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**5 September 2016**  
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### Supply chain leaders at Oliver Wight Think Tank

Posted date: settembre 05, 2016 in: Culture & Sustainability, Office & Operations



#### Supply chain leaders at Oliver Wight Think Tank conclude that IBP drives business transformation.

Leading business consultants, Oliver Wight, hosted an exclusive Think Tank in Dusseldorf, Germany on 24th May 2016 in conjunction with events group, Industry Dynamics. A report has now been released from the event sharing the thoughts of the supply chain professionals who

attended. Attendees agreed that Integrated Business Planning can be used to transform businesses, and drive growth but only when the entire organisation embraces change.

The session was moderated by Oliver Wight Partners Debbie Bowen-Heaton and Liam Harrington and conducted under Chatham House rules, providing an open and honest forum where 15 carefully selected senior executives were able to share concerns over current and future issues. The Think Tank participants represented diverse industries, including apparel, oil and gas, fast moving consumer goods, pharmaceutical, chemical, plastics and construction all with a common objective – "How can we successfully implement Integrated Business Planning in our organisations?"

The report highlights the outcome of a brainstorming discussion where delegates were split into two groups with the objective of identifying the top three performance gaps to be addressed by the IBP process. Interestingly each team returned different answers including: communication; financial scenario planning; plan-do-check-act cycles; predictability of plans, closing revenue gaps and reducing operating costs. Attendees concluded that these gaps represent the 'trees' and IBP 'the forest' – it is the guiding strategy used to address these issues, but only if there is buy-in across all levels of the organisation, from the top-down. Accepting that there may be resistance to change, it was recognised by all attendees that a cultural change must take place within businesses with senior executives responsible for mobilising their entire workforce towards one common goal. 'Doing what you say you will do' and 'establishing a culture of brutal honesty', particularly regarding finances, were some of the top ways attendees agreed that a shift in company behaviour could be achieved.

"All too often, executives fall in love with the potential results of the IBP approach but do not fall in love with the process," commented one Think Tank participant. They continued, "It is imperative to create an environment in which people fall in love with the process. This, of course, requires a significant investment of time and money, but represents the only path to success."

Debbie Bowen-Heaton, summarises "The Think Tank report really highlights how IBP can help transform a business" she says. "Participants were very forthcoming and agreed transformation cannot happen overnight. It is a process that may require several of planning and investment before the first return can be realised."

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