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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Master's thesis     |
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|---------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Subject       | Finance and accounting                      | Date            | 7.11.2007       |
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|               |   | Number of pages | 84 + appendices |
| Title         | Measuring the success of Six Sigma projects |                 |                 |
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Abstract

Changes in business environment have created a demand for effectiveness and the need for companies to react fast, causing projects to become a common way of working in companies. Six Sigma is a project-by-project improvement methodology that focuses on processes and aims at improving growth and productivity. The need to have enough information on the results of functions and processes is increasing and therefore measuring success has received growing interest in business world.

Based on these growing trends the primary objective of this study is to explore how Six Sigma project success is measured. The research question is supported with the following questions: What is Six Sigma and how is it used in the case companies?; What kind of established frameworks and practices exist for measuring Six Sigma projects?; How is project success generally measured and how these measurement practices apply to Six Sigma projects? This study aims at answering these questions by offering both theoretical and empirical insights. This study is a qualitative interview study. Seven interviews were carried out for the study including Six Sigma professionals from global companies, Six Sigma experts and one person giving a perspective of other than Six Sigma projects.

The theoretical and empirical analyses indicate that Six Sigma project success can be measured in various ways depending on the users of the information. Different measures are used for different target groups, such as people working with the process, management, or customers. It was also perceived, that there are different levels of measuring. Measuring is the basis for Six Sigma because the process improvement is always measured. In addition, when measuring in Six Sigma, two other levels can be perceived. These are project outcome measures and strategic goals. The ways to measure the success of other than Six Sigma projects are diverse. Because of differences between the nature of Six Sigma projects and other projects, the applicability of these ways to Six Sigma projects is limited.

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| Key words           | Six Sigma, measuring, success, project |
| Further information |  |