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THE LEVEL OF PROCESS MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES APPLICATION IN SMEs IN THE SELECTED REGION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Abstract

This paper presents a methodology for calculating the indicators of the implementation of process management in SMEs (MPP) and the analysis of results of process management principles use based on the number of employees. The data based of a questionnaire survey in 2011, of 187 small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the South Bohemian Region of the Czech Republic, was taken for the purposes of the research.

The level of process management implementation in enterprises can be determined using the evaluation application of its principles (Truneček, 2003; Rolínek et al., 2012). Designed composite indicator MPP reflects the degree of implementation of the principles of process management. MPP is made up of the sum of the points that have been assigned to individual principles of process management, with the maximum score 21. Enterprises that were rated 16-21 points are considered as process managed, 6-15 points for partially managed, less than 6 points gained is procedurally unmanaged business. Process management principles are based on the findings of this indicator and MPP is applied to most medium-sized enterprises, while the least in micro-enterprises, which implies that the number of employees increases the utilization of the principles of process management. Results were adopted by Chi-square test of goodness of fit and correlation coefficient.

Keywords: Process management, process management principles, small and medium-sized enterprises

1. INTRODUCTION

Process management is a systematic process of identification, visualization, measurement, evaluation and continuous improvement of business processes using methods and principles, which are based on the process approach and aim to secure the effectiveness of the company (Burlton, 2001; Závadský, 2005). Hammer (2002) sees the

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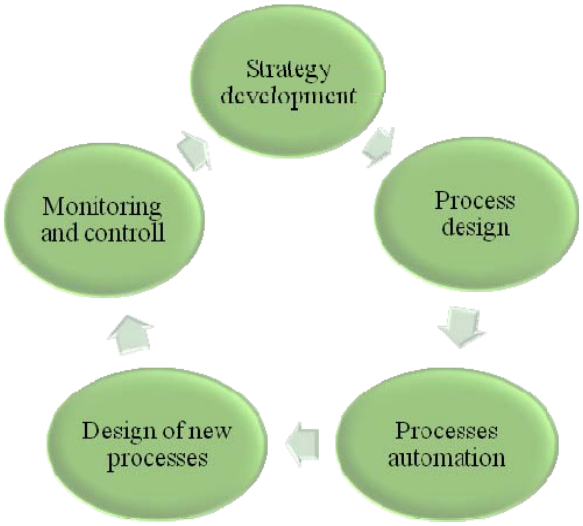
process management as assurance that processes operate at the highest possible level of their potential, while there is a search for opportunities leading to their improvement and subsequent implementation of these opportunities into reality. The essence of process management can be expressed also by using the following definitions:

„Business process management (BPM) is a systematic approach to making an organization's workflow more effective, more efficient and more capable of adapting to an ever-changing environment. A business process is an activity or set of activities that will accomplish a specific organizational goal" (Business process management (BPM) 2011).

Process management (business process management), according to McCoy, Sinur and collective (2007) is a highly productive discipline of management, as illustrated by research (Jeston & Nelis, 2014) that generalizes the main positives introduction of process management, which demonstrates specific results of companies such as Citybank (50% reduction in operating costs, increase satisfaction of both employees and customers), Air Products (increase net operating profit by 32%) and Nedbank (large operational savings, ubetter time-management , cost, quality).Companies, which are driven by its rules, gain according to the author competitive advantage over other companies.

The essence of process management can be expressed using the model of its phases (Figure 1). These phases provide, at their appropriate implementation, the necessary steps in the design (or description) implementation, automation and the process performance determination (Buech et al., 2012).



Source: (Buech et al., 2012)

Figure 1. Phases of Process Management

The first basic phase of the process management model is the design and selection of appropriate strategies in relation to the business model and its development to the level of the key factors of success (KPIs), so that it can be used for process management, for example by using BSC methods (Horváth, 2002). The second phase is the very definition and design of a business processes based on allocating resources and conditions for their implementation in relation to factors of external and internal environment, the chosen strategy and identification of the key success factors. Second phase also includes the performance indicators evaluation process proposal, i.e. determination of measurements and the subsequent performance appraisal system setting (Wong & Tseng 2014). The third phase is characterized by business processes automation and possible introduction and use of IT infrastructure. The next phase is the eventual design of new processes and their implementation using the proposed IT

infrastructure. The last phase is the process performance monitoring, detection and analysis of deviations and tackling and resolving deficiencies.

The procedure is similarly applied in other methodologies deployment process management (or process reengineering), i.e. methodology such as Hammer and Champy, Davenport, Manganelliho and Klein, Kodak, Dod (Řepa 2006).

Process-driven enterprises are those that implement basic principles, characteristic for this concept to their management system. These principles can be assigned for example recording ofthe processes into process maps, developing the strategy and implementation of the principles of strategic management, identifying value added products, setting up a system of performance evaluation (Benedict & Bilodeau, 2013). Truneček (2003) defines the following basic principles of process-managed enterprises, which include the integration and compression of activities, delinearization of processes, supplier integration, the principle of the best location of the work realization, teamwork, process-oriented motivation, alternative process concepts, 3S principles etc. Overview of principles according to their orientation is shown in the following table:

The essence of the **principle of integration and work compression** is thickening and incorporation of the separate and independent activities in one process. This happens in both the horizontal and vertical direction. According to the approaches of process management this process is always served by one team.

The purpose of the second principle (**principle of work delinearization**) is not performing actions in a linear sequence but in parallel. This leads to shortening the time between the beginning and the end of the process. This principle can be filled again by team work, especially for the reason that individual team members are interchangeable.

The work must be performed where it is most effective regardless of the organizational structure. To ensure the **principle of the best location of work realization**, the use of transfer of the work from the inside out (the integration of the customer's production) from outside to inside or vice versa (it is the integration of suppliers into the process by the manufacturer).

The basis of the application of the **principle of teamwork** is the preparation of process teams that have considerable powers

Table 1. Principles of process management

Principles aimed at work	Principle of integration and work compression Principle of the best location of work realization Principle of work delinearization
Principles focusing on the process	Principle of team work application Principle of the focus on process motivation Principle of ownership of the process Principle of the variant concept process Principle 3 S - self-management, self-control and self-organization
Principles aimed at enterprise	Principle of flexible process autonomy Principle of accessibility of knowledge and information

Source: Truneček, 2003

and the result of their activity is evaluated by maximizing the added value for the customer.

The **principle of process-oriented motivation** is built on the principle that the motivation of workers in teams is tied to the outcome of the process and therefore on the level of added value for the customer.

Responsibility according to the **principle of responsibility** lies on the process owner. The task is to lead the process owner and be responsible for the performance of its end goals.

Principle of the variant concept process is based on the individual needs and requirements. From this perspective is the applied concept of mass production obsolete. Each new variant of the process serves to ensure different needs of markets and customers.

3S principle - self-management, self-control and self-organization can be applied in the work of individual team members. This requires mastering the employees training and improving their knowledge. Each team member must be responsible for their work and there must be a direct link to the results of the motivational process. Self-control process takes place within teams and is based on value metrics (value added by the customer). Individual workers are also sufficiently independent and that could lead to self-management. Self-organization is then applied (also found) in enterprises with specific organizational structures such as the amoeba.

The basis of the flexible process autonomy principle is reduction of the cost of individual operations by appropriate use of centralized and decentralized approaches to their management. Teams are assembled flexibly to customers' requirements and certain activities are controlled by the "central" (such as purchases in large volumes for the whole company). The implementation of this principle is to allow the application of information technology and the creation of a single database in which all teams may enter.

With application of the **knowledge and information of accessibility principle** the usual information transmission is removed (typical for functional management (Porth, 2011)), based on the fact that the subordinate knows exactly what "he/she must know", what he/she must know, to perform the given task. Within the new concept everyone in the company has the access to all the information and everyone has to decide which of them are needed in their work. It is important to remove barriers of work interface (paragraphs break), knowledge barriers and information barriers (Harmon, 2014).

Approaches such as the use of horizontal corporation are included among other principles characteristic for process managed businesses (there is a reduction in the number of management levels), application of mass customization, the introduction of internal markets, the integration of suppliers and customers, driving with open books, etc. These characteristics as well as the comprehensive implementation of the described approaches can be fully applied rather in larger enterprises (corporations) (Zelený 2005).

2. EXPERIMENTAL

The aim of this paper is to present the definition of composite indicators of the process management implementation (defined by Truneček, 2003) and its use to analyze the application level of the concept of process management in SMEs in the

selected region of the Czech Republic, focusing on the size of enterprises. The paper presents the results of the research project GAJU 79/2013/S.

The data were collected in 2011 based on the face-to face survey with the management of SMEs. The sample consisted of 187 small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the South Bohemian region of the Czech Republic. New definition of the European Union (European Commission: A new definition of SMEs, 2006) in accordance with the Act no. 47/2002 Sb. as amended has been used as basis for the classification of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Wholesale and retail trade (22%), construction (13%) and industry (13%) were according to CZ - NACE prevailing activities of SMEs. Companies in sections A (agriculture, forestry, fisheries), B (Mining and quarrying) and I (Accommodation and food service activities) by CZ NACE were excluded from the research due to their specific properties.

The data has been edited and statistically processed using basic statistical methods, namely Chi square test, which assumes the formulation of the null and alternative hypotheses. The null hypothesis (H_0) assumes that between the observed phenomena is not a relationship, while the alternative hypothesis H_A assumes that the relationship exists. The acceptance or rejection of hypotheses is used in the following test criteria (Chráska, 2007).

Test criterion:

$$x^2 = \sum \frac{(p-o)^2}{o} \quad (1)$$

x^2 = test criterion chi-square test,
p = observed frequency,
o = expected frequency (corresponding to the null hypothesis).

The calculated value is then compared with the critical value according to the chosen level of significance, in our case $\alpha = 0.05$ and the corresponding degrees of freedom.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Process management principles defined by Truneček (2003) allow us to identify whether the enterprise is managed by process management. Supposedly the principles can be applied in different companies in different degrees. For this reason, the research team designed a composite indicator of process management principles implementation level. Its design was based on the assumption that the process-driven SMEs apply only basic principles characteristic for process management. As stated by Srpová (2010) the management of small and medium-sized enterprise has many specifics. Small firms are also characterized by the fact that most of them are managed by operational management, and oral communication predominates over written communication. The work is often distributed among employees rather spontaneously and on the go. Decisions of the entrepreneur or executive are often dependent on the current state of mind of the decision maker. The number of company employees usually increases with company growth and it is necessary to formalize business processes. The basic task is to define all processes and activities that run in the company. It is, however, for a small business very difficult because of the mentioned concentration of several functions within the competence of very few employees who typically do not record anything in writing.

In the questionnairesurvey (Appendix), the authors for the above reasons, particularly focused on strategies, processes, ISO, system of process evaluation, outsourcing,

Are the processes evaluated regularly?

Is there any form of suppliers' or customers' integration present at the enterprise (outsourcing, supplier chain involvement)?

The above areas are the basis for the construction of a composite indicator Level of the process management implementation in SME (MPP).

Level of the process management implementation in SME (MPP) consists of the sum of the points that have been assigned to individual principles according to their importance in process control (Table 2). The appropriate number of points was assigned to the company if the principle was implemented in the company. Enterprise was marked as processed managed, if it received at least points (which are 75%). Enterprise was marked as partially processed managed, if it received between 6 – 15 points. The enterprise doesn't use the principles of process management, if it uses less than 6 points (or apply them to a minimal extent).

process management, only 48 companies, i.e. 26%. The group of companies implementing the principles of process management only partially covered 128 SMEs, representing 68% of the entire sample. About 11 companies (6%), we can say that in their management procedural elements are hardly used.

3.1. MPP and number of employees

Medium enterprises, i.e. enterprises that have 50-249 employees, apply procedural principles at greatest level. The opposite situation is in enterprises with the fewest employees (0-9 employees). From a total of 20 micro-enterprises 5 companies (25%) apply the principles of process management in general, and the remaining 15 companies (75%) applied only some selected principles of process management. While 0% of the micro-enterprises uses process principles of enterprises, 15% of enterprises with 10-49 employees and 53% of companies with 50-249 employees use these principles.These relationships also demonstrated research (Chong, 2007), which was focused on analyzing the barriers for the transition to process control, where the top places are

Table 2. The rate of introduction of the principles of process management (MPP)

Principle Process Management	pts
The company has developed a strategy.	2
The strategy is formulated in writing.	1
The company has developed strategies into plans	1
The company has developed process map	3
For processes are defined performance indicators	3
Process performance is regularly evaluated	3
A system ISO is used	3
Ongoing integration of suppliers (outsourcing occurs)	2
The company is integrated into the supply network	1
Ongoing integration of customers in the form of custom manufacturing (or service)	2

From the sample of 187 small and medium-sized businesses uses elements of

mentioned inadequate funding, lack of time and low support from top management.

Table 3. Usage of the process management principles, depending on the number of employees

Number of employees	Principles of proces management						Total
	Do not apply		Partially apply		Apply		
0 - 9	5	25%	15	75%	0	0%	20
10 - 49	4	4%	86	81%	16	15%	36
50 - 249	2	3%	27	44%	32	53%	61
Total	11	6%	128	68%	48	26%	187

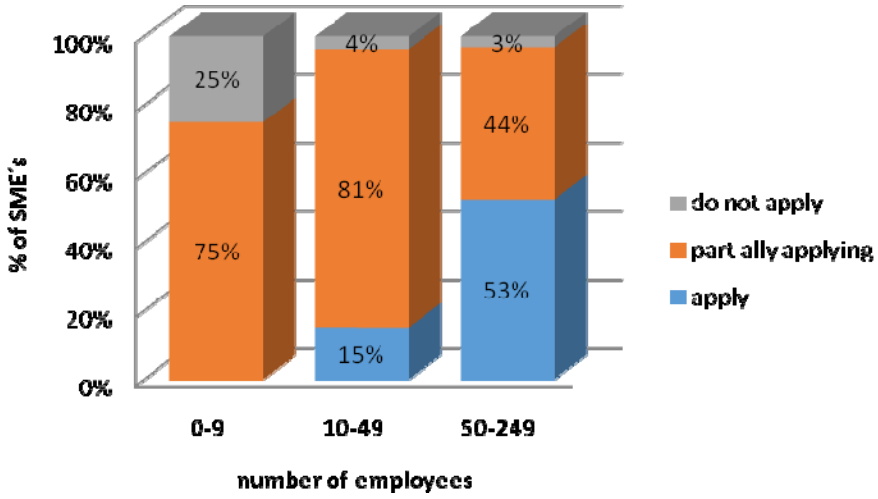


Figure 2. Usage of the process management principles, depending on the number of employees

These barriers are typical just for micro and small enterprises.

At the chosen significance level α = 0.05 was tested the null hypothesis, to which was formulated following alternative hypothesis.

H_0 = the level of introduction of the principles of process management is independent of the number of employees (or company size)

Non $H_A = H_0$

The p-value <α, therefore we my with 95% probability based on the analyzed data decline the null hypothesis in favour of alternative (= 45.61388, df = 2, p-value = 0.0000), which says that there is a correlation between the degree of implementation of the principles of process management and number of employees (or company size).

Figure 3 shows a more detailed characterization of the examined data; median, interquartile range and the individual categories of employees compared to the achieved level indicators MPP.

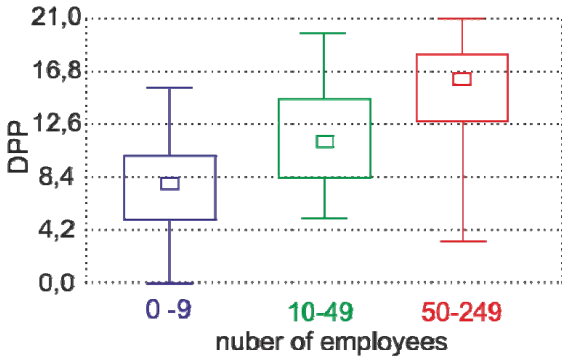


Figure 3. Box plots characteristics of the relationship MPP degree and number of employees

This relationship was further analysed using correlation coefficient "r". Cross correlation MPP by number of employees, is listed in Table 4. Correlation degree of the process management principles application were found in micro and small enterprises up to 25 employees (25%). Graphically, the results can be seen in Figure 3, where the strongest correlations are apparent. The results correspons with Dallas & Wynn (2014) study, which focused on the question of the successful application of traditional tools, techniques and technologies of process management in the management of a small business. Just appeals to small and micro-businesses to not worry about the transition to process control, despite limiting in human and financial resources, which conversely flatter organizational structure and proactive corporate culture are the main foreign exchange.

Table 4. Correlation coefficient MPP by number of employees (or company size)

Dependent: MPP%	MPP% Multiple comparison of 'values; MPP% (Table 1) Independent variable: pocetzamcuKruskal-Wallis test: H (2, N = 187) = 45.61388 p = 0000		
	0-9	10-49	50-249
0-9	1.000000	0.251752	-0.289772
10-49	0.251752	1.000000	0.000993
50-249	-0.289772	0.000993	1.000000

4. CONCLUSIONS

Methodology for calculating the indicators of process management was tested as part of the research on 187 small and medium-sized enterprises mainly from the South region and the results of analysis of usage of the principles of process management, depending on the number of employees. The level of process management implementation in enterprises can be determined by using the evaluation the application of its principles.

Designed composite indicator MPP, which reflects the degree of implementation of the principles of process management, is made up of the sum of the points that have been assigned to individual principles of process management, the maximum score was 21. Principles of process management are mostly applied to medium-sized enterprises least in micro-sized enterprises. This implies that the number of employees increases the utilization of the principles of process management.

MPP dependence on the number of employees in the company was demonstrated by positive correlation between the indicator MPP and the number of employees, therefore we can say that with more employees company focuses more on process management.

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НИВО ПРИМЕНЕ ПРИНЦИПА ПРОЦЕС МЕНАЏМЕНТА У МСП-има У ОДАБРАНИМ РЕГИОНИМА ЧЕШКЕ РЕПУБЛИКЕ

Ladislav Rolínek, Jaroslav Vrchota, Jana Kubecová, Monika Švárová

Извод

Овај рад представља методологију за прорачун индикатора примене процес менаџмента у МСП-има и анализира резултате употребе принципа процес менаџмента, засновано на броју запослених. У циљу истраживања коришћени су резултати добијени упитником током 2011 у 187 малих и средњих предузећа у Јужно Бохемском региону Чешке Републике. Ниво примене процес менаџмента у предузећима може се одредити на основу примене његових принципа (Truneček, 2003; Rolínek et al., 2012). Дизајнирани композитни индикатор МПП рефлектује ниво имплементације принципа процес менаџмента.МПП се састоји од суме поена који су додељени индивидуалним принципима процес менаџмента, ус максимални скор 21. Предузећа која су оцењена у интервалу 16-21 поен се сматрају као управљана процесом; 6-15 за делимично и мање од 6 као процедурално управљан бизнис. Принсипи процес менаџмента су засновани на резултатима овог индикатора, и примењива су на већини предузећа средње а најмање у микро предузећима, што утиче да број запошљених повећава примену принципа процес менаџмента. Резултати су адаптирани применом “Chi-square” теста фитовања корелационих коефицијената.

Кључне речи: Процес менаџмент, принципи, МСП

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire:

1) How long operate your company on the market and what successes did you achieve?

2) What is the purpose of your business and what do you expect about the company's development in the next few years?

3) What is its competitive advantage?

4) What is the biggest threat for your business? (Decline in sales, increase costs, solvency of customers)

5) How do you assess the level of processes in your company (insert other main processes according to the nature of your company or delete the processes)?

Business process	Evaluation (0% - 100%)	The order of importance of the process
Marketing, trade		
Production		
Personal management		
Financial management		

6) Have you developed process maps? YES / NO

7) Which outcome indicators is priority for the management of the company? (sales, profit, sales ...)

8) Are you purposefully involved in the supply chain? (long-term cooperation with customers and suppliers, information exchange, strengthening partnerships, production)

- continued involvement in a chain
- involvement in several chains
- we are not involved

Characteristic

Name of the company:	
Address:	
Responsible person:	Interviewer:
Type of business:	Form of Business:
The parent company (the share of Czech firms in %)	Turnover for the last year (million CZK):
Number of employees:	Certification (ISO):
Main Products, services:	The number of people in management: Higher: Medium: Low:
	Field of business interest: • Province • Czech Republic • Germany • Austria • Slovakia • Other
Do you have created a business strategy? YES / NO	Is the strategy formulated in document? YES / NO
Indicate the main points of your business strategy	

What kind of plans do you work with:	Do you perform audit? YES/NO	Do you outsource? YES / NO
• Marketing • Production • Financial • Personnel • Other (specify) • • do not plan	If so, which: • • • • • • •	If so, where: • accounting • transport • research and development • maintenance and repairs • marketing

Fill in the case of manufacturing enterprise

Type of production:	Completeness of production:	Material flow:
• custom • routine • serial • collective • mixed	• manufacture only parts • production of a finished • product production of the two previous	• finished products are stored • finished products are shipped to customers immediately • apply both ways

1. Process MARKETING, TRADE

What are you in marketing process and trade searching for? (choose from these indicators, erase the inappropriate, fill in the missing)					
PROCESS	INDICATORS	FREQUENCY OF DETECTION	CURRENT STATUS	TREND	IMPORTANCE
		1-Once per week 2 monthly 3 per annum 4 continually 5 randomly	1-very good 2-good 3-average 4-bad 5-very poor	1 fast-growing 2-growing 3-stagnant 4-declining 5-rapidly decreasing	1-very important 2-rather significant 3-average 4 rather insignificant 5-insignificant
Market analysis	Size of the market				
	Structure of the market				
	Potential of the market				
	Competition				
	Customers				
	Subscribers				
Sales of product	Sales				
	Price policy				
Communication with customers	Customer satisfaction				
	Customer loyalty				
	Customer needs				
	Complaint (time, quantity)				
	Irrecoverable receivables				
	Receivables overdue				
	Customer reviews by solvency				
	Advertising (return costs)				

2. Process PRODUCTION

What are you in production process searching for? (choose from these indicators, erase the inappropriate, fill in the missing)					
PROCESS	INDICATORS	FREQUENCY OF DETECTION	CURRENT STATUS	TREND	IMPORTANCE
		1-Once per week 2 monthly 3 per annum 4 continually 5 randomly	1-very good 2-good 3-average 4-bad 5-very poor	1 fast-growing 2-growing 3-stagnant 4-declining 5-rapidly decreasing	1-very important 2-rather significant 3-average 4 rather insignificant 5-insignificant
Communication with suppliers	Supplier selection				
	Evaluation of suppliers				
	Quality of supply				
	Speed of delivery				
	Material price				
Production and services	Calculation of product costs				
	Quality control (ISO)				
	Volume of unfinished production				
	Average time of production of the main product				
Storing	Value stocks in CZK				
	Time of stock turnover				
	Value salable and unused inventory				
Transport	Costs				
	The cost of various vehicles				
Production planning	Contractual arrangements in the production plan at the beginning of the year				
Maintenance (machine)	The cost of maintenance and repair of machines				

HUMAN RESOURCES

What are you in HR process searching for? (choose from these indicators, erase the inappropriate, fill in the missing)

PROCESS	INDICATORS	FREQUENCY OF DETECTION	CURRENT STATUS	TREND	IMPORTANCE
		1-Once per week 2 monthly 3 per annum 4 continually 5 randomly	1-very good 2-good 3-average 4-bad 5-very poor	1 fast-growing 2-growing 3-stagnant 4-declining 5-rapidly decreasing	1-very important 2-rather significant 3-average 4 rather insignificant 5-insignificant
Selection of employees	Selection (qualifications, education, experience)				
	Fluctuations				
Evaluation of employees	Morbidity				
	Accident rates				
	Labor productivity				
	Use of working time				
	Employee satisfaction				
Training and further education	Time to incorporate				
	Qualifying growth				

FINANCIAL PROCESS

What are you in financial process searching for? (choose from these indicators, erase the inappropriate, fill in the missing)

PROCESS	INDICATORS	FREQUENCY OF DETECTION	CURRENT STATUS	TREND	IMPORTANCE
		1-Once per week 2 monthly 3 per annum 4 continually 5 randomly	1-very good 2-good 3-average 4-bad 5-very poor	1 fast-growing 2-growing 3-stagnant 4-declining 5-rapidly decreasing	1-very important 2-rather significant 3-average 4 rather insignificant 5-insignificant
Financial planning	Plan creation				
	Determine the turning points in the critical values of the financial plan				
Financial management	Profit				
	Cash flow				
Essential criterion for deciding	Revenue				
	Cost control				
	Value of the company				
	Adept control				
	Ensure the solvency				
	Market share				
	Requirements of the parent company				
Profitability and cost management	Wage costs				
	Material costs				
	Costs of services				
	Energy costs				
	Interest expense and lease Payments				
	Tax burden				
Net working capital and solvency management	Turnover time of the obligations				
	Overdue liabilities				
	Short-term liabilities and short-term loans				
	Liquidity				
	Cash				
Debt management	Share of foreign resources				
	The share of bank loans				
	The ratio of interest (and lease payments) to total income				
Management of fixed assets	Turnover of fixed assets				
	Depreciation of fixed assets				
	Effectiveness of investments				