Preface

In response to the dramatic changes in the business landscape over the past few years, many companies across different industries are launching business transformation programs to improve and optimize their strategic, tactical, and operational supply chain processes.

70% of all transformation initiatives fail firstly because of lack of preparation and knowledge of the supply chain transformation life cycle, secondly because of lack of well-defined supply-chain optimization strategy, and thirdly because of poor addressing or altogether neglecting the “people-related” aspects in transformation (Maurer, 2010; Sabri, 2013). Therefore, improvement initiatives have been short lived or incomplete and expected business benefits are not achieved or materialized. Many companies are trying to understand the best practices and master the recipe for success of transformation programs to avoid failures. They are now connecting with universities, research centers, and consulting companies for this purpose. Therefore, the editor decided to take an initiative to write a book to help the industry professionals improve their success rate in supply chain transformations.

To address challenges in the area such as supply chain optimization, business transformation, performance measurement, and change management, there is a need for an edited collection of chapters. These chapters would help analyze situation in better way and provide important lesson learned and best practices.

This comprehensive and timely publication aims to be an essential reference source, synergizing with available literature in the field of supply chain optimization and business transformation and providing proven tactics from the industry.

The target audience of this book includes professionals and researchers working in the field of supply chain optimization and business transformation. This book provides:

- Insight and support to executives concerned with achieving value as an output of supply chain transformation programs,
- Supply chain and IT managers with suggested process, technology, and governance best practices,
- Academicians, researchers, and advanced-level students with an excellent reference on supply chain optimization and transformations, business challenges, change management, performance measurement, supply chain strategy development, case studies, and opportunities to extend the research in this field.

The chapters stand alone in covering their individual topics, but also form a cohesive overview of library-related professional development as it stands now along with future trends in the field. The chapters in this book can be categorized in four broad sections of supply chain business optimization:
“Supply Chain Strategy” (Chapters 1 – 2), “Success Factors for Transformation” (Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6), “Recipe for Success for Optimizing Certain Supply Chain Processes” (Chapters 7 – 8), and “Key Supply Chain Enablers” (Chapters 9, 10, 11).

The first two chapters of this book explore how to develop supply chain strategies and why executives have to be involved in the process. The practitioners will realize that only when business, supply chain, and technology strategies are aligned and supported by executives can lean and agile supply chains become enabled. Chapter 1 argues why executives should understand and be part of supply chain strategy development. Chapter 2 argues that true supply chain strategies must be derived from an evaluation of capabilities required achieving business goals.

The next four chapters focus on supply chain transformation and related success factors. Specifically, Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive understanding of business transformation, principles, and challenges. This is followed by explaining Nokia’s journey with transformation and lessons learned. Chapter 4 provides a literature review on supply chain segmentation as a key success factor for supply chain transformation, and offers a practical supply chain segmentation framework for companies who are about to take the segmentation transformation journey. A couple of case studies from Dell and Caterpillar are also presented to illustrate the framework. Chapter 5 builds the case that mastering change management is the most important success factor for transformation and offers several best practices and a roadmap for a smooth journey. Chapter 6 explains the last success factor for transformation that is effective supply chain performance measurement and Organizational Alignment.

Next, the book drills down on the optimization of certain supply chain processes. Chapter 7 provides insights for companies which are seeking to enhance their Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP) processes to higher levels of maturity. It addresses the questions amongst supply chain executives from “Why do we need to improve at this time?” to “How do we do it?” Chapter 8 addresses issues regarding collaboration of supply chain members and shows possible further directions in optimizing supply chain management.

The final three chapters concluding the book cover specific enablers for supply chain optimization. In Chapter 9 readers will realize that real-time collaboration and supply chain visibility will enable supply chains to be more agile and efficient. Chapter 10 explains how e-procurement solution can improve supply chain and purchasing activities while achieving a competitive advantage in the agriculture industry. Lastly, Chapter 11 explores about supply chain sustainability as an enabler in the construction industry.

The authors of each chapter followed the adage of “write what you know,” having been personally involved in every topic they covered. However, they went beyond what they personally worked on in relation to the topic. Each chapter focuses on future trends, assessment, and applicability to supply chain optimization and transformation. The result is a book that provides useful guidance to supply chain practitioners and researchers in a changing business world.

This book shows the readers the best practices in optimizing and transforming supply chain management in contemporary organizations, and presents several ideas for change that provide a roadmap for a smooth transformation journey for all. Let this book help you deal with the changes and keep current with the profession.

Ehab Sabri
University of Texas – Dallas, USA & JDA Software, USA
REFERENCES
