



# PLANT TOURS IN MANAGEMENT

Third Edition



Roger W. Schmenner



# PLANT AND SERVICE TOURS IN OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

Third Edition

ROGER W. SCHMENNER

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To the memory of  
my mother,  
Gwendolyn Jackson Schmenner

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# INTRODUCTION

Many things in our lives help prepare us to be better students in business. We are all consumers. We all have to deal with financial matters and with other human beings. In addition, the business and press writes on such matters all the time and in some depth. As students of business, then, we can readily bring these experiences and knowledge to bear in learning more about marketing, finance, accounting, and organizational behavior. Moreover, our past experiences with these business functions are likely to whet our appetites for their continued study.

This is less true for production and operations management, the study of how businesses effectively deal with the management decisions surrounding the production and delivery of goods and services. In today's world, fewer and fewer of us have firsthand knowledge of factories or service operations. Manufacturing accounts for less than a quarter of the workforce, even though regional scientists are quick to maintain its role as the "economic base" of most communities. The business press typically does not report on production/operations with the same intensity as it reports on other matters. Thus, while production/operations management remains a critical business discipline, it is less a part of our consciousness and of our everyday lives.

This book is designed to help remedy this deficiency. Each of the following nine chapters introduces a particular kind of manufacturing or service process. All nine processes described are different in important respects; together they span the entire range of process

choices and fall into two categories: manufacturing and service. The manufacturing tours describe the following types of processes:

- Job shop
- Batch flow process
- Worker-paced line flow process
- Machine-paced line flow process
- Continuous flow process
- Hybrid process (part batch and part continuous flow)

Included in the service tours are:

- Service factory
- Service shop
- Mass service
- Professional service

The models for each of these process types are drawn from actual operations as they were functioning in the latter half of 1988. Naturally, I am greatly indebted to the cooperating companies for spending a good deal of time with me discussing their processes and walking me around them, and also for reviewing and correcting my written descriptions of their operations.

Each tour consists of the process description followed by a discussion of the salient features of the process. The sequence of the tours highlights the differences among the processes. For example, the description of a continuous flow process (Tour A) is followed immediately by a description of a job shop, which lies at the opposite extreme of the manufacturing process

spectrum. By playing up these contrasts, the unique features of each process may be kept more clearly in mind.

The second segment compares and contrasts all nine processes and, in so doing, pinpoints the key elements of management choice and concern in each. These tours are constant reminders of the diversity, complexity, and

challenge of the operations decisions faced by managers everyday in hosts of industries.

The questions and situations for study at the end of each tour are designed to reinforce the concepts presented and discussed. I am grateful to Professor Thomas Callarman and Joseph Biggs, as well as to several of my students, for contributing them.

R.W.S.



Norcen Industries



Burger King Restaurant



Stroh Brewery



Thalhimers, Cloverleaf Mall





Jos. A. Banks Clothiers



Ogle-Tucker Buick Auto Service and Repair