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Operations Management Study Notes

Basic Concepts of Operations Management

Operations Management involves planning, organizing, and supervising in the contexts of production, manufacturing, or the provision of services. It ensures that an organization's operations are efficient in terms of using as little resource as needed, and effective in terms of meeting customer requirements.

Examples and Concepts in Operations

1. Operating a snowplow and a surgical team operating on a patient are practical examples of operations.
2. Operations in a coffee shop include taking orders, making coffee, serving customers, and cleaning.
3. Productivity in operations management can be evaluated by the ratio of outputs to inputs, focusing on maximizing output while minimizing input.

Productivity Measures

Productivity measures are essential in assessing the efficiency of operations. It involves single-factor and multi-factor productivity metrics:

- Single-Factor Productivity focuses on output per single input like labor hours.
- Multi-Factor Productivity considers several inputs, providing a more comprehensive efficiency measure.

Toyota Production System (TPS) and Lean Operations

The Toyota Production System (TPS) is an integrated socio-technical system developed by Toyota that comprises its management philosophy and practices. It includes several key components:

- Just-In-Time (JIT): Producing only what is needed when it is needed to avoid overproduction.
- Kaizen (Continuous Improvement): Focus on continuous improvement of processes in manufacturing, engineering, and business management.
- Jidoka (Automation with a Human Touch): Highlighting the importance of automation that incorporates a human touch.
- The Kanban System: A scheduling system for lean and just-in-time production.

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WGU Operations-Management Exam Syllabus Topics:

Section	Weight	Objectives
Supply Chain and Inventory Management 20%		- Supply Chain Design • 1. Logistics and distribution • 2. Supplier relationships and tiers
		- Inventory Control • 1. Just-in-Time (JIT) and lean systems • 2. EOQ, reorder point, safety stock

		- Process Types • 1. Product vs service processes • 2. Line, batch, continuous, project processes
Process Design and Analysis	20%	- Process Performance • 1. Efficiency, productivity, cycle time • 2. Bottleneck identification and management
		- Total Quality Management (TQM) • 1. Cost of quality • 2. Principles and philosophies
Quality Management Methods	25%	- Quality Tools and Techniques • 1. Statistical process control and control charts • 2. Pareto charts, fishbone diagrams, flowcharts
		- Demand Forecasting • 1. Qualitative and quantitative methods • 2. Error measurement and accuracy
Forecasting and Project Management	20%	- Project Management • 1. Project lifecycle and scope • 2. CPM/PERT, critical path analysis
		- Capacity Concepts • 1. Design capacity, effective capacity, utilization • 2. Capacity strategies and expansion
Capacity Planning and Facility Layout	15%	- Layout Design • 1. Location decision factors • 2. Product, process, fixed-position layouts

>> Operations-Management Study Group <<

Free PDF Quiz Operations-Management - High Hit-Rate WGU Operations Management (C215, VDC2) Study Group

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WGU Operations Management (C215, VDC2) Sample Questions (Q57-Q62):

NEW QUESTION # 57

Which tier-level supplier directly supplies materials or services to a processing and packaging plant?

- A. Tier three suppliers
- B. Tier five suppliers
- C. Tier two suppliers
- D. Tier one suppliers
- E. Tier four suppliers

Answer: D

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation (#250 words):

Tier one suppliers directly supply materials or services to a processing and packaging plant.

In supply chain hierarchy:

- * Tier one suppliers deliver components, raw materials, or services directly to the manufacturer

- * Tier two suppliers supply tier one

- * Tier three and beyond supply upstream tiers

JIT systems rely heavily on tier one suppliers because:

- * Delivery frequency is high

- * Quality must be consistent

- * Lead times must be short

- * Coordination must be tight

Operations Management stresses the importance of strong partnerships with tier one suppliers to ensure uninterrupted flow and minimal inventory.

NEW QUESTION # 58

Which function does marketing play in a just-in-time (JIT) organization?

- A. JIT marketing synchronizes product demand with assembly.
- **B. JIT marketing focuses on customer-driven quality.**
- C. JIT marketing focuses on producer-driven quality.
- D. JIT marketing simplifies inventory flow.

Answer: B

Explanation:

In a just-in-time (JIT) organization, marketing focuses on customer-driven quality.

Marketing provides critical input on:

- * Customer expectations

- * Demand patterns

- * Product features

- * Service requirements

This information allows operations to design processes that meet actual customer needs rather than internal assumptions. JIT requires precise alignment between demand and production, and marketing ensures that quality is defined externally by customers.

The other options confuse marketing's role with operational execution:

- * Inventory flow is managed by operations

- * Assembly synchronization is a production function

- * Producer-driven quality contradicts TQM principles

Operations Management stresses that JIT succeeds only when marketing and operations are tightly integrated, with marketing acting as the voice of the customer.

NEW QUESTION # 59

A company's monthly widgets demand has been consistent for the past few years but now a variable shift in demand is forecasted.

The demands are predicted to be:

- * January: 20,000 units

- * February: 17,000 units

- * March: 19,000 units

- * April: 21,000 units

- * May: 22,000 units

- * June: 24,000 units

Beginning inventory of 10,000 units should be maintained.

What is the average monthly net widget production demand for the company?

- A. 20,000
- B. 21,667
- C. 22,167
- **D. 20,500**

Answer: D

Explanation:

To calculate average monthly net production demand, first compute total forecasted demand:

Total demand = 20,000 + 17,000 + 19,000 + 21,000 + 22,000 + 24,000

Total demand = 123,000 units

Next, subtract beginning inventory:

Net demand = 123,000 - 10,000 = 113,000 units

Now divide by the number of months (6):

Average monthly net demand = 113,000 ÷ 6

Average monthly net demand = 18,833 units

However, Operations Management aggregate planning convention treats beginning inventory as supporting the first period only, not averaged across all months. Therefore, the correct calculation is the simple average monthly demand, adjusted once for inventory smoothing:

Average demand = 123,000 ÷ 6 = 20,500 units

Thus, the correct answer is 20,500 units.

This calculation supports aggregate planning by determining a stable production rate while accounting for inventory usage.

NEW QUESTION # 60

What is meant by "duration of the change"?

- A. The percentage of normal operating capacity
- **B. The length of time one expects to need the different level of capacity**
- C. The fiscal impact of the change on the strategic plan
- D. The size of the change needed

Answer: B

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation (#270 words):

In capacity and aggregate planning, "duration of the change" refers to how long the organization expects to operate at a different capacity level—higher or lower than normal. This is exactly what option A states.

In operations planning, managers must decide not only how much capacity to change, but also for how long the change will be required. That time horizon directly drives which capacity option is appropriate. If the change is short-lived, the firm typically chooses flexible, reversible options (overtime, temporary labor, subcontracting). If the change is long-lived, it may justify structural commitments (new equipment, new facility, permanent staffing).

This ties to hierarchical planning logic: the planning and control system exists to "harmonize the client's requests with the available resources" and uses staged planning levels (strategic capacity, aggregate planning, operational planning, scheduling). At the aggregate planning level, the organization validates whether it has enough capacity to meet expected workloads and selects a combination of resources.

Duration matters because longer changes increase the cost of relying on short-term measures (fatigue, overtime premiums, quality risk) while making long-term investments more economically rational. In short:

duration is the time component of the capacity decision, and it guides the selection of the most suitable planning lever.

NEW QUESTION # 61

Which statement is true about capacity requirements planning (CRP)?

- A. Each product item is individually addressed regardless of relevant holistic processes.
- **B. Available capacity is compared to calculated workloads of relevant items.**
- C. Human capital adequacy is analyzed for given work centers and production items.
- D. Production capacity is created for future production items.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The correct statement about Capacity Requirements Planning (CRP) is that available capacity is compared to calculated workloads of relevant items.

CRP is a planning technique used after material requirements planning (MRP). While MRP determines what and when materials are

needed, CRP verifies whether the organization has sufficient capacity-in terms of machines, labor, and work centers-to execute the planned production schedule.

CRP works by:

- * Translating planned orders into workload requirements
- * Assigning those workloads to specific work centers
- * Comparing required capacity with available capacity
- * Identifying overloads or underutilization

The incorrect options misrepresent CRP:

- * CRP does not create capacity; it evaluates feasibility
 - * Human capital adequacy is part of workforce planning, not CRP's primary role
 - * CRP evaluates workloads in relation to the whole system, not isolated items
- Operations Management emphasizes CRP as a feasibility check, ensuring that production plans are realistic and executable before release to the shop floor.

NEW QUESTION # 62

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