

Preface

The competitive nature of markets over the last 20 years has re-emphasized the key role of operations in bringing about the growth and profitability of organizations. Providing services and products fast, on-time, right first time and at a price that matches or betters competitors' are increasingly important factors in most markets. How well operations is managed to bring these about is a key corporate issue. However, not only does operations contribute much that enables a company to compete effectively, but it is also responsible for 60–70 per cent of costs, assets and people. The task of controlling costs and assets and the continuing need to reduce costs and release cash are equally critical and essential contributions to the welfare of an organization. Furthermore, the need to effectively manage and develop people adds yet more substance to the role of managing the operations function. From a historical bias towards techniques and systems, the emphasis of what is key in operations has swung to one that stresses and highlights the effective management of this large business function. This book is designed to contribute to this on-going focus. It is orientated towards a managerial perspective of operations and is set within the context of the function's significant contribution to the overall success of an organization. Operations has now rightly and appropriately returned to the top of the corporate agenda and this text has been designed to serve the needs of those who intend to take on the operations management role and also those whose roles will relate to this function in a range of businesses. In particular it can be used by:

- Postgraduate, MBA or Executive students, with explanations and further application through class discussion and the use of appropriate case studies.
- Managers who can apply the knowledge, concepts and ideas to their own business to increase their understanding of how to improve operations' contribution to an organization's overall performance.

Why choose this book?

This 3rd edition is a comprehensive and accessible guide to operations management. Here are just a few reasons why you should choose this book:

- It has been researched and written by a highly respected author team. Alex and Terry Hill both worked in operations management for a decade or more before switching careers and this experience and their continued research and consultancy within the field is the basis for the book's orientation towards the task of managing the operations function and the source of the numerous case studies that provide illustrations and teaching material throughout.
- The content is supported by a comprehensive pedagogy, and a modern and dynamic page design to draw in the reader.
- It reflects the mix of the service and manufacturing sectors that typify more developed economies.
- It contains excellent coverage of operations strategy – a key area that students find difficult to grasp.
- It is fully up-to-date both in terms of its content, data illustrations and case study material.
- It has an excellent supporting companion website which includes bonus chapters and cases for students and a comprehensive manual for lecturers which contains teaching notes for all the cases in the book, PowerPoint slides and much more. Visit www.palgrave.com/business/hillom3e

Alex Hill and Terry Hill

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