SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT, TEXT AND CASES BY V.V. SOPLE

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The name of the book under review is “Supply chain management, text and cases” which has been written by Mr. Vinod V Sople. This book has been published by Dorling Kindersley Pvt Ltd, a licensee of Pearson education in South Asia. The author of the book is a prominent researcher in the field of supply chain and logistics management. The book contains 484 pages with detailed list of contents, prologue, an introduction of the author, glossary, supply chain related information, sources and a bibliography. Each chapter is followed by assessment questions, online exercises, video links, research tasks and some valuable notes. The book provides fundamental knowledge about supply chain management, tactical and operational decisions, strategic approach, measurements and controls and sustainability. A prime feature of this book is that it includes 15 cases which can be instrumental in comprehending the strategies of supply chain management of any organization.

In an attempt to explain the fundamental knowledge of supply chain, Part I of the book revolves around the basic concepts of supply chain. It focuses on the evolution, definition and importance of supply chain management, specifically with the help of charts and models. Relevant examples of various decisions in supply chain are also discussed. Project assignments given at the end of chapter 1 of Part I enable the readers to understand the essence of supply chain management. The author also explains the role of logistics within supply chain in this part. I agree with the author that logistics can play a pivotal role in the effective supply chain management of any organization.

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organization. Goals and functions of logistics are enumerated as well. The logistics decision hierarchy displayed by the author is quite interesting. An analysis on logistics in an international context would augment the scope of the subject. In Part I, the author also makes a comparison between supply and demand chains. He finishes part I by explaining as to how value can be created with the help of a supply chain. Online exercises provided in this part add value to the discussion. This part I of the book seems to attain the aim of imparting elementary information of supply chain to the readers.

**Part II** elucidates the value of supply chain planning for effective supply chain management. It includes justifications as to how inappropriate short, mid or long term planning can affect the supply chain. Practice case “Gillette: demand planning to improve supply chain health” is worth reading in this regard. The author elaborates the complete supply chain planning matrix successfully in this part. The concept of procurement is discussed in detail with the help of models which can be very useful to the readers. This part also includes a substantial justification about the fact that effective strategic sourcing can be considered a key factor leading to success. Distinction between traditional and strategic sourcing is also made. The author also throws light on the concept of lean manufacturing with the help of complete chapter in part II. The video links given at the end of the chapter can be rated high in efficacy level by the readers. Another component of Part II covers the distribution decisions that a company can make. The author finishes part II with some interesting discussions on distribution centre site selection.

**Part III** enumerates the role of transportation in logistics. The author has rightly stated that the costs related to transportation form the major component of the overall cost of logistics. The author has mentioned the various types of transportation modes in this part of the book. Some strategies, challenges and decisions related to the transportation industry are also mentioned. Various tools and
techniques related to inventory management are highlighted. More numerical examples involving inventory management at the end of the inventory management chapter would have been better. Designing an effective supply chain network is extremely crucial for the overall supply chain management of any organization. The author has created a link between decisions of network designing and the robustness of a business. From the point of view of a supply chain’s success, it is imperative that management understands the roles, problems and structure for network design. Part III of the book includes a comprehensive chapter on information system and IT enablement. It examines the significance of information in order to attain competitive advantage. Basic IT related tools and technique are explained in connection with role of information technology in managing supply chain. The display of the dimensions affected by information technology on supply chain integration is quite useful.

Part IV starts with the discussion about strategic alliance and outsourcing. Numerous benefits of strategic alliance and outsourcing are outlined with the help of some industrial examples and illustrations. However there are certain challenges associated with having such type of alliances or outsourcing practices and the author does justice in elaborating these challenges. Increasing volatility, smaller product life cycles and changing demands have given birth to agile supply chains which are much more flexible. Creation of an agile supply chain can be difficult as there are numerous barriers which can inhibit agility within the supply chains. The book also enumerates the role of several rules and regulations (cross-border) as well as policies in connection with global supply chains. The process of selection of an appropriate method of transportation and documentation can become a serious issue for the smooth functioning of a global supply chain. A significant element of part IV of the book is an interesting debate on the efficacy of a reverse supply chain. It is quite evident that most of the organizations spent a considerable time in the design and strategies of forward supply chain, but they disregard
reverse supply chain issues. A reader can find some interesting charts and short industrial cases in this section of the book in order to understand reverse supply chains. Discussions about issues, advantages and critical success factors of attaining supply chain optimization are made as well. The author explains how re-engineering supply chain to differential strategies could be made possible. According to the author, it might not be feasible to depend on a single supply chain. In fact, having mini supply chains with the mainstream supply chain could be an effective alternative in certain situations. He also describes the role of integration within the supply chain. A major portion of this part is the comprehensive analysis of the roles drivers, models and problems associated with cold chains.

The most prominent aspect of part V is managing risk in a supply chain. The author has successfully elaborated the supply chain risks within and outside an organization’s control. It provides detailed evaluation of who can we evaluate, assess, manage and monitor risk. Several models of supply chain management are also presented in this regard. Various strategies are discussed in order to lessen the negative impact of these supply chain risks. This part of the book explains the need and types of quantitative techniques in order to find solutions of various complex problems that we encounter during the design and implementation of effective supply chain management practices. Further explanations about the usage, issues and challenges of these quantitative techniques on an international level along with some numerical examples would augment the readers’ understanding. The author has drawn the attention of the reader to the fact that more companies should look at supply chain management as an instrument to attain financial growth. Now days, the physical supply chain remains unintegrated with a particular financial supply chain. Money travels slower than goods. This part gives a comprehensive view of the impact of pricing and costing decisions as well. The author has stated that improvement is not possible unless you measure and control the performance. He demonstrates some of the financial and non financial performance measures which can be
very useful in determining the health of supply chain of any organization.

In part VI, the author has rightly discussed the emerging need for green supply chain management. Because of stricter governmental regulations, increasing consumer awareness and competition organizations around the world are devising plans in order to go for sustainable supply chains. Such sustainability can help the businesses to diminish the cost, reduce the risk and achieve a considerable competitive advantage. A list of components of corporate social responsibility has been presented. The author has done a great job by giving some practical examples by which several international brands have adopted a sustainable approach. Such real life scenarios can help the reader in understanding ways for adopting a sustainable approach. This part also highlights the impact of several governmental and non governmental regulations on the overall efficiency of supply chain management. It also encapsulates how supply chains can be vulnerable because of unfair ethical practices. The author also identifies the ethical issues and challenges and provides his views in this regard.

A classic section of this book is part VII in which the author has described fifteen business cases followed by reasonable number of questions at the end of each case. These cases provide the readers an ample opportunity to understand implications of supply chain related concepts with the help of analytical and critical thinking. These business cases seem to be challenging and interactive. Since they are based on real life situations, readers can be motivated. Several types of graphs, charts and tables have been used in these cases. Most of the review questions are open ended. The range of topics covered in these cases is quite diverse including supply chain integration, innovation, role of information technology in supply chain, cost control, procurement, distribution, inventory management, logistics and supply chain leadership.
Overall, the way the information is presented by the author in the book is commendable. The style is simple and the author seems to have complete grasp of the subject. Various techniques including cases studies that the author has used throughout the book can facilitate the reader to understand the concepts given. The book is equally suitable to academic as well as non academic readers who would like to gain an insight into the field of supply chain management. I strongly recommend it to students and faculty working on supply chain issues.