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Working towards agile manufacturing in the UK industry

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Abstract

The business environment is one which is ever more demanding on companies, due to its sheer dynamism, which means that they are constantly having to improve their manufacturing performance. Organisations are continuously having to cope with changing markets that are unpredictable and more diversified, increasing global competition and ever changing customer demands. Companies now have to be able to not only predict variations and changes within the market and socio-economic and political environments but must also be able to adapt and change in accordance with these environments. As a result, this demands that an organisation develops and sustains an inherent ability to continuously change. Such a demand can be met by adopting the management philosophy of agile manufacturing. In embracing such an approach, there are a lot of key concepts and enabling technologies that are required to be able to implement agile manufacturing and many companies do not know how far down the path they are towards becoming agile manufacturing organisations. Hence, in providing a deeper understanding, this paper proposes a conceptual model based on

providing a deeper understanding, this paper proposes a conceptual model, based on joint research, which has been developed to identify where UK's best practice companies are in their quest to become agile manufacturing organisations. In support of this, a questionnaire has been developed and completed by best practitioners of manufacturing, to assess the model, and establish whether they are making progress to becoming agile manufacturing organisations.



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Keywords

Manufacturing; Agility; Conceptual model

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