning (IBP) had become unwieldy over time. Meeting attendance sometimes exceeded 90 people, monthly sessions stretched to four hours, and discussions often drifted into tactical detail. The meetings consumed time without delivering the intended alignment or actionable decisions. As a result, forecast accuracy decreased, teams had different priorities, and problems were slow to reveal themselves, all of which ultimately impacted performance.

The company turned to Integrated Project Management Company, Inc. (IPM) to bring discipline, structure, and efficiency to its IBP process.

TOO MANY PEOPLE, TOO MUCH TIME



The growing food company faced major obstacles in its IBP cycle. Meetings combined demand and supply discussions into a single marathon session. They forced in-depth tactical issues—such as specific plant line breakdowns—into what should have been strategic planning forums.

Without clear ownership of IBP, roles blurred. Senior executives and functional managers from each business unit, as well as corporate, all crowded into the same meeting. People added slides to the

lengthy meeting deck to cover their bases in case someone asked questions. Escalation of issues led to higher-level executives being invited. Attendees left without clarity on priorities or next steps.

The company needed to realign its IBP process and responsibilities to increase collaboration, enable sharper decisions, reduce costs, respond more quickly to demand changes, and refocus attention on long-term planning.

REFOCUSING ON WHAT MATTERS



IPM's IBP expert began by objectively assessing the demand and supply review processes. He evaluated each person's role and contribution. Working with the company's finance leadership, they redesigned the meeting structure by separating demand and supply reviews into distinct forums, each with a clear purpose and time horizon. They streamlined the sessions by condensing presentations from more than 200 slides to just 34. A focus on concise scorecards, KPI summaries, and visual storytelling supported decision-making.

Roles were clarified and escalation paths defined to ensure issues were addressed at the right level and executives were engaged only when necessary. This enabled them to reduce the regular attendee list by about two-thirds, while ensuring the decision-makers were at the table. For example, corporate finance team members were no longer required; business unit finance leaders were. Engineering, food safety and quality, human resources, and IT were left off the guest list. And fewer members from planning and supply chain were invited to attend.



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To maintain transparency and trust with those no longer attending, change management practices included tailored messaging to explain the new structure. Many people still had indirect impact or infrequent involvement, so this helped make sure information still flowed effectively.

IPM also helped the company strengthen demand planning discipline by establishing an executive demand review. This new forum created clearer visibility into customer priorities and competitive insights, improving market responsiveness.

MEASURABLE SAVINGS, SHARPER DECISIONS



The restructured IBP processes quickly delivered both financial savings and cultural improvements. Cutting the monthly meeting duration from four hours to two returned valuable time to senior leaders and managers. That adds up to more than \$550,000 a year. And the savings don't account for what those people accomplish with their time.

Importantly, the IBP cycle now focuses not on historic reporting but on forward-looking planning, extending the horizon to 24 to 36 months.

And the demand review is connecting sales more directly to operations, improving forecast accuracy, production planning, proactive market response, and customer service.

With clearer roles, sharper content, and a disciplined process, the company moved closer to IBP best practices. And the results go beyond efficiency gains. Teams report better focus, stronger ownership, and more confidence in decisions that shape both near-term operations and long-term strategy.



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