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SCIENTIFIC BUSINESS

A quarterly review of the applications of scientific method in business

PILOT ISSUE

FIRST ISSUE DUE MAY 1963

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“Conceived and launched in a crusading spirit . . .”

- **THIS 16 PAGE PILOT ISSUE** is a synopsis of the first full issue, Volume 1, Number 1 due out in May 1963. To ensure your copy, please complete the Subscription Form opposite and post it to us today.
- True to the traditions of Scientific Method in Marketing, we are distributing this Pilot Issue to potential subscribers and advertisers to establish the likely level of demand.
- This Journal was conceived and is now launched with the object of taking a leading part in the current crusade for better management and higher productivity in British Industry. It intends to play this part, not in any hectoring or exhortatory manner from the sidelines, but by providing a medium through which those working on business problems can disseminate their ideas more widely amongst the business community. Every member of the Editorial Board has a full-time job in business and is engaged in one or other of the scientific disciplines which are becoming so vital to management activity and control.

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I BELIEVE that there has long been in this country a gap between scientist and industrialist, which is reflected in the slow and uncertain application of scientific method and discoveries in business which we too often find. Anything that can help to bridge this gap will be of invaluable importance to our economy and country. If the JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC BUSINESS can provide a platform for the discussion of the application of science to industry and commerce, in a way which will be informative and interesting to scientist and layman alike—and I believe that it can and will do this—it will have performed a most vital function. For this reason I sincerely welcome its publication.

Michael Shanks, Industrial Editor of *F. Times*
and author of Penguin Special “The Stagnant Society”

Introducing the Journal . . .

THE TITLE SCIENTIFIC BUSINESS for a new journal aimed at business managers may seem pretentious to those for whom the word "science" means precise measurement and closely defined laws, in other words, the natural sciences. Business management can never be a science in that sense of the word. Although in essence the management of a business may be thought of as a continual stream of decisions to be taken, there is much more to it than merely taking the right decisions. If all the factors involved were calculable, the decisions might as well, or better, be taken by a machine. In fact, many of the factors are incalculable and many of the decisions concern the future, which in human affairs at any rate, remains a mystery.

It might be feasible, by simulating the judgement processes of the human mind, to make a machine come to decisions on incomplete evidence and to foretell the future at least as well as the average business man, but it seems unlikely that a machine would be very good at the personnel function which is an integral part of management. Questions of square pegs and round holes, of promotion and succession are one of the most important parts of the manager's task, because of the obvious fact that a business is a human organisation. This means that a business functions effectively as much as anything because the people in it get on with one another and are prepared to give of their best. A decision which is right for one business could be wrong for another in exactly the same circumstances but with different skills, outlook and tradition among its employees.

For the foreseeable future, then, business management will be an art; but an

art with a difference. The artist in the more usual sense of the word can discard an unsuccessful painting or sculpture, having wasted only his own time, but a badly managed business amounts to nothing less than a waste of this country's most important natural resource, the skill and energy of its workpeople.

In these days of a new and infinitely more complicated industrial revolution, at a time when the expansion of this country's material wealth depends absolutely on the expansion of its exports, or in other words, on the efficiency of British businesses relative to other countries' businesses, management is too important an art to be left to the trial and error methods of former times. This is where science comes in.

Already, science is becoming a tool of business managers, in the shape of statistics and the increasingly sophisticated means of processing figures. New management sciences, such as cybernetics, are being evolved. In market research and operations research scientific method is being used to help management reduce the areas of uncertainty in the taking of decisions.

Understandably, most of these ideas are fairly novel to many business managers. The world changes too fast even for the most avid self-educator to keep pace. Most of today's Chairmen and Directors grew to maturity before the computer as we know it was developed. Few executives have time to keep themselves up-to-date with the developing techniques of their profession, for profession it must surely become. How they should do so is something we propose to discuss later.

What this journal seeks to do is to promote the use of scientific method in

the management of business by providing a vehicle for the dissemination of the new ideas. No one can pretend that reading an article on, say, motivation research, can teach a manager or potential manager very much about that particular specialism. But it can open his mind to its possibilities.

One essential stage in the development and the widespread application of new management techniques is the creation of a serious business literature. It is here

that THE JOURNAL OF SCIENTIFIC BUSINESS can make a contribution. Each issue will consist of up to a dozen articles written by authorities in their own fields, plus several features of general interest to business men. Whilst it is obviously intended that all articles should be fully intelligible to the non-specialist there can be no "writing down" to them and contributions will have sufficient density of content to make them of interest to specialists as well.

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Lord Robens, *Chairman of the National Coal Board,*

writes of the need for Scientific Business

THE SUCCESSFUL running of any organisation, large or small, depends on making the right decisions—and no decision, trivial or important, can be made correctly unless management has a clear picture of the alternatives. This is only possible if it has been given an accurate presentation of all the factors that affect the choice.

Any punter who backs horses or fills in football coupons knows that fortune is just around the corner. The one thing that baffles him is the choice—which horse to back! It is often the same in business, for an otherwise efficient management can fail too by backing the wrong choice.

The rejection of the "hunch" in favour of analytical calculation—the use of the scientific method—is not new, but is now being employed more extensively as a tool of management.

No industry could hope to plan and control its operations without improving and changing its tools; and as industrial and commercial life becomes more complex the electronically-controlled coalface must succeed the man with the pick and shovel, just as surely as the computer will

replace office methods which are outmoded.

The coal industry is one of the biggest businesses in the world, and is constantly seeking and finding new answers to old problems by the use of new and exciting techniques. Its management is learning rapidly, not only to increase the productivity of the manual worker, but also to exploit new and more effective ways to do its own job.

The record achievements in productivity last year were due not only to the introduction of highly-productive power-loading machinery, but to its more effective use. And just as a maximum degree of mechanisation is being sought, so also is the administration becoming more efficient through the introduction of such aids to management as electronic data processing, and the extended employment of operational research.

The techniques of scientific inquiry which can provide and also process essential facts will not replace managerial skill, but they can reduce the margin of error in the control of planning, as well as in operations, and save valuable time and money.

SCIENTIFIC BUSINESS

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