support for the individuals assuming the process roles. An otherwise simple issue with the process is unresolved and causes more severe problems. The process team members must be assigned directly to support the new or aligned processes. They can't yet be allowed to return to their previous roles. A journal of issues must be kept to ensure issues are resolved and as a reference when similar issues appear.

N O T E A journal of issues is also used to meter the number of issues and is a gauge to determine when the process team members can (safely) return to their previous roles. ■

Depending on the length of the process team assignment, members may be asked to resume their original roles or remain with the process team for the next round of process improvement. Continuous improvement methods require that the process of looking for efficiency in the order-to-cash process is ongoing. There is never a point in time that the organization is considered to be at maximum efficiency.

Individuals assigned to the process team should be targeted as key employees—those who have a keen understanding of the current process within their department, but are also seeking to advance themselves across or up through the organization. Former team members are particularly well suited to become Baan project team members, because the method of process alignment is the basis for a successful Baan implementation.

Business Value for IT

The result of aligning business processes is not only an improved order-to-cash process, but also an opportunity for IT. The direct connection of IT initiatives to the business process is what determines *business value*, which is an estimation of the return from investment in IT.

Although many organizations undertake the Process Alignment methodology as part of a Baan implementation, it is also a methodology that can stand on its own. Clearly, a continuous improvement philosophy supports this practice. If a particular organization subscribes to continuous improvement, this methodology is already in place, albeit in a different form. It is unfortunate to think that every process improvement initiative had to involve technology. Not withstanding technology is the great enabler of our time. Beware, technology based on poor processes ends up processing poorly. ●