



Operations Management for Service Industries: Competing in the Service Era

Glenn Bassett

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Effective service delivery requires a transition from high-volume, long-run operations to low-volume, short-run output. In conventional terms, inefficiency is inherent in such a shift. The Japanese experience suggests, however, that this convention is in error; success is available if we can only organize operations away from capital toward labor intensiveness with emphasis on multipurpose machinery and multiskilled workers as the foundation. Wholly new devices that accept the inevitability of bottlenecks and focus on managing them are required for managing work flow. A century of mass production has set in place habits and concepts of operations management that are inappropriate to the need. A new vision is needed. This book outlines an operations vision based on proven principles of management and organization science that can guide the way into an emerging service era.

Glenn Bassett looks at a variety of service industries from the perspective of cost and quality management. He argues the basic inevitability of suboptimized plant and equipment utilization. The potential for conflict between commodity and noncommodity dimensions of service is examined. Basic methods of cost control and work flow management are described. The varied and sometimes shifting bases of service quality are described in considerable detail, industry by industry where necessary. Methods for selecting and training effective service-providers are reviewed. Reform of government service as metaphor and model for the service revolution is detailed. The focus always is on sound, cost-effective, high-quality service delivery using the best available operations methods. It is sound operations management that will contribute genuine value to tomorrow's service industries. The basics of that discipline are the subject of this book.

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