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Managing Cooperation in Supply Network Structures and Small or Medium-sized Enterprises: Main Criteria and Tools for Managers

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Enterprises: Main Criteria and Tools for Managers:

Managing Cooperation in Supply Network Structures and Small- or Medium-sized Enterprises outlines different approaches to the analysis of the organisation of small- or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Owing to the increased competition in the worldwide market, several SMEs operating in the same industrial sectors have agreed collaborative market strategies, both for raw material procurement and for final product delivery. The resulting networks, however, have a tendency to suffer from a lack of organization, which minimizes their impact on the product and labour markets, and causes a weak negotiation capacity within their supply chain. Managing Cooperation in Supply Network Structures and Small- or Medium-sized Enterprises aims to give managers of SMEs a simple methodology that helps them to understand when and why becoming a partner in an SME network can be profitable for their enterprise. It discusses the most critical organizational problems and identifies which procedures must be known to become a collaborative member of the network. Policy-makers, as well as managers and executives, will be able to appreciate the key issues in creating and managing healthy networks that serve global market requirements in the major industrial sectors. Managing Cooperation in Supply Network Structures and Small- or Medium-sized Enterprises enables them to evaluate the efficiency of their organization, and to estimate both the network performance and the opportunity for further development.

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About the Author Born in 1949, Agostino Villa was made a full professor in 1990 and has taught Production Planning and Control and Performance Evaluation of Production Service Systems at Polytechnic University of Torino since 1991. He is also currently the Chairman of the Office for Monitoring the Performance of the University Researching and Teaching Activities. Research lines developed by A. Villa mainly consist of: modeling of large-scale distributed manufacturing systems and SME networks and supply chains; designing production planning and control architectures oriented to supply chain management; developing methods and tools for organizing and managing industrial innovation processes; and developing procedures for organizing human resources in industrial systems and public services, with attention to health care systems. In these areas, A. Villa has published over 200 papers in international journals and conference proceedings, and has published 9 books with international and national publishing companies. He is a past president and current Fellow of the International Foundation for Production Research (IFPR), Vice-Chairman of the Technical Committee Manufacturing Modeling, Management and Control (MIM) of the International Federation of Automatic Control (IFAC), and a member of the Working Group 5.7 (Integrated Production Management) of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). He is regional editor of the journal Robotics and Computer Integrated Manufacturing. He also a member of the editorial committees of the International Journal of Production Research, the Journal of Intelligent Robotic Systems, the International Journal of Mechanical Production Systems Engineering, the Journal for the Integrated Study of Artificial Intelligence, Cognitive Science and Applied Epistemology, the Journals Logistica e Management and Automazione e Strumentazione (in Italian). He has been and is currently a member of several international program committees for conferences, symposia and workshops. He has been and is currently responsible scientist and coordinator of European and national research projects on the following topics: design of FMS systems; design of logistic networks; development of autonomous vehicle systems for production plants; B2B systems for SMEs; new management methods for collaborative SME networks; and innovation of healthcare systems by using industrial techniques.