



## Management Research During World War II

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## EFFECTS OF WORLD WAR 2 ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN MANAGEMENT THEORY

World War 2 initiated several well-definable changes in the life and thinking of managers and the developments of management theory of the era. The modernisation of Taylorism, the beginnings of motivation studies, the dissemination of systems thinking, the origins of strategic management, and the “leadership revolution” are five of those effects that have reshaped the management landscape since then. Together with the social and societal changes that have taken place there and then, the effects of the 2nd World War on the United States and Europe helped the widening of democracy in social, political, and economic terms as well as opened ways for the coming of participative and democratic management styles

World War II brought great trials to humanity. However, because of the problems that had to be solved tactfully, indirectly, the war also brought beneficial things that we all use today, and here I am referring to specific concepts and management procedures...

Management concepts and procedures used today by large successful corporations, government organisations, administrative apparatus and private companies.

We know already that POLC is one of the short-theory of management systems but when we think about management more deeply we can consider also some specifically human activity - meant to lead and organise; to cooperate, coordinate and to direct the human and material forces at hand in the interior of a particular system for touching some given strategic objectives. In the armed forces field, this super complex activities require knowledge and availability to develop, create, and ready for research.

Because leadership is the most crucial component of the combat field, we must admit that we can touch the objectives only with the excellent manager.

What exactly is the project about?

Content

- Analysis (the need for management during the Second World War)
- Historical Method (What new concepts have been developed or what concepts have been adapted)
- Comparison (how did the concepts apply then, and how and where do they apply today?)
- Conclusions and long-term impact.



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## ANALYSIS

### ○ THE NEED FOR MANAGEMENT DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

It was a period of ambiguity. Large changes have to be made with little warning. Even established companies couldn't access components or materials because their supply systems were in disarray. Because such a large portion of the workforce was absent, firm executives had to rethink their preconceptions about how to keep production going, who to employ, and how to inspire and safeguard a nervous workforce. On a more personal level, everyone was concerned about the individuals they cared about, fearful of losing someone who was in danger.

Historians, academics, and military specialists alike continue to be fascinated with World War II. The enormity of the worldwide struggle continues to draw fresh research, publications, and studies on the confrontation of military capabilities between the Allies and the Axis. The link between combat, logistics, and management is one main area. The victorious Allied forces had to figure out how to project their military strength with greatest force at the lowest cost in men, while taking into consideration the size of global operations, resource shortages, nation-level suffering, and political and cultural variables.

## HISTORICAL METHOD

### ○ WHAT NEW CONCEPTS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED OR WHAT CONCEPTS HAVE BEEN ADAPTED

With the increased demand for production brought about by scientific measurement, the conflict between labour and management was inevitable. The personnel department, The forerunner of today's human resources department, emerged as a method to slow down the demand for unions, initiate training programs to reduce employee turnover, and to acknowledge workers' needs beyond the factory floor. „The knowledge of strategic management has been formed by key military battles and events (Figure 1.9 "Classic Military Strategy"). The term strategy has its origins in battle. The Greek verb *strategos* means "army chief," and the concept of strategy (from which we derive the term strategy) relates to conquering an opponent via smart resource management (Bracker, 1980).

*Strategic management often borrows lessons as well as metaphors from classic military strategy. For example, major business decisions are often categorized as "strategic" while more minor decisions (such as small changes in price or the opening of a new location) are referred to as "tactical" decisions. Here are a few select examples of classic military strategies that hold insights for strategic decisions today.*

<p>1532: Machiavelli's book <i>The Prince</i> offers clever recipes for success to government leaders. Some of the book's suggestions are quite devious, and the word <i>Machiavellian</i> comes to refer to acts of deceit and manipulation.</p>	
	<p>1775: The American Revolutionary War between the United States and Great Britain begins. Weaker American forces win the war in part by relying on nontraditional tactics such as guerilla warfare and the strategic targeting of British officers. They also depend on help from the French navy, illustrating the potential value of strategic alliances.</p>
<p>1815: Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo demonstrates how spreading resources too thin can result in defeat of even one of the most famed militaries of all time.</p>	
	<p>1865: The American Civil War ends. Historians consider the Confederacy to have had better generals, but the Union possessed greater resources. Sometimes good strategies simply cannot overcome a stronger adversary.</p>
<p>1944: Following a series of deceptions designed to confuse and fool German forces, the Allies launch the D-Day invasion in an effort to liberate Europe from Nazi control.</p>	

The supply chain and management system the U.S. Army carried from peace into conflict was already showing its faults by 1941.[3] The global conflict demanded a rapid capacity to feed, clothe, arm, manage, and provide transport for military personnel in remote locations where hospitals, barracks, airfields, and other critical installations were simultaneously being developed. Both materials and manpower had to be delivered at the right place and at the right time.[4] As Franklin D. Roosevelt observed in 1942, the former was of less concern than the latter: "We are learning to ration materials; and we must now learn to ration manpower."

## COMPARISON

- HOW DID THE CONCEPTS APPLY THEN, AND HOW AND WHERE DO THEY APPLY TODAY?

## LESSON 1: LOGISTICS GETS IN FRONT OF STRATEGY

The Army Service Forces served from 1942 until 1945 -established that the Army may be effectively controlled by a Service Commander in charge of allotments, finances, and manpower. Allied military strategies were subjugated to logistical capabilities throughout WWII. "Especially in a post war age, history has shown that service components enhance their authority at the expense of other elements," stated John D. Millet in a post-war review of the Army Service Forces. As a result, high-level strategic decisions are mostly logistical. Only at the planning phase do strategic decisions have an impact on logistical arrangements. Today, this tendency is exacerbated by complicated equipment, with current platforms resembling computers on wheels rather than the streamlined equipment of the industrial period, such as the Sherman tank or the four-engine B-17 bomber. While logistics will continue to improve preparedness through supporting units, new technologies such as 3-D printing of components, the usage of robots, and the widespread use of autonomous systems will unavoidably decentralize it. As a result, technology is expected to become the primary engine of modern army strategy.

## LESSON 2—BASICS MATTER MORE THAN FANCY NEW IDEAS

New concepts about strategy and combat may not be required to complete difficult tasks as long as an organization's axiomatic norms are followed. To put it another way, sticking to the essentials and maintaining a high level of performance is enough to get the task done. Somervell wasn't particularly bright, but he was efficient, and his management style was summed up by a subordinate as "driving and driving to gain the maximum in the way of approach, authority, cash, or whatever was necessary in order to pursue that specific operation."

## LESSON 3—ORGANIZATIONS WITH A MISSION THAT ARE NOT CONCERNED WITH CONTROL ARE MORE LIKELY TO SUCCEED.

Because of his experiences during WWII, Somervell was able to demonstrate that distinct theoretical sorts of organizations aren't necessary. The organization's ability to adapt to a certain objective is significantly more crucial. While this insight is based on a traditional sort of combat that is beginning to fade from living memory, it is still applicable in today's context, which is defined by counterinsurgency operations. The US Army is attempting to instill a Mission Command mentality and maintains an active presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, where—thanks to technology advantages as well as less centralized control—it has been able to achieve success.

## CONCLUSIONS AND LONG-TERM IMPACT.

The Army Service Forces' operations are rarely mentioned in continuing debates regarding combat. This might be because, unlike World War II, modern combat does not rely on tremendous weapons and highly centralized command systems. General Brehon Somervell's management guidelines, on the other hand, are just as relevant and applicable to today's military procurement and logistics difficulties as they were 75 years ago.

The US Army's "backlog of postponed readiness, procurement, and modernization requirements has grown...and can no longer be ignored" after almost two decades of constant combat.

Modern military should pay attention to the link between combat preparedness and logistical issues. The Army Service Forces have clearly taught us a lot about management and procurement.

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#### **1. Management Concepts and Practices**

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2Krooss ([1966](#)) cited in Porter ([1980](#), p. 948).

3 The cost to the parishes might be very heavy during prolonged fighting as few soldiers fighting on the continent returned (Lindegren, [1980](#); [1985](#)).

4 Cited in Koistinen ([1967](#), p. 382).