Exercises in Industrial Management

A Series of Case Studies

Studies in Management

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S. Eilon, R. I. Hall, and J. R. King

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MACMILLAN

ST MARTIN'S PRESS

New York

© S. EILON, R. I. HALL, J. R. KING 1966
Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1966 978-0-333-06740-6

MACMILLAN AND COMPANY LIMITED
Little Essex Street London WC2
also Bombay Calcutta Madras Melbourne

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA LIMITED
70 Bond Street Toronto 2

ST MARTIN'S PRESS INC
175 Fifth Avenue New York 10010 NY

ISBN 978-1-349-00459-1 ISBN 978-1-349-00457-7 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-00457-7

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGUE CARD NO. : 66-15056

9 × 6, i–viii, 1–208 *pages*
56 *line illustrations*

Preface

Case studies have become established in courses of management or business administration. Not only do they provide an excellent framework for discussion and exchange of views, particularly for students working in small groups, but they can act as a stimulant in developing the student's analytical faculties.

Much of the case material found in the literature is of a descriptive nature, and, although it serves some useful purpose, it is often inconclusive and has naturally been the subject of some criticism. We have used many case studies in our graduate courses at the Management Engineering Section at Imperial College and have developed in the course of the past few years a number which involve the use of industrial engineering and operational research techniques. Eighteen of these have been assembled in the present volume.

A selection of the material presented here could be used as a one-semester course in the American university system or as a two-term course at British academic institutions. At Imperial College we found that these case studies can be well integrated into a 'laboratory' type course, with each case occupying the attention of a group of students for a day at the college, and many requiring additional preparation at home before the final report is submitted.

The cases in this book cover a wide range of applications, and, although many are in the field of production, there are several which involve problems in inventory control, marketing and pricing.

To avoid identifying costs, profits or prices with the currency of any one country, we adopted the term m.u. (money units) throughout this volume.

Each case study is divided into two parts: The first describes the problem which is to be analysed; the group of students should discuss this part and attempt to solve the problem before reading the second part entitled "Discussion", which provides enough material to enable the group to complete the analysis. At the end of the book there is a section which gives solutions to the cases;

some are comprehensive, others are not but are sufficiently detailed to indicate to the students whether they have tackled the case problems correctly. We hope that this 'teach yourself' feature will make this volume useful to students, teachers and practitioners alike.

December, 1964.

SAMUEL EILON
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JOHN R. KING

Contents

Preface	v
1 Handling in a Warehouse	1
2 Production Scheduling in a Biscuit Factory	6
3 Layout of a Machine Shop	18
4 A Feasibility Study of Tooling and Layout	35
5 Control of a Variety of Products	44
6 Production Planning in a Chemical Plant	54
7 Multi-product Batch Production	63
8 Optimal Plant Capacity	70
9 Reserve Drivers for a Bus Fleet	77
10 Machine Supervision	85
11 Operator's Workload in a Chemical Plant	97
12 Pricing Policy for Semi-perishable Goods	106
13 Process Planning in a Steel Plant	115
14 Control of Manufacture of Electronic Components	123
15 Deterioration of Materials in a Processing Plant	132
16 Supply Policies of a Publishing House	142
17 The Sportsware Dealer's Problem	151
18 Inspection of Incoming Goods	157
Solutions to Case Studies	167