TURUN KAUPPAKORKEAKOULU
Turku School of Economics and Business Administration

ABSTRACT

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Author(s)	Antti Jauhola	Student number	
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Title	IMPROVING THE OUTSOURCED APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE PROCESS. Case Elcoteq Oyj		
Supervisor(s)	D.Sc. Hannu Salmela D.Sc. Jussi Puhakainen		

Abstract

The scientific literature often handles application development and maintenance as separate entities and more from project than from process point of view. The related theories represented in the thesis have also not paid enough attention to the fact that a great amount of this type of work is nowadays outsourced to service vendors.

This thesis studies the application development and maintenance as an integrated process between the client company Elcoteq and multiple service vendors providing the service. The research method used in this thesis is constructive research method. This thesis' main objective is to create a construction that corrects the issues in application development and maintenance operations and takes into consideration the special features of the process in forming a clear, pro-active and standardized future process, which ensures good co-operation between Elcoteq and service vendors. Special attention is paid in the definition of the co-operative process, in the co-operative management of the process, enablers of the process and the measures of the process.

The construction is created on the basis of the process improvement project done for Elcoteq during winter and spring 2002. The construction was implemented during summer 2002 after which it has been tested and improved in practice. After ten months of construction testing, the process stakeholders were interviewed with the purpose of gathering additional information, feedback and improvement suggestions to the construction.

The construction reported in the thesis and the feedback received to it form the results of this study. The created construction combines application development and maintenance activities in outsourced, multi-organization and multi-vendor environment, into a process that takes the made changes through dynamic and static process phases and implements the changes in releases. Furthermore, the construction builds a co-operative management structure and measures around the process. The construction has been taken into everyday use in the operations between Elcoteq and the service vendors, and according to the received feedback, it can be applied to other companies as well. The construction was also found functioning by the people acting in the process and it has corrected the issues in operations between Elcoteq and service vendors. The construction comments and complements the existing application development life cycle models and the process management concepts.

A conclusion can be drawn from the feedback received from the interviews that the process measurement serves well in the controlling of the case process, but it does not have a significant impact on the continuous improvement of operations in itself. It can also be concluded from the interviews that the process improvement work and its results had a positive impact in the determinants of the partnership quality.

Key words	Process Management, Outsourcing, Application development, Application Maintenance, Application Management Services
Further information	