

*Executive Master CPF for
the international certification*
**IBF - Certified
Professional Forecaster**



**Institute of Business
Forecasting & Planning**

Advance
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

IBF - CPF, Certified Professional Forecaster

Regardless of the type of business or functional role, there is always a need for reliable forecasting as the foundation for effective planning.

These plans are applied across different areas of the organization, each with its own needs and objectives.

- **Marketing professionals need forecasts** to determine which new products or services to introduce or discontinue, which markets to enter or exit, and which products to promote.
- **Sales teams** use forecasts to develop their sales plans, as sales targets are generally based on estimates of future sales.
- **Supply chain and operations managers** use forecasts to make production, procurement, and logistics plans as smooth and efficient as possible.

We are now operating in an increasingly demand-driven world, where accurate forecasting and targeted planning are no longer optional but an absolute **necessity to remain competitive** and meet demand while controlling costs. As a result, the pressure on **Demand Planners, Forecasters, and S&OP professionals** is steadily increasing, even within our industrial environments.

Do we have the right teams and the right skills to improve market performance and the profitability of our organizations?

This course, offered **for the first time in Switzerland** by Advance School, provides a comprehensive and in-depth overview of key topics and best practices in Demand Planning & Forecasting. It is based on the Body of Knowledge (BOK) developed by the Institute of Business Forecasting & Planning (IBF), an organization widely recognized today as an international reference in this field.



The program prepares participants for the **IBF CPF® (Certified Professional Forecaster) professional certification**.

The IBF certification program is based on a Body of Knowledge developed over the past 30 years. Its key strength lies in its foundation on best practices, continuously updated and grounded in real-world success cases, which have proven to be effective models even in times of economic evolution and rapid change.



Benefits for the participant

- Recognition and validation of expertise through an internationally established Body of Knowledge
- **Robust preparation** to successfully navigate a fast-changing and dynamic market environment
- Broader and deeper **knowledge** to strengthen professional capabilities
- Full command of **Demand Planning, Forecasting, and S&OP processes**
- **Enhanced professional value**, both within your organization and in the job market



Benefits for the company

- Presence within the organization of **highly skilled professionals** capable of effectively managing key processes such as Demand Planning, Forecasting, and S&OP, creating **greater value for the company**
- **Implementation of functional processes** aligned with industry best practices
- **Increased training effectiveness**, as investment is made in a well-established program recognized as a benchmark of excellence
- **Improved quality of business decision-making**



Detailed program

→ 1. *Fundamentals of Demand Planning & Forecasting: People, Processes and Technology*

Key Learnings:

- Learn how to structure a demand planning process to get the best results for your forecasting & planning efforts.
- Learn how the forecasting process impacts forecast accuracy and how to gain forecast buy in/acceptance within the organization.
- Learn how forecasts impact management decisions.
- Learn the types of forecasting to be considered in developing a demand planning process.
- Learn approaches to handling products and data patterns, which are easy to forecast, as well as those that are difficult to forecast.
- Learn when to use shipment forecasts, unit forecasts, revenue forecasts as compared to order (demand) forecasts.
- Learn the benefits of consumption based forecasting, also known as POS data forecasting.

→ 2. *The Demand Planning & Forecasting Process: Basics of Demand Forecasting and their Drivers for Operations / Supply Chain Planning*

Key Learnings:

- Learn what the bullwhip effect is, its effect on forecasting & planning, and how to prevent this from happening.
- Learn about the key drivers and the considerations in operations planning/ supply chain management, and the role forecasting plays.
- Learn about the related inventory and customer fulfillment issues that will be of concern to your company operations, and how to manage and hedge against them.
- Learn how to design a demand planning & forecasting process that is goal and decision driven.
- Learn how to establish priorities for forecasting & planning, how much time to spend and where to spend it, as well as how to hedge against the “Unfore-castable”.
- Learn how to setup a demand planning consensus meeting and be driven by a single number forecasts.

→ 3. Collaborative Processes: Sales & Operations Planning (S&OP) and Collaborative Planning, Forecasting & Replenishment (CPFR)

Key Learnings:

- Learn how to design an optimal S&OP process and manage it effectively.
- Learn how to organize and manage S&OP meetings and ensure top management support.
- Learn Demand Sensing & Demand Shaping for balancing supply with demand to achieve company goals.
- Learn the basics of CPFR, success factors, and challenges.
- Learn the nature of POS & Syndicated data, and the valuable market intelligence they provide.
- Learn the sources of syndicated data such as AC Neilson and IRI.
- Learn how to pilot and launch CPFR with key accounts/ customers.
- Learn CPFR process steps and supporting elements, such as the business plan, handling of exceptions, and order policy.



“Advance School Certified Professional Forecaster Master was extremely valuable: the program is clearly structured, comprehensive, and immediately applicable to daily work. The instructors are top-level professionals, able to explain even the most complex concepts with concrete examples and outstanding expertise. It was a truly educational and high-value experience, enriched by the contributions of the working group during the sessions, which allowed me to understand other company environments and bring those insights into my own company.”

Raffaella Bruno | Demand Manager – PPG

→ *4. Data Management, Planning & Forecasting errors and measurement metrics*

Key Learnings:

- Learn how to define and locate important data for your forecasting effort.
- Learn how to analyze data to determine patterns that are useful for your planning and forecasting processes.
- Learn how to cleanse data and deal with data outliers, missing data, promotional effects, events, unit of measure mismatches, seasonal and trend effects, and other considerations in ensuring that you have usable and relevant information.
- Learn about different error measurement metrics, and their pros and cons, that can be used to better understand your forecasting and planning performance.
- Learn how to develop Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that are most appropriate and applicable to your organization's needs.
- Learn how to use error as information feedback to improve your future plans and forecasts, as well as a source of business information for your company's management.

→ *5. Forecasting Models: Time Series Methods and how to select and use*

Key Learnings:

- Learn how to evaluate and match data patterns with forecast models.
- Learn the fundamental differences between time series forecasting and using cause and effect/ regression models.
- Learn how to evaluate accuracy in selecting your model, and how to establish in advance, the expected accuracy and range of forecasts.
- Learn key concepts and terminology of time series forecasting models and methods.
- Learn how to estimate seasonal factors, and improve forecast accuracy.
- Learn how to disaggregate your best category level forecasts into their respective SKU forecasts.
- Learn how to track and prepare forecasts using the sales ratio method.
- Learn how prepare forecasts using several models based on averages, as well as exponential smoothing.

→ *6. Cause & Effect / Regression Models for Forecasting & when they are most appropriate*

Key Learnings:

- Learn the benefits of cause and effect models as well as when and how to use them.
- Learn how to build a cause and effect model and prepare forecasts that meet your needs.
- Learn the necessary data requirements, and transformations that can make your cause and effect models more effective.
- Learn how to validate and gain confidence in your cause and effect forecasts by evaluating and putting the model through diagnostic testing such as ex post forecasting & more.

→ *7. New Product Forecasting & Planning: making decisions when little or no data is available*

Key Learnings:

- Learn what to expect when developing and forecasting for new products & services.
- Learn what models are available to forecast new products and how to use them in combination, e.g. cause and effect model and diffusion model.
- Learn how to use both quantitative and qualitative methods in combination to get better results in your forecasts.
- Learn how to structure a new product development planning and forecasting process.
- Learn who should be involved and when in the new product forecasting & planning process.
- Learn how to modulate your forecasts and forecast methods as the new products approach their launch time.
- Learn the role of judgment and how collaborative efforts improve new product forecasts & plans.



“The Master Certified Professional Forecaster delivered by Advance School has a clear, well-structured program, whose concepts can be immediately applied in the workplace. The Advance instructors, being professionals who work day by day in structured companies, demonstrate a strong ability to ground the concepts presented in real-life practice, bringing corporate case examples into the classroom that have greatly enriched the training experience.”

Lucia Castelli | Demand Planner – Mowi Italia

→ 8. Demand Planning & Forecasting Software Systems: Selection, audits and more

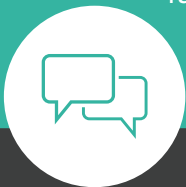
Key Learnings:

- Learn why it is important to determine the process first and then decide on the system that aligns with the process.
- Learn who should be involved in identifying the process you need as well as validating the process prior to a software application roll out.
- Learn the pros and cons of using software to automate processes.
- Learn what attributes to look for in a forecasting software/ system that is best for you.
- Learn how to determine the need for a forecasting & demand planning application.

→ 9. Corporate benchmarks, best practices, and gaining buy-in through better communication in Demand Planning & Forecasting

Key Learnings:

- Learn about dealing with difficult people, resolving conflict, dealing with a range of people who have different needs and priorities.
- Learn the basics of running an effective review meeting, how to structure an appropriate agenda, and how to prepare the most effective presentation materials.
- Learn how to more effectively communicate with different levels of management and professionals and managers in different functional areas of the company.
- Learn some of the most important characteristics in communicating forecasts based upon the experience of demand planners & forecasters at best in class companies.
- Learn about the best practices of companies in developing models and accurately forecasting with them.
- Learn how best practices/ best in class companies use software to support their forecasting models and data needs, as well as how they track their accuracy over time.



"In Hitachi we organized with Advance School the CPF training for the Demand Planning team, giving the opportunity to achieve a prestigious international certification. I am happy to confirm that the new skills learned during the training are already adding great value to our daily activities.

Looking ahead, I see great potential in extending these Trainings to other teams within the S&OP area and Supply Planning area to drive better alignment and cross-functional collaboration."

Riccardo Baldoni | Head of S&OP at Hitachi Construction



Who the course is for

- Demand Planning Manager
- Demand Planner
- Supply Chain Manager
- Forecasting Analyst
- Forecasting Manager
- Inventory Manager
- Master Scheduler
- S&Op Professional
- Marketing Manager
- Sales Manager
- ERP consultants who wish to expand their expertise in Demand Forecasting and Planning.



Requirements

A **good knowledge of the English language** is required to attend the course, as the training materials and the final exam are in English.
The course requires a minimum number of 6 participants.



Training path

We designed 2 CPF training paths, delivered over 3 months by certified instructors:

- Classroom path: 3 training days
- Live Webinar path: 6 sessions of 4 hours each

The course includes:

- A training phase delivered by certified instructors
- A self-study phase with remote support from the instructor
- Strong interaction and experience sharing, enabling participants to enhance their personal knowledge and address issues that may arise within their organizations
- Exam simulation with discussion of the results



Instructors

Advance School instructors, certified ASCM/APICS instructors, are Senior Managers with **over 20 years of experience** in End-to-End Supply Chain and Operations Management within multinational and well-structured corporate environments. Their extensive industry experience enables them to share **real-world experiences** and **successful case studies** with participants in the classroom, enriching the learning experience, stimulating discussion, and accelerating professional growth.



Training locations

Switzerland: Basel.

Italy: Milano.



Exams and Certification

At the end of the course, a final assessment will be held at Advance School, based on the IBF Body of Knowledge. The assessment lasts 3 hours and takes place on Friday afternoon. Upon successful completion, Advance School will award the CDPF certification (Certified in Demand Planning & Forecasting).

IBF CPF® Certification (Certified Professional Forecaster)

After completing the final assessment at Advance School, participants may choose to also register for the CPF® exams, which are directly managed by IBF, in order to obtain the CPF® certification. Exam sessions are scheduled online by IBF.

IBF exam prerequisites:

A university degree and at least 1 year of professional experience in Forecasting and Planning, or at least 2 years of experience in Business Forecasting and Planning.



Registration fees

Fees are listed on the following websites:

Trainings in SWITZERLAND: www.advanceschool.ch

Trainings in ITALY: www.advanceschool.org



In-house trainings

In-House delivery mode is typically used when a client requests a **training course for a specific group of employees**. Advance delivers In-House courses either on-site or via Live Webinar throughout Switzerland and internationally through its team of instructors.

The In-House courses offered by the school can be either from the standard catalog or **customized according to the client's specific needs and objectives**. An experienced consultant from our team will conduct a detailed needs analysis and then develop a tailored training program.



How to register

To register please fill the **Enrolment Form**



COMPANY

ADVANCE is a leading training and consulting company with offices in Switzerland and Italy, collaborating with top Managers, Directors, and Management Consultants operating worldwide.

Advance is ASCM Premier ELITE Partner, delivering APICS-certified courses that set the global standard for supply chain excellence.

MISSION

To develop excellent skills in Operations Management and contribute to the success of its partners, both companies and professionals. To achieve this, ADVANCE relies exclusively on accredited training programs and instructors with proven teaching and professional experience.

ABOUT IBF

The Institute of Business Forecasting (IBF) is an association founded in 1981, dedicated to the professional and focused study of forecasting and planning. The IBF Certified Professional Forecaster (CPF®) certification program is the most widely recognized qualification in the field of Demand Planning & Forecasting and is adopted by dozens of multinational companies worldwide. The program is based on a Body of Knowledge whose main strength lies in its foundation on best practices. It is continuously updated and built on real-world success cases, which have become proven models even in periods of economic change and rapid market evolution.



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