

The Produce-Process Matrix 4
Revisited: Integrating Supply
Chain Trade-offs

In 1979, Hayes and Wheelwright presented a product-process matrix showing the trade-offs in operations and marketing. Since then, much has changed in the world of commerce to increase speed to market, flexibility of production, and increased customization. The functions of a producer's supply chain are of increasing importance to these processes and trade-offs. To compete successfully, the entire supply chain must focus on meeting the needs of the end customer. Concrete examples suggest how this can be done.

Rhonda R. Lummus, Robert J. Vokurka, and Leslie K. Duclos

The Role of Knowledge and 11
Capability Evaluation in
E-Business Strategy: An Integrative
Approach and Case Illustration

Companies that might benefit from e-business are often understandably nervous about moving into this digital world. With the right kind of preparation, however, much uncertainty can be removed. A thorough, documented, and shared knowledge of customer priorities, the supply chain environment, competitors, current core capabilities, and IT abilities are needed as a foundation for a flexible e-business strategy. The "continuous planning with feedback" approach is recommended to tailor the strategy to the firm's particular needs and capabilities. This approach was applied by a garment manufacturer in the United Arab Emirates that was considering an e-business-to-consumer initiative. Their experience should be instructive for other businesses and managers.

Abdelkader Daghfous and Noor Al-Nahas

Culture, Self-Directed Learning 21
Readiness, and Per Capita
Income in Five Countries

Competitive pressures arising from globalization put the spotlight on workplace learning. If employees can't learn quickly, a company will not have the needed flexibility and agility to compete successfully. A study of self-directed learning readiness in China, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Lithuania, and the U.S. found a strong correlation to certain aspects of country culture. In particular, cultures that value individualism correlate positively, whereas those endorsing "power distance" (acceptance of the unequal distribution of power within an organization) correlated negatively.

Paul J. Guglielmino and Lucy Madsen Guglielmino

Proactive Reification: Shifting 29
Market Structure and
Entrepreneurship

Although a market is an abstract concept, it functions in a very real way. Market strategists seek to adapt their firms to existing markets, whereas entrepreneurs typically create new markets out of existing market factors. They convert or reify the market abstraction into something new and different. Southwest Airlines, Apple Computer, and the creation of the town of Impact, Texas, are notable examples of proactive reification. But entrepreneurs should beware of the Frankenstein effect, whereby the newly created market takes on a life of its own and threatens or destroys the inattentive creator.

W. Scott Sherman and Janice A. Black

Determining the Common Problems of Early Growth Small Businesses in Eastern North Carolina

39

Anyone starting or managing a new business in a rural area will be interested to learn that their biggest problems are likely to be administrative — accounting and records, collections and credit, cost control, legal needs, etc. The next biggest headaches arise in the strategic area and involve business feasibility, development, market definition and research, and so on. Operations, such as computer systems, engineering, estimating and bidding, inventory control, and sales provide the fewest problems. These are some principal results of a study of 170 retail and service firms in eastern North Carolina.

Michael L. Harris and Shanan G. Gibson

Here We Go Again: How a Family's Cross-Cultural and Repatriation Adjustment Relates to the Employee's Receptivity to Future International Assignments

46

Despite advances in communications, increasing numbers of companies want employees "on the ground" to manage international operations. While such expatriates receive many benefits, these may be offset by real or perceived drawbacks. A family's ability to adjust to the non-U.S. environment and then readjust to the U.S. is a key factor in an employee's willingness to accept a future overseas assignment. A closer look at the importance of such factors is provided by a study of 200 recently repatriated spouses of employees of eight large corporations.

Don A. Larsen