

Executive Overview

The book map opposite the beginning of this chapter highlights the position of this chapter within the whole of the book. As you would anticipate, it is shown as having an overarching dimension to depict the all-embracing nature of this topic. In particular, the aspects covered here relate to the role of operations management within organizations and review the following:

Defining operations management – the opening section of the chapter explains what the operations management task comprises, giving illustrations from organizations in different sectors.

An overview of the operations management role – introduces the day-to-day (or operational) and strategic roles of operations, together with the key task of managing people.

The nature of organizations – with the growth of businesses, groups of tasks are completed by a number of departments or functions and one of these is operations.

The task of managing operations – transforming inputs into saleable outputs is at the core of day-to-day operations management. What this involves is discussed and illustrated.

Operations management in a developing economy – the varying nature of the operations task in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors is discussed and the mix between these within nations is examined.

The purchase – customers purchase a mix of services and products. How these differ and the operations management response are examined.

Size of the operations task – the fact that operations typically comprise 60–70 per cent of people, assets and costs is discussed.

The role of the operations manager – the variety and nature of the tasks of the operations manager are outlined.

Services versus manufacturing – the similarities and differences between these two sectors are reviewed and examples given to illustrate the issues involved.