

# Importance Level of Success Criteria in Management Consulting Operations: The Turkish Case

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to determine the importance level of success criteria in management consulting operations in Turkey. A survey instrument was developed and posted on the Internet in order to reach as more respondents as possible for the study. A Likert scale of 10 was chosen to explain precisely the differences between the criteria. Eighty responses were returned. It should be stated that the respondents of the survey were all Turkish consultants. Descriptive statistical analyses were conducted for the four main categories and their criteria. On the basis of a literature search, it was found reasonable to classify the success criteria for management consulting operations into four basic categories such as human resources, competitiveness, customer relations, and processes and methods. The study presents the ratings of four basic categories and their criteria, which essentially affect the success of consulting firms. The results of the research will serve consulting companies as guidelines to pinpoint improvement areas in their consultancy operations. The responses received from the consultants can be considered reliable and satisfactory. In addition, the important point that this study has revealed is the interest and willingness of the consultants for further studies.

**Key words:** Consultancy operations, Turkish consultants, success criteria.

## **INTRODUCTION**

As a result of intensifying global competition and technological developments, it is inevitable for companies to demand assistance of consulting companies. As demand for consulting services increases, competition among the consulting firms tend to

increase. These developments have been observed very frequently in consulting industry in recent years. As an outcome of increasing demand for consulting services, the number of consultants offering assistance boomed. However, consulting firms require more refinement in their consultancy work.

Management consulting industry has different divisions ranging from human resources to information technologies and from quality practices to re-engineering. The tasks that different kinds of consulting firms perform are almost irrelevant and it is quite difficult to find a common practice. However, the task they all perform is project-based so that there are some common factors influencing the success of consulting firms. The following criteria are not all of the criteria that influence the success of consulting firms, but they are specific for consultants differing from the criteria of other organizations.

### **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF CONSULTING OPERATIONS**

On the basis of a literature search, it has been found reasonable to classify the success criteria for management consulting operations into four basic categories such as human resources, competitiveness, customer relations, and processes and methods. The basic categories and their criteria are discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### **Human resources**

“Human resources” is pointed out as the basic input for consulting firms. Independent from all other factors, staff working in a consulting firm is the main factor for determining its success. A consulting company knows as much as its staff knows; a company has the capabilities that its staff possesses (Matassani, 2000). Although it is important how efficient and effective the processes or other resources for the project are, the basic category to determine success is “human resources.” Criteria that constitute “human resources” in this study are knowledge, skills, people, and effective usage of the professional staff (Chase, et al, 2004).

#### *(a) Knowledge*

For management consulting firms, knowledge is a critical property that the consulting firms sell. Every project accomplished is based on knowledge beside skills and expertise. Knowledge can also be a combination of theory and methodology such as EVA (economic value analysis) that helps managers think more rigorously about their actions (Matassani, 2000).

#### *(b) Skills*

Skills of a consulting company can be various and can be related to simple problem-solving approach. As Bill Matassani states the skills that a consultant needs are related

to communication, project management, people development, and interaction with senior management to keep them involved in the project (Matassani, 2000).

*(c) People*

For consulting firms, "people" is the synonym of leadership, values, commitment, professionalism, and trustworthiness (Matassani, 2000). A good combination of knowledge and skills can be sufficient for good impact, but they certainly have important effects on the project and the results obtained.

*(d) Effective Usage of the Professional Staff (Efficiency)*

David H. Maister identifies consulting firms as a shop where the right kinds of "machines" (professional staff) must be correctly allocated to the right kinds of jobs (consulting projects). Most of the consulting firms are engaged in multiple projects at the same time, which requires the partners, midlevel and junior consultants to be carefully distributed among the projects in order to sustain efficiency staff (Chase, et al, 2004).

**Competitiveness**

The second category is "competitiveness." As it is mentioned above, increasing competition among client companies requires consultancy more than ever. This also results in enhancement of competition in the consulting industry so that the competition among consulting firms is getting increasingly more intense. Basic criteria that constitute "competitiveness" of a consulting firm are being among best in at least one service, strong image and reputation, and diversification of services (David, 2001).

*(a) Being among the best in at least one service*

Being among the best in at least one service is one of the factors that most affects competitiveness of a consulting firm. Besides, the competitive strength of being the best, the practice results in reputation. Mouth to mouth effect plays an important role in the advertisement and promotion of the firm. A service that is among the bests can be an effective core competency and driving factor for a consulting firm.

*(b) Strong image and reputation*

Increasing competition in the globalization, one of the most important assets of a consulting company is its strong image and reputation. The company managers utilize good reputation or image as one of the main evaluation criteria for management firms. Hence, marketing message requires special attention (David, 2001). Inconsistent marketing efforts end up with inconsistent results and unnecessary workload.

*(c) Diversification of services*

Consulting firms become more aware that a key factor to sustained success is

diversification. By varying the industries served, services offered, and geographical areas reached, consulting firms become better to serve the needs of their clients. Diversification is also an important tool in capturing bigger market shares in consulting. Besides, diversified services lead to ability of serving to different markets and needs. This ability will obviously result in serving to various markets that mean more customers and higher shares in the market. Because diversification leads to engagement with different markets, it also has a positive effect to the reputation of the firm. As the consulting firm is engaged with more people in different areas, advertising and recognition will be much better.

### **Customer relations**

“Customer relations” is the third category. It will not be an exaggeration to say that it is the category that lies at the base of each project. Unless strong customer relations with a client are not achieved, the business will finally fail. Besides, customer relations constitute the basic point where consulting firms can create differences from their competitors (Congram and Dumesic, 1986). The criteria suggested for this category are trust relationship with clients, customer-driven growth strategy, cooperation with client in finding solutions (Hoban, 2002), informing client regularly and frequently, clear expression of capabilities, full support of top management, and consideration of client’s willingness and ability (Fisher and Rabaut, (1992).

#### *(a) Trust relationship with clients*

For a consultant, to work effectively with any company requires the establishment of a trusting relationship. It will not be an exaggeration to say that a consulting firm’s success is dependent on a relation with its clients based on trust. A company acquires the project if the client trusts. Trust first of all is related with consulting firm’s abilities, skills, knowledge, professional staff, and reputation. When it comes to a trust relationship, the main factor is openness during the entire project activities.

#### *(b) Customer-driven growth strategy*

In order to gain competitive advantage, consulting firms should always endeavor systematically to acquire information and insight from the current, former and future clients. A customer-driven firm, as a result of its investment in service quality, benefits as its satisfied clients purchase additional services, recommend and refer to their business, and stimulate firm growth (Congram and Dumesic, 1986). Clients’ identification of the specific service strengths and weaknesses of a firm can be useful in the enhancement of service delivery systems, human resources, marketing, and internal marketing. This is essential for customer-driven firms as a foundation for effective marketing and growth.

*(c) Cooperation with clients in finding solutions*

Analysis of the consulting firms reveals that every consulting firm interacts with its clients, but the degree of interaction varies significantly from one firm to another. Many consultants have relatively little interaction with the clients and some simply provide direction. They identify their clients' critical issues and then tell them how to resolve them. Others take action by addressing only those issues the client has specified (Fisher and Rabaut, (1992). The most effective consultants are those who work together with the client in every step of the task to define key issues and implement solutions.

*(d) Informing client regularly and frequently*

Consulting projects are usually considered to be mainly within the domain of the consultant. Consultants accomplish their task and then deliver the result to their clients. The clients, with little opportunity to develop their own insights or the skills needed to implement the recommended changes and busy with all the other aspects of their routine jobs, are nevertheless expected to be able to implement the consultants' recommendations (Schaffer, 1997).

*(e) Clear expression of capabilities*

One of the greatest challenges facing consultants is to manage client expectations. If not the clients may lead to bad feelings and prefer write-offs, slow payments, and worse do not repeat business (David, 2001). In order to avoid such outcomes, a consulting company should identify the services that carry the most significant risk of wrong expectations and make it a point to give those areas special attention when outlining the engagement to the client.

*(f) Full support of top management*

According to Alison Nankivell, closely held family companies can create problems for consultants. If some of the parties involved in the problem believe that there is no need for outside advice, it can be a nightmare for both the company and the consultant. To ensure success of the project, top management involvement must begin at the very start of the consulting engagement. Together, the consulting team and senior executive team must define clear and realistic expectations for the project. And also they must agree on the milestone markers and performance indexes that will be used to track progress (Fisher and Rabaut, (1992).

*(g) Consideration of client's willingness and ability*

For consulting profession it is quite common to hear consultants complain about organizational barriers preventing their clients for achieving good results from their recommendations. A client rejecting a carefully developed marketing plan because it

contradicts the CEO's beliefs or a company setting a major strategy study because it calls for directional shifts too radical for senior management to risk, are some examples of what usually takes place in consulting operations (Schaffer, 1997).

### **Processes and methods**

The last category that affects consulting success is "processes and methods." Provided that all previously mentioned success categories are accomplished at optimum levels of success, a consulting firm cannot work efficiently and effectively without achieving successful processes and methods. Without effective processes and methods, even the previous categories cannot be accomplished. The "processes and methods" category mainly is consisted of the following basic criteria such as continuous learning, tangible results and changes, future thinking, serving in shortest time possible, teaching fishing rather than giving fish, innovation, definition and clear understanding of goals and reasons of the project, incremental successes instead of one big solution, considering the implementation process as well as suggestions, and obtaining answers to main questions (Schaffer, 1997).

#### *(a) Continuous learning*

Continuous learning is a factor that consulting firms must handle seriously. As a result of tough competition, each day a new approach is developed and a new application is defined. A consultant cannot ignore these developments. In order to compete with others, they have to improve themselves, follow the developments, and increase their knowledge.

#### *(b) Tangible results and changes*

Clients care results oriented. Despite the fact that most of the services consulting firms cannot provide results in short run, or sometimes even in the long run; client companies still tend to ask for tangible results and changes. A project's success is evaluated with tangible changes and companies still do not feel likely to engage in projects that they cannot evaluate its effects with tangible findings. In the client's eyes success is the achievement of tangible results according to specific business criteria that the client and consulting firm determine at the beginning of the consultation. According to clients "if nothing changes, nothing is accomplished" (Sam, 2000).

#### *(c) Future thinking*

Future thinking is an attribute that results from the changing nature of the management sciences. As a result of developments in science and technology, a consulting company should adopt the understanding of future thinking in all of its projects. A consulting firm must have the ability of forecasting future trends in the sector and make the necessary changes to sustain successful business.

*(d) Serving in shortest time possible*

In today's business environment one of the most powerful weapons that companies hold for competition is fast service. All of the processes of the companies are revised and adapted according to speed; from manufacturing to finance; from distribution to suppliers. With the increased competition in the industry, consulting firms that meet their customers' needs in a shorter time than their competitors grow faster and are more profitable. Beside the fact that competition necessitates fast service, also the costs of a consulting project are affected by the duration of the tasks.

*(e) Teaching fishing rather than giving fish*

According to Gary Neilson, best consultants are those who help clients do things. They guide and brainstorm but above all they coach their clients to think about the case and solve problems themselves. They teach to fish rather than give fish to eat. The product is not the achievement of the consultant, but the client (Glenn, 1985).

*(f) Innovation*

As the number of competitors is rising each day and the structures of competition and economy have changed, consulting business has become much more complicated and a challenging task. Consultants need to possess a much better understanding of the environment. They now need to find new approaches and frameworks that allow a senior management team to sort through the flood of information in order to find the optimal value for growth opportunities. Consultants can no longer depend on traditional benchmarks and frameworks. Success depends on developing new and innovative ways of looking at dynamic markets and identifying new opportunities to create value (Hoban, 2002). Even though few consulting firms have developed a clear strategy, process, and consistent effort to add new services and products to their practices, new products can provide a steady income stream, new clients and balance cash flow (Edwin, 1997). Patterns a client forms help it to understand the cause and effect relations. As these cause and effect relations are clear, it is easy to identify an innovation strategy and generate solutions for different industries (Lippitt, 1981).

*(g) Definition and clear understanding of goals and reasons of the project*

Generally, consultants define projects in terms of their expertise or products, not in terms of specific client results to be achieved. They do not consider the goals the client may have in mind when engaging a consultant. The project is generally defined in terms of the work the consultant will do and the products the consultant will deliver. Examples may be found in various publications (Schaffer, 1997).

*(h) Incremental successes instead of one big solution*

Another obstacle that consultants usually face is the assumption of consultants that the best way to attack any subject whether cash flow, marketing strategy, or inventory turns is to examine the entire system. Consultants almost always want to produce a big-picture solution; anything less is considered a peace meal or sub optimizing. Large-scale studies usually take too long, are very costly and result in change plans that are too complex for most organizations to carry out (Schaffer, 1997).

*(i) Considering the implementation process as well as suggestions*

Conventional consulting is based on the assumption that the key to progress is greater knowledge. According to this view, once the client knows what to do, the client will achieve greater success. However, real world applications suggest that this is a wrong assumption. The design of most consulting projects reflects the flawed assumptions of conventional consulting. Most are completely dedicated to providing managers with insight and ideas about change, but pay virtually no attention to helping the client effect change. In fact, client limitations in this area are generally not viewed as an appropriate focus for the consultant's attention (Schaffer, 1997).

*(j) Obtaining answer to three main questions*

The last criterion that has an important effect on the success of a consulting firm is whether the following questions can be answered or not. "What has changed for better?" "Is the organization moving forward?" "Did the consultant understand the company and its problems and come up with creative solutions?" These three questions also provide an overview of the project and are related to the criteria given above. If the consultant is capable of answering these three questions satisfactorily, the engagement becomes a mutually effective one, namely the client and consultant. These questions serve as a means of self-evaluation for the consultant as well as the overall project.

To ensure success of a project, top management involvement must begin at the very start of the consulting engagement. The consulting team and senior executive team must define clear and realistic expectations for the project. According to Alison Nankivell, confined family companies can create serious problems for consultants (Nankivell, 1991). If they believe that there is no need for outside advice it can be a nightmare for both the company and the consultant.

Despite the fact that most of the consulting firms are not able to provide beneficial results in the short run, or even in the long run, clients still tend to ask for tangible results and changes. Success of a project is evaluated with respect to tangible changes. Thus, companies do not feel likely to engage in projects that they cannot be able to evaluate its effects with tangible findings (Sam, 2000).



Management sciences are highly dynamic and future thinking is an attribute that results from the changing nature of the management sciences. Nowadays, one of the most important weapons that companies hold for competition is fast service. All of the processes of the companies are revised and adapted with respect to speed from manufacturing to finance, from distribution to suppliers. From this viewpoint, it is expected that they would ask for speed also in services they obtain from consulting companies.

According to Gary Neilson, best consultants are those who help clients do things. The important think is not to find a planned action, but a plan for implementation. The product is not the presentation of the consultant, but the presentation of the client (Glenn, 1985).

In the recent years, a lot of changes took place in the consulting profession. Even though few consulting firms have developed a clear strategy, process, and consistent effort to add new services and products to their practices, new products can provide a steady income stream, new clients, and balance cash flow (Edwin, 1997). As its clients represent an almost limitless laboratory, a consulting firm has plenty opportunities to innovate. Patterns a client forms helps a consultant to understand cause and affect relationships. Once the causes and effects are clear, it becomes easy to identify a strategy and transplant it in different industries and solutions (Lippitt, 1981).

Conventional consulting was based on the assumption that the key to progress was more knowledge. In other words, once the client knows what to do, the client will achieve greater success. Many studies have shown that not knowing what to do is rarely the greatest obstacle to organizational success.

### **MANAGEMENT CONSULTING INDUSTRY IN TURKEY**

In Turkey, the management consulting industry is one of the industries required to accomplish significant achievements. Despite the huge number of consulting firms, the industry is not innovative. Analyzing the Turkish management-consulting firms, it is seen that the consulting sector is consisted of mainly "IT consulting" and "human resources consulting" firms. One of the main problems for the Turkish consulting firms is that most clients do not know how to work with consultants. They do not know much about the consultancy process. In other words, they are aware what they should expect and how they should contribute to the process. They consider consultants as wizards with magic sticks. Thus, this approach of the clients hinders consulting firms from development and specialization in more specific subjects.

Another problem in Turkey is the personal relations in choosing a consulting firm to work with. Managers usually make their decision according to their relationships instead of scientific and rational investigations. These decisions also affect the project since the consultants usually are under the pressure of these mutual relationships.

Most consulting projects fail especially because the global consulting firms practice the same projects in Turkey, which they practice in their home country, without taking into consideration the social and cultural features of Turkey. If these practices are acquired from abroad and directly applied, it usually ends with frustration. The same failure occurs if the Turkish firms receive consultancy without considering past experiences, the characteristics of the company, and the sector. In Turkey, consultants usually attempt to find a general solution that will fit everyone and everywhere.

Another problem for management consulting industry is the financial dynamics of Turkey. Because crises are quite frequent, companies cannot predict the long-term economic and financial developments in the country. Hence, they consider consulting services sometimes inappropriate.

For the local consulting firms, their global competitors constitute a great problem. As companies decide on engaging in a consulting project, they often prefer global ones just because of their reputation. They do not mind to investigate the local ones and not take into account the professional staff or the abilities of the consulting firm.

Last thing to mention about the Turkish consulting industry is that the process for becoming a consultant is so easy that anybody who decides can become one. This is one of the reasons why the number of consultants, especially human resources consultants, boomed. The undesirable effects of such consultants on the companies seeking consultancy also affect the consultancy industry in a negative way. The trust and reputation of consulting firms is strongly damaged because of such firms.

In order to eliminate this type of consultancy, the Turkish Management Consultants Institution has initiated a project called Certified Management Consultants (CMC). This program is an international benchmark from International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI) (<http://www.ydd.org.tr>, 2004). The Certified Management Consultant project is as a measure of an individual management consultant's competence, objectivity, independence and professionalism (<http://www.ydd.org.tr>, 2004). Certain minimum requirements and a rigorous assessment procedure have to be met in order to qualify for the certificate of the CMC program. The CMC mark of excellence is used worldwide to accredit management consultants whose competency is recognized and certified by the national institutes that are members of ICMCI (<http://www.icmci.org>, 2004).

## **METHOD AND ANALYSIS**

### **Application Process of the Survey**

In order to reach as more respondents as possible for the survey, it was conducted on the Internet. In the questionnaire, a Likert scale of ten was used. The reason for this was that all the criteria to be analyzed already have high importance. If scale

of five were used, it would not be sufficient to stress the slight differences among criteria. In order to reach the people involved in consultancy, the survey was sent to the corporate mails of all the consulting firms in Turkey. It was also sent to all mail groups that are concerned with consulting business.

Eighty responses were returned. The answers given by the respondents to the question asking their comments about the study revealed that most of the respondents were quite happy that a study on consultancy was being conducted. They all mentioned the need of further studies in the field. Some even demanded more detailed and in-depth studies of consultancy business.

It should be stated that the respondents answering the survey were all Turkish consultants. Thus, the results obtained from the study reveals the case in Turkey and views of the Turkish consultants about the profession. However, these results may be used for comparison with other countries.

### Statistical Analysis of the Findings

The following analysis of the data is conducted with a SPSS 11.0 software package. Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics for the four basic categories.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Basic Categories

Category	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Human Resources	80	5.25	10.00	9.0750	0.98276
Customer Relations	80	6.14	10.00	8.9089	0.87953
Processes and Methods	80	4.10	10.00	8.2962	1.07473
Competitiveness	80	2.67	10.00	7.8292	1.43983

According to the results of the survey, the Turkish consultants responded to the survey place the highest importance to the "human resources" category with an average of 9.0750. The second most important category was "customer relations" with an average of 8.9089. This is followed by the "processes and methods" category with an average of 8.2962. The respondents considered the "competitiveness" category least important with an average of 7.8292. The responses suggested that personal relations were still the most important point in deciding for the acceptability of projects in the Turkish Industry.

In Table 2, descriptive statistics for each criterion are illustrated. The respondents put more emphasis on the "trust relationship with clients" criterion than the others.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Each Criterion**

Criterion	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trust relationship with clients	80	7	10	9.55	0.778
Knowledge	80	5	10	9.25	1.185
Full support of top management	80	3	10	9.15	1.379
Definition and clear understanding of goals and reasons of the project	80	6	10	9.10	1.703
Skills	80	3	10	9.09	1.285
Continuous learning	80	4	10	9.07	1.376
People	80	5	10	9.05	1.211
What has changed for better	80	5	10	8.95	1.211
Did the consultant understand the company and its problems and come up with creative solutions	80	6	10	8.95	1.550
Efficiency	80	3	10	8.91	1.460
Obtaining answer to three main questions	80	4	10	8.91	1.193
Cooperation with clients in finding solutions	80	6	10	8.90	1.165
Is the organization moving forward	80	5	10	8.73	1.331
Future thinking	80	2	10	8.72	1.630
Strong image and reputation	80	1	10	8.70	1.664
Informing client regularly and frequently	80	5	10	8.70	1.344
Clear expression of capabilities	80	1	10	8.70	1.702
Customer-driven growth strategy	80	1	10	8.69	1.658
Consideration of client's willingness and ability	80	5	10	8.68	1.474
Tangible results and changes	80	5	10	8.62	1.335
Considering the implementation process as well as suggestions	80	5	10	8.50	1.765
Being among best in at least one service	80	1	10	8.48	1.961
Teaching fishing rather than giving fish	80	1	10	7.85	2.129
Innovation	80	3	10	7.78	1.882
Serving in shortest time possible	80	3	10	7.35	2.171
Incremental successes instead of one big solution	80	2	10	7.05	2.116
Diversification of services	80	1	10	6.31	2.416

It is observed that engagements and selection of the consulting firm to work with are strongly dependent on personal relations in the Turkish consulting industry. This fact resulted in rating the criterion "trust relationship with clients" for the first place with a significant difference.

Respondents placed the "knowledge" criterion at the second place with an average of 9.25. After this comes the "full support of top management" criterion with an average of 9.15. The reason for the "full support of top management" criterion being so high, - in the third place among the 31 criteria - may be pointed out as a result of most Turkish companies being family firms. It is a common practice in the family firms that every decision is made by the owner(s). The owner or the boss has the right to abandon the project if they believe it is necessary. Because the Turkish managers do not know how to work with or do not believe strongly in management consulting, leaving a project incomplete is a common practice for the Turkish consultants. This is probably the reason why the "full support of top management" criterion is placed in the third place.

The "definition and clear understanding of goals and reasons of the project" criterion is placed in the fourth place with an average of 9.1 and the "skills" criterion at the fifth with an average of 9.09. Because the "knowledge" criterion is placed at a significantly higher rank than the "skills" criterion, it may be concluded that the consulting projects in the Turkish Manufacturing Industry are generally based on knowledge rather than skills. Perhaps, it may be remarked that the consultancy projects are mostly "procedures projects."

In regard to the least important five criteria, the criterion considered as the least important one is the "diversification of services" criterion with an average of 6.31 that is followed by the "incremental successes instead of one big solution" criterion with an average of 7.05. The third place belongs to the "serving in shortest time possible" criterion with an average of 7.35, the fourth the "innovation" criterion with an average of 7.78 and the last one "teaching fishing rather than giving fish" with an average of 7.85. The reason why "diversification of services" received such a significantly low average may be the structure of the Turkish Consultancy Industry. Because the Turkish Manufacturing Industry is not so innovation oriented, only a few firms provide diverse services and most focus on specific tasks. The "innovation" criterion ranked as one of the least important criteria confirms that most of the consultancy work is "procedures projects."

## CONCLUSION

This study is probably one of the first in the field of consultancy in Turkey. The aim of the study was to reveal the basic success criteria for management consulting operations. Because the topic is so untouched and wide, it has not been possible to

determine success criteria more in detail. However, we may say that it has been a useful and efficient study. The survey conducted in the Turkish Consulting Industry provided an analysis of the viewpoints the Turkish Industry and the Turkish Consultants.

As a conclusion, it may be remarked that this study aims to be the first step that will lead to further researches. The responses received from the consultants were quite satisfying, but the most important thing that this study revealed was the interest and desire for further studies relating to consultancy.

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### **Biography**

Dr. Sitki Gozlu is a professor of production and operations management at Faculty of Management at Istanbul Technical University. He holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Bogazici University (June 1969), a M.A. in Management from Istanbul University (June 1981), and a Ph.D. in Management Engineering from Istanbul Technical University (June 1986). He became Associate Professor in October 1990 and full Professor in December 1996. He served as the Department Head between September 1997 and September 2000 for three years. Dr. Sitki Gozlu worked as a researcher at Marmara Research Institute for two years, and in the private sector as a plant and technical service engineer for more than four years. He lectures on "Quality Assurance and Control" and "Management of Technology" at the undergraduate level, and "Production and Operations Management" (MBA) and "Total Quality Management" (MBA), "Manufacturing Systems Management" and "Project Management" at the graduate level. His research interests are in the areas of technology, productivity, quality, and project management. His works have been published in international and national journals and conference proceedings. He is a member of Turkish Chamber of Chemical Engineers, Production and Operations Management Society (U.S.A.), European Operations Management Association, International Management Development Association (U.S.A.), and American Society for Quality.

Aylin Coskun was graduated from Istanbul Technical University with a BS degree in Management Engineering in June 2004. She started her professional life in Price Water House Coopers; where as an experienced senior auditor she led audit projects and reviews of internal control processes for various multinational firms operating in Turkey. In 2007, she transferred to Turkcell Iletisim Hizmetleri A.S. as a business controller.

