**AIU Exam – Introduction to Operations Management**

**Major**: Operations Management

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**Name of study material (video or book)**:

***Strategic Operations Management* by Steve Brown**, (**Chapters 1 and 2)**

**Link to access study material (video or book):**

<http://students.aiu.edu/submissions/profiles/resources/onlineBook/g4F4m2_Strategic%20Operations%20Management.pdf>

**Exam Starts Here.**

**Introduction**: In the following space, write 4 to 8 paragraphs to introduce the topics covered in the exam.

**Questions:**

Answer each question below with complete paragraphs. Give examples from your own experience to illustrate the ideas. As well, give examples on how you would apply the knowledge in your work and life. How would you successfully apply the concepts in your community?

**Chapter 1**

1. What are the major areas of responsibility for operations managers?

**Answers:**

An Operations Manager is in charge of keeping track of the big picture and spotting areas for development. The following are some of the responsibilities of an Operations Manager:

* **Management of Value: -** Management of value is concerned with creating long-term value, whether at the project, product, process, organizational, or social levels.

It is concerned with achieving and maintaining a desirable balance between stakeholders' needs and desires and the resources required to meet them. Stakeholder value judgments differ, and Management of value reconciles competing priorities to provide the best value to all stakeholders.

* **Capacity management: -** Capacity management is the act of ensuring that a company's potential activities and output are maximized at all times and under all conditions. A company's capacity measures how much it can achieve, produce, or sell in a given time period.
* **Location decisions: -** Operations managers should be able to propose the best location that will ensuring the organization’s potential activities and output are maximized at all times and under all conditions. An organization location measures how much it can achieve, produce, or sell in a given time period.
* **Process management: -** Operations Managers are responsible for ensuring a systematic approach that ensures effective and efficient business processes are in place, as well as using methodology that aligns business processes with strategic goals.
* **Managing technology:-** In terms of operations management, Operations Managers must be able to introduce technology and must "be able to articulate what the technology should be able to do, take an active part in the selection of the technology itself, manage its installation, integrate it into the rest of the operation, maintain, and finally replace it when necessary." Technology can be used in a multitude of ways. The transaction volume is an important argument for using technology, as automated systems can handle volumes that manual operations cannot. Other considerations include risk avoidance, particularly when it comes to complex tasks with high consequences for errors. Furthermore, technology in a broader context can be used to gain a competitive advantage, particularly in industries where manufacturing processes or services have reached their limits.
* **Human resources management: -** Operations managers must be able to manage people in order to achieve the organization's mission and reinforce the culture. When done correctly, operations managers can provide employees with the necessary skills to help the company achieve its goals, as well as assist with the training and development of current employees to meet those goals. As technology advances, it is also necessary to balance the workforce. The survival of an organization is not solely dependent on intelligent machines. Workers also play an essential role in the advancement of an organization.
* **Integration and affiliation: -** Operations manager should be able to broker Affiliation through corporate franchise agreements with large-scale operators. And know when to sub-franchise and outsource common services in order to be a competitive organization.
* How I will apply my operations management skills in my community is to assist small-scale businesses in thinking of better ways to improve their mode of trading. For example, the lady who sells clothes in the market to a handful customers, can now increase her clientele by introducing social media and can now gain more income from those who do not want to visit the market but would like to get the same clothes but in the comfort of their homes. As a result, this market woman will earn more money and possibly see a significant improvement in her product turnover.

2. Why is it important to go beyond the organization-specific, input/processes/output model in modern-day operations management?

**Answers:**

In modern-day operations management, it is critical to go beyond the organization-specific, input/processes/output model, because organizations no longer see themselves as a standalone element in the input/processes/output model, but rather as part of a larger, extended enterprise, where there is a network of collaborative partners, all of whom link together to form an extended enterprise within an industry. As a result, the operations management model for current and future operations is no longer restricted to a single organization. This requires the organization to be willing to look outside of itself and form strategic relationships with organizations that were previously viewed as competitors.

**Chapter 2**

3. What are the links between operations strategy and business

Strategy?

**Answers:**

Operation strategy connect the firm's programs, policies, guidelines and workforce in a way that allows each branch to support others in achieving a common goal.

A business strategy is a decision-making process that shapes an organization's long-term plans to achieve the objectives in its mission statement. It comprises specific actions management wants to take to achieve a specific aspect of a company's operations. The link is they aim at achieving a set goal by creating strategies with the operations manager as a focal point in the application.

4. What are the problems that might be faced in formulating an operations strategy?

**Answers:**

When developing an operations strategy, there are a few potential issues to consider. One potential issue is accurately forecasting future demand for the company's products or services. Another issue could be determining the most efficient method of producing and delivering those products or services. Furthermore, managing inventory and capacity utilization can be difficult tasks, particularly in volatile markets. Another significant challenge when developing an operations strategy is ensuring that the company's resources are used as efficiently as possible.

Some of the may also include:

* Operations literature (and sometimes practice) sees the need to ‘make the case’ for strategy, but there is not a great deal of crossover to strategy mainstream;
* Mainstream strategy will use terms like core competences, key success factors and so on without necessarily linking these with operations management;
* There is often a conflict between resource-based and market-led views of strategy.

5. Why have operations and business strategies become separated in some firms?

**Answers:**

Due to system redesign efforts, some firms have separated operations and business strategies. Back-of-house or back-office operations are increasingly being separated from front-of-house or front-office activities in service firms. This is known as 'decoupling.' A second major system redesign has increased customer participation in their own service experience, which is another way of saying ‘self-service.'

Cell and group technology configurations have been introduced as part of system redesign in manufacturing. All of these approaches are critical. Such approaches, however, are insufficient in and of themselves and, at best, form only a subset of broader strategic considerations.

6. Why is operations strategy vitally important in modern-day operations management?

**Answers:**

When attempting to manage the future, it is critical that operations strategies be put in place to allow them to deal with future strategic changes. Without a doubt, strategic operations will determine the fate of firms in both manufacturing and service settings, as well as combinations of both.

**Conclusion**: In the following space, write 4 to 8 paragraphs to conclude this course.

* Describe the 3 most important concepts you learned in this course.

**Answers:**

* The issues faced by operations managers in manufacturing and service environments.
* Understanding the integral need for all organizations to develop operations strategies.
* Knowing the importance of human rights being adhered to in working environments
* How would you use this knowledge to improve your life and work?

**Answers:**

What I have learnt so far has given me the insight on how to prioritize, knowing that planning before embarking on any project is very important. Operations management does not only apply in the work place but cuts across all works of life and when applied in every aspect, productivity will be the result both at work and in life in general.

* How would you use this knowledge to increase your income?

**Answers:**

I will use this knowledge to increase my income in the following ways:

* Knowing the best environment in which to sell and establish a business because the environment in which the business is located will determine the revenue I will make. For example, I am from Ghana's coastal region (Saltpond). Fishing is a major source of income for the people there, and it is done in a haphazard manner. I'd rather capitalise on this by launching a fish delivery service. Instead of the market women leaving at dawn to go to the beach, I'd have them send me. Instead, with my bicycle and basket, I would rather run the errand for them, allowing them to cook for their husbands and children, and in return, I will not only make money by providing this service, but I will also help to strengthen family ties. As you can see, I identified the demand and provided a service that will not only be efficient, but will also keep customers satisfied and happy in the long run.
* How would you use this knowledge to promote human rights in the world?

**Answers:**

In our society, human rights are extremely important. When we look at society, we see that it is full of racial differences. Human rights must be protected at all costs, both at work and at home. I will make people understand that having someone work for you does not make the person any less of a human being; we must understand that the right wedges for work done are to be paid to the employee. Respect for people of your race or ethnicity goes a long way toward protecting human rights. Being in a position of power or not makes no difference to the fact that we are all equal.

# References

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Management. "Management." (n.d.).

Steve Brown, Richard Lamming, John Bessant and Peter Jones. *Strategic Opertions Management*. British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data, 2000,2005.

www.indeed.com. "Operations Manager Job Description: Top Duties and Qualifications." n.d.

**Bibliography:**

Put here the references that you used to study and complete this exam. You should have at least 3 different references.

- Here are links to 2 videos on how to do bibliography automatically in Word. One is an AIU webinar on Bibliography. The other is a YouTube video. Login to your student page before opening the link to the AIU webinar.

<https://students.aiu.edu/student/AIUWebinar.aspx?p=1&id=356>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-IEWabgf0I&t=19s>