workers are inherently motivated to do a good job and that they do not need prodding to do it. McGregor's work is generally interpreted as an argument to adopt a Theory Y management style which, when contrasted to Theory X's autocratic style, yields more autonomy, trust and self-motivation for the worker. McGregor's work complements that of Chris Argyris (1957, 1960, 1962, 1964). Argyris argues that workers subjected to an autocratic organization will be unable to meet their needs and that such practices will lead to human and organizational decay.

It remained for Abraham Maslow (1954) to develop a theory on the levels of fulfillment a worker can find within an organizational structure. He developed the hierarchy of needs, which has five progressive stages: (1) physiological, (2) safety, (3) social, (4) esteem, and (5) self-actualization. One cannot move to the next stage until the need associated with the preceding stage has been met. Physiological and safety needs are fulfilled by the organization's provision of an exchange sufficient for the employee to provide for food and shelter. Social needs are met by the daily formal and informal activities an employee can engage in as an extension of organizational interactions. These interactions extend from chitchat at the coffee machine to recreational trips.

The compelling force behind the need for esteem is the basic human desire for recognition. Psychologists and sociologists have argued for decades (Freud, 1910; Adler, 1954, p. v; Bell, 1973) that the human species has a need for recognition. One's feelings of uniqueness are essential to well-being. Self-actualization, the highest-order need, is an ideal and not a real state. After the employee's needs are met at the lower levels, the organization must keep an individual sufficiently challenged in order for the individual to find fulfillment and remain highly productive. Thus, in an ideal work setting, the individual is ever presented with new and rewarding challenges and opportunities (Maslow, 1954; Aldag and Stearns, 1987; Cascio, 1998). The result is continued self-growth.

The Human Relations School has had a monumental influence on the practices of American management. The focus of the school was on the importance
of the individual and the relationship between worker satisfaction and productivity. The empirical results of this relationship are uneven according to many significant reviews of scholarly research (Yukl, 1998, pp. 125–127). Serious criticism of the Human Relations School has arisen. Noted British sociologist Charles Perrow (1972) observed that many of the school's observations were given impetus by the time frames in which they occurred. Much of the work of Mayo and Barnard took place in the aftermath of the Great Depression, which may have skewed the results. Some have argued that workers in the Hawthorne plant were delighted to have employment through the Great Depression, and thus productivity went up during Mayo's studies for fear of job loss. Some scholars (Perrow, 1972; Bell, 1973) believe the focus on human relations went only so deep. To cite one example, Barnard's company paid a dividend to stockholders through the Depression, but, when asked by the workers for a 5-cent-per-hour pay raise, Barnard said, in effect, "let them get to hell" (Perrow, 1972). Perrow (1972) and others see the work of the Human Relations School as trite and predicting only the obvious (Bell, 1973).

Whatever one's view of the Human Relations School, it is clear that the impact of the body of literature from the school has been and continues to be a dominant force in American management thought. Much academic research has tested numerous hypotheses related to whether money alone is a sufficient motivator, the relationship of supervisory practices to job success, and the effects of management practice on absenteeism, illness, and job satisfaction (Hertzberg, 1959; Casio, 1998). More often than not, these studies indicate that intangible factors (e.g., recognition) are important—or more important—than tangible factors (i.e., money, chief among them), in increasing worker productivity and satisfaction.

Quantitative & Total Quality Management

The 1940s presented a diametrically opposite approach to the humanism of the preceding three decades. Computer systems and models gave rise to the application of quantitative tools to management decisions. Perhaps the most famous implementation of quantitative applications to corporate success was the use of W. Edwards Deming's work by Japan. Unable to find a market for his ideas in the United States, Deming, an American physicist and mathematician (and the statistician on the Hawthorne studies), took his ideas on Total Quality Management to Japan. He is given much credit for rapidly turning around Japan's quality management processes in a few years (Aldag and Stearns, 1987, p. 57; Walton, 1986, p. 7).

While Deming's work has been given much lip service in the United States, there may be a profound misunderstanding regarding the application of Deming's work. At the core of Deming's method was the application of the mathematical concept of variance to the manufacturing process. Deming believed that the key to improving products was to reduce the variance, i.e., the error rate. If one can reduce variance, quality and productivity go up. Standard performance evaluations and a focus on individual workers were decried by Deming (1986, 1989). Product failures and poor service were the results of poorly built systems,
not deficiencies within employees or their managers, he believed. For example, producing television sets with an error rate of 1 percent, as opposed to an error rate of 10 percent, is the key to increased quality and productivity, according to Deming. It is exactly this process that Japan mastered (Franklin, 1983; Kepner, 1982).

In the United States, the quality movement is often reduced to greater participation efforts or to improving human interaction. Often these attempts to improve human interaction boil down to efforts to improve customer service by enhancing an employee's interpersonal skills. Critics of this type of application of Deming's work call it an attempt to impose "smile technology," a term used by major corporate leaders in Japan to describe American management's penchant for the quick fix or easy answer (Walton, 1986).

The work of Deming continues to influence the thinking of American managers, even though many fail to grasp the fact that it is applicable only where variance can be precisely measured and improved through statistical analysis. For such a process as TQM to be successful, traditional performance evaluation and Management-by-Objectives plans must be set aside. They focus on trite measures of employee behavior and attempt to assign individual blame. The true impetus for improvement comes from the workers. Management's role should be to allow the workers to determine what work needs to be accomplished and how best to accomplish that work (Deming, 1986, 1989). Management provides resources and does not set direction or attempt to measure what management thinks it needs to measure. Traditional American management performance evaluation plans and Management-by-Objectives plans often confuse any employee motion that management can measure with actual productivity, efficiency, or creativity. Nonetheless, such plans are endemic to American management culture and therefore explain why employee empowerment has been so slow to take root in American management practice (Mintzberg, 1994; Kotter, 1982).

Systems Theory

Systems Theory came to fruition in the 1950s. Much of Systems Theory is based on the observations of biologist Ludwig Von Bertalanfly (Aldag and Stearns, 1987, p. 52). He was interested in the relationships among various subsystems forming a complete cycle. Later, Katz and Kahn (1966) elaborated on Von Bertalanfly's theories and applied the concepts of open systems and closed systems to organizations.

The concepts of open and closed systems were useful in the social sciences for establishing classification schemes to study organizational dependencies and environmental exchanges. Open systems rely on exchanges with other systems for survival. In theory, closed systems are self-reliant, producing and consuming everything they need for survival.

Katz and Kahn (1966) made an attempt to keep management theory a serious academic discipline. Their Open Systems Theory attempts to unify the individual, the organization, and the environment. While they made a valiant attempt to establish organizational theory as an academic discipline, their work appears to have found an audience primarily among scholars as opposed to managers.
Contingency Theory

Contingency theory holds that universal principles do not apply to general solutions to individual organizational problems. Each situation has unique characteristics that require managers to diagnose a specific solution for each problem an organization confronts rather than rely on a general approach. Contingency theory merges other theories and approaches. The rise of lawyers and accountants to leadership positions in American industry in recent years gave impetus to this movement. This shift in leadership base focused attention on exploiting for profit the linkages between organizations (Hayes and Abernathy, 1980). In practice, what encumbered the attention of American management in the 1970s was merger mania. Mergers are clearly the domain of lawyers, accountants, and MBA holders from select American universities. There is, however, no evidence that merger practices will work in the long term. In fact, there is compelling evidence that lines of business outside the purview of an organization's core business often lead to management turmoil, financial loss, and a lack of necessary innovation (Hayes and Abernathy, 1980). Thus, mergers today are viewed often from a variety of perspectives, financial and cultural.

Population Ecology Perspective

The Population Ecology Perspective offers a severe critique of management as a career for which one prepares. This body of thought is evidenced in the writings of economist Oliver Williamson (1983). Williamson asserts that the odds of becoming the leader of a large corporation are determined by chance, not ability. He goes on to state that organizational form, which he labels "production function," is far more important than strategy in terms of accounting for positive organizational performance.

Geert Hofstede is quick to point out that Williamson's theories (and those of other American scholars and management practitioners) are unique to the culture in which they are found and may not be applicable to other cultures (Hofstede, 1996, p. 79). There are no such things, according to Hofstede (p. 77), as universal management theories.

Williamson's focus on structure is linked to American management's historical penchant for formalized controls. Hofstede points out that the American company of Booz, Allen and Hamilton was commissioned by the German government in 1973 to review German management practice. The study resulted in a severe critique of the German concept of management, which is less formalized than its American counterpart. To support his assertions, Hofstede points out that the German economy has continuously outperformed the U.S. economy in almost every respect since the report was issued (p. 80).

Hofstede's work raises another important issue. The word "culture" has taken on new meaning. In today's world of increased competition, culture refers to the differences among nations in norms, values, customs, and beliefs that must be understood in order to bring about effective business relationships. For Hofstede, the term is a macro concept in the sense defined above.
A distinction must be made between Hofstede's use of the term culture from the micro use of that word by Edgar Schein. And while Hofstede is reluctant to do so, this distinction may explain Hofstede's criticism (1996) of Schein, a renowned academic and founder of a discipline of management thought that examines the values, norms, customs, and beliefs of organizations to explain mistakes, promote change, and improve performance. Schein views the organization as a psychotherapist views an individual patient. In order to effect change, Schein observes (1990, pp. 109–119), one must change the values, beliefs, customs, and norms that are endemic to an organization and the units within it by replacing them with new values, beliefs, customs, and norms. Such a process is time-consuming and requires a skilled practitioner to implement.

The Focus on Japanese Management—Theory Z

From 1960 to 1990, American managers were preoccupied with Japanese management styles. So dominant was the impact of Japan's industrial success in the 1970s and 1980s that it is rumored that an American MBA student, when presented with the choice of another lecture on Japanese management practice or committing hara-kiri, chose the latter.

The preoccupation with Japan was underscored by the prescriptions presented by Ouchi in his 1981 book, Theory 2: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge. In that work, Ouchi notes that America focuses on short-term employment, individual decision making, and a system of formal controls. In contrast, Japan's focus is on lifetime employment, collective responsibility, and informal controls. Ouchi suggested a modified American plan, which he called Theory Z. Under a Theory Z management style, American managers should focus on long-term employment, individual responsibility, and a mixture of formal and informal controls.

As it turns out, none of the principles of Japan's management practice, such as lifetime employment, were particularly applicable to American management. In recent years, the world economy has shown that Japan's practices cannot insulate Japan from the effects of recession. Moreover, Japan is moving away from commitments to lifetime or long-term employment, something the United States was forced to abandon with rigor in the late 1980s when a recession swept the nation and resulted in numerous instances of corporate downsizing. IBM, for example, was forced to abandon its commitment to a job for life as it reduced its workforce by more than 100,000 employees (Miller, 1993, p. A6).

The movement to copy Japan's management style as a quick-fix method for America's problems highlights the penchant of many American managers to grasp for "cookbook" approaches to complex issues that are deeply embedded in all aspects of one's culture. How does one isolate the decay of America's inner-city schools and the poorer-than-average performance in math and science of American students on various international exams versus students of other large industrial countries (Lapointe, Mead, and Phillips, 1989) from the overall ability of the United States to remain competitive well into the future? The literacy rate of Japan, an extremely homogeneous society, is close to 100 percent. Its family structure remains largely intact. Moreover, there is an emphasis on educational
attainment based on intense competition. These attitudes must be contrasted to
those of the United States, an extremely heterogeneous country, whose literacy
rate is half that of Japan, and whose divorce rate now exceeds 50 percent (John-
son and Packer, 1989). Moreover, in the United States, access to schools and
indeed employment is dictated by many factors other than academic achievement
(Bell, 1973).

Cookbook Approaches:
The State of Modern American Management Theory

The point of the focus on the differences between Japan and the United States is
to highlight a growing problem in American management theory. That problem
is the failure or inability to separate complex issues from cookbook solutions.

It is clear that the focus of American management on Japan underscored the
movement of contemporary management theory from a serious academic disci-
pline to a grasp for the quick fix—a movement away from serious and rigorous
analysis toward recipes and prescriptions. This propensity to draw from recipes
as prescriptions seems vested in American corporate culture. American manage-
ment has often been criticized for its short-term focus (Hayes and Abernathy,
1980) and its rejection of the intuitive process within workers that leads to pro-
ductive and creative outcomes (Mintzberg, 1994). Instead, American manage-
ment has tended to embrace command and control devices such as
Management-By-Objectives and traditional performance plans that measure over
a short term those results management thinks are desirable but which serve pri-
marily to maintain management’s own power base (Deming, 1986; Kotter, 1978,
1982).

It is little wonder that the quick fix has so much appeal to an American man-
gagement focused on, or perhaps obsessed with, measurable short-term results. As
is pointed out below, this focus on developing plans to measure short-term
results became the reason IBM missed the desktop computer revolution (Carroll,
1993).

Moreover, many management consultants have achieved celebrity status
(Drucker, 1950; Peters, 1983; Covey, 1989, 1991; Senge, 1990, 1994; Porter
1980, 1983). Few among them are women, however. One exception is Rosabeth
Moss Kanter, a Harvard faculty member and the first female editor of the Har-
vard Business Review. She has achieved celebrity status based on her writings that
address organizational innovation (1997), international and local competition
(1995), organizational change management (1990, 1984) and a variety of other
topics. As is the case with her male peers, her access to the leaders of America’s
largest corporations has led to a plethora of prescriptions to solve the dilemma
faced by American managers in an increasingly complex world. The legitimate
issue is whether such prescriptions offer real answers for serious problems.

It is almost an anathema to raise the name of Peter Drucker in the celebrity
as opposed to management guru context, but some writers have observed that
the genre of contemporary management theory has been and continues to be
greatly influenced by Drucker. Drucker, perhaps as much as any other organiza-
tional theorist of the past 50 years, embodies the issue of whether or not man-
gement theory is an academic discipline or something else. The fact that
Drucker was denied a chair at Yale University (Mckethwait and Wooldridge, 1996) for not being a "proper academic" reveals the vexing question for the future of management theory: Is management theory a serious body of academic literature, or is it pop psychology based on a series of "quick-fix" prescriptions, and cookbook approaches whose recipes catch on like a fad diet and go out of style with the next trend? In their New York Times article, Mckethwait and Wooldridge point out that Oxford's refusal to establish a separate business school focused on management as an academic discipline was in part based on the fact that one can find on the same bookshelf in a bookstore's business reference section "... heavyweight texts like Michael Porter's Competitive Advantage of Nations... (next to) such poppycock as Make It So: Leadership Lessons From Star Trek The Next Generation, (1996, p. 3). While they conclude that Oxford made a mistake, this writer has a less charitable point of view. Since Porter rose to fame in the 1980s with his works based on serious academic research, he has had few if any rivals. Unfortunately, most modern-day business texts fall in the genre of cookbooks that offer recipes as quick-fix prescriptions.

Let us analyze this issue regarding management as a discipline by briefly reviewing the contributions of Drucker a bit more fully. Born in Vienna in 1910, Peter Drucker authored his first book, The Practice of Management in 1954. That book provided an analysis of successful company practices at Ford Motor Company, Sears-Roebuck and Company and IBM, contrasted with unsuccessful practices. Drucker, the founder of Management-By-Objectives (MBO) and its leading proponent, presents advice in the book on implementing MBO, marketing strategies, organizational structure and decision-making. The book has sold over 200,000 copies since it was published and continues to sell 20,000 copies a year (Boone and Bowen, 1987, p. 186).

Drucker, more than any other management theorist, personifies the modern movement of management thought from a discipline rooted in scholarly research to a collection of practical advice provided "in a lively style" and designed to captivate a wide audience of practitioners (Boone and Bowen, 1987, p. 123). His work can be contrasted to the work of Weber (1905) and Bell (1973) whose focus was to explain the issues underlying certain tendencies in social settings, such as a corporation. Drucker's focus, on the other hand, was to provide a pragmatic approach to solving particular business problems by prescribing a recipe-like solution.

In 1960, Drucker authored The Concept of the Corporation. In that book, he analyzed General Motors, which he labels the most successful company in social history. More importantly, from the standpoint of impact, is the fact that he touts Management-By-Objectives as a prescription for successful management. This development presents an interesting phenomenon. As a result of his access to top officials in America's most successful companies, Drucker can prescribe remedies to business leaders. Most large companies have, as a result of Drucker's work, embraced the concept of Management By Objectives.

Management-By-Objectives has come under careful scrutiny as a result of IBM's failures in the late 1980s. MBO was seen as a central cause of that failure, as Carroll points out in his 1993 Wall Street Journal article, "The Failure of Central Planning at IBM." Carroll argues that IBM placed too much emphasis on
planning, which created a rigid, centralized structure that rewarded planning itself as a business accomplishment at the expense of true innovation.

Henry Mintzberg, the only individual to twice win the Harvard Business Review award for article of the year (for "The Manager's Job: Folklore and Fact" (1972) and "The Fall and Rise of Strategic Planning" (1994)), has questioned the role of MBO-type thinking altogether. He argues that American managers' penchant for analysis at the expense of synthesis may lead to a loss of competitiveness. This is exactly what happened to both General Motors and IBM in the later stages of their histories.

Management, Mintzberg argues, needs to be more intuitive and less structured. He recognizes that a command and control structure is a hallmark of the American way of doing things. Managers cannot get their arms around intuition, but they can revel in the good feelings they have when they see and touch a nicely laid-out MBO plan. It is exactly this need for something tangible that Drucker awakened in the American manager, and as a result he became an American icon of folk hero status in business circles.

Many other American writers of organizational theory have sought to emulate Drucker's success. A few examples will suffice to make the point. In 1983, Peters and Waterman, two consultants from America's most successful high-end corporate consulting firm, McKinsey and Company, wrote In Search of Excellence, which became an international bestseller. It was read in boardrooms throughout America and accepted as gospel. Peters obtained a syndicated column and was a featured speaker on television and at Fortune 500 companies. As it turned out, most of the companies Peters and Waterman covered in the book were in serious trouble within five years of the book's writing, especially IBM. Peters and Waterman embraced IBM's management styles and practices in the same way that Drucker embraced many of General Motors' practices some 30 years earlier.

As was the case with Drucker, it was their access to corporate executives and lively style that paved the way to the bestseller list. The reader should not make the conceptual leap that writing for popular use is not a noble end and that this author frowns on popular success in the market place. Rather, the question is to what end was the work designed—scholarship that leads to gains by business readers or popular appeal based on anecdotal evidence or personal interviews of business leaders whose views may or may not be transferable from one setting to another but whose names generate market interest in book purchases?

In Search of Excellence prescribes a series of steps for companies to follow: staying close to customers to learn their preferences; being hands-on in order to stay in touch with employee roles (i.e., "management by wandering around," p. 296); remaining with the business the company knows best (i.e., "stick to the knitting," p. 292); and fostering an inclusive climate for all employees. The book's format—easy to read with plenty of pizzazz—became the benchmark for how to relay management theory to practitioners.

The overriding problem with a prescriptive approach is that the "cure" may not be applicable to a specific type of disease. IBM, for instance, dominated by a centralized management structure, continued to stick to the mainframe market it knew best, and missed in very large part the desktop revolution. It has yet to
recover from that mistake. Moreover, the U.S. recession of the late 1980s downsized exactly that class of employees whose management roles (and subsequent employee output) were to be greatly enhanced by “wandering around.” Technology changed the economics of scale associated with various unnecessary levels of management; accordingly, the prescription to wander around was sacrificed in the wake of a difficult to foresee but nonetheless monumental trend toward individual technological empowerment and its associated productivity gains.

A few years after *In Search of Excellence, Service America* (1985) arrived. Authored by Karl Albrecht and Ron Zemke, *Service America* looks at the key to service among successful companies and prescribes how the individual employee can make a difference. Staff departments must see those they serve as internal customers, while every employee must recognize the “moment of truth” where the employee’s interaction with a customer becomes the company to that customer, the authors assert. While the book details the massive amount of money spent by companies such as Scandinavian Air to improve service through technological means, many American companies adopted the less important but quicker to implement aspects of customer service such as customer service training programs.

In the view of the author (Frank, 1994), the focus on service in terms of customer relations training and finding the right people for the job caught on because it was an objective management could meet. As the author observed in 1994, one large financial institution implemented a customer service improvement program even though that institution was already in the top 2 percent of companies providing a similar service. The customer service training issue is raised not to debate the value of good customer service; rather, it is intended to highlight the fact that an easy-to-measure program was implemented while issues that are more serious and difficult to assess, such as a better method for that institution to ensure a sound loan portfolio, did not receive attention. The institution went bankrupt in 1993 as a result of its poor loan portfolio.

After being ignored by management in the United States, Deming’s work came to their attention in the 1970s as a result of its success in helping to revitalize Japan’s economy. However, American practitioners did not utilize Deming’s work in the same way Japan used his methods and ideas. American managers sought to capitalize on Deming’s ideas in the same way that they grasped the prescriptions of Drucker, Peters and Waterman, and Albercht and Zemke. The shortcut they sought was to implement Deming’s ideas, which centered around the mathematical concept of the value of measurement of statistical variance in products and systems where such measurement is precisely known (e.g., parts manufacturing). The work of many other consultants who built on Deming’s ideas in a manner that appealed to American managers by simplification of his statistical processes and avoidance of the necessity to give up such command and control devices as MBO caught on in the United States. Philip Crosby, author of *Quality Is Free* (1980), exemplifies the type of approach that has appeal to American managers. He is a management consultant who offers a step-by-step approach to solve quality problems. The approach is general in nature and appears to be applicable to a variety of corporate situations. American managers were attract-
ed to this seeming panacea, and many failed to realize what Deming pointed out so clearly; mainly that real quality improvement is limited to those systems where variance (in the mathematical sense discussed previously) can be accurately obtained, measured, and then reduced.

In 1993, Michael Hammer and James Champy wrote *Reengineering the Corporation*. American managers embraced the book, which provided yet another cookbook approach to solving management problems in corporate America. Hammer and Champy do present some interesting and worthwhile notions, however. Foremost among them is the idea that Adam Smith’s concept of division and specialization in labor as presented in his *An Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations* (1776) is no longer applicable. Modern technology makes it possible to radically redesign today’s corporations. Such redesign must be driven from the top down and therefore is in stark contrast to the decades of work invested by American managers in Total Quality Management, a bottom-to-top concept that in theory empowers the lowest-level worker. This explains why Hammer (1996) notes that 75 percent of reengineering efforts fail. Many companies, based on the prescriptions found in the literature, implement both approaches simultaneously, only to be frustrated by the ensuing failure of each.

It is vastly more important to realize that many problems are inherently complex than it is to seek ready-made solutions through the most recently popular quick fix. It seems to this writer that much of contemporary management literature has been instrumental in perpetuating the belief that following simple formulas will provide meaningful results for the long term. Ken Blanchard’s *One-Minute Manager* books (1982, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1990) are a case in point. In his books, Blanchard gives advice to managers on one-minute praisings, one-minute reprimands, one-minute feedback, one-minute goal setting, and the like. No doubt the issues that underlie Blanchard’s prescriptions are serious academic and practical concerns rooted in the field of psychology. These books, however, which take very little time to read, became very popular in boardrooms and with chief executive officers throughout the nation based not on the strong but unrevealed scholarship that underlies the basic principles, but based on the fact that Blanchard clearly knew his market. He knew that easy-to-adopt quick fixes would appeal to many American managers.

Steven Covey has clearly become the Ken Blanchard of the 1990s. Today, prescriptions for management are outlined in his two most widely known works, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (1989) and *Principle-Centered Leadership* (1990). Covey now presides over a vast training network of disciples, who teach his program to numerous corporations and individuals. The principles of his first book provide the 7 steps to become a highly effective manager (be proactive, keep the end point in mind, put first things first, think win-win, first understand then be understood, be synergistic, self-renew). The second book provides the ingredients for successful leadership (continually learning, service oriented, energetic, trustful, adventurous, synergistic and self-renewing). The value of works such as those written by Covey and Blanchard is ultimately, as is “beauty,” in the eyes of the beholder.
Senge's *The Fifth Discipline* (1990), which espouses the need for organizations to seek a method for continuous learning, has been enhanced with a field book (1994) to help managers build a learning organization through applying systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning throughout the organization. Using a case-based approach, Senge is convinced that his principals unlock the secret to a successful organization.

It is more difficult to classify the contribution of some contemporary management theorists. Since Drucker, no writer in the field of American management had the influence of Harvard's Michael Porter. It would be difficult to find any American management textbook written in the past 20 years that does not mention the impact and scope of Porter's theories. In *Competitive Strategy* (1980), Porter identifies five industry forces that managers must consider in their development of market strategies. The five forces are: (1) the threat of new entrants into the market, (2) the bargaining power of customers in the industry, (3) the bargaining power of suppliers in the industry, (4) the threat of substitute products or services entering the market, and (5) the price competition or other forms of rivalry among existing firms in the industry or market.

This model has proved useful to managers in understanding the various difficulties their products and services might encounter in their life cycles. Porter also envisions the importance of his model in a global economy. He pursues his theme of global competition in his 1985 book *Competitive Advantage*, where he notes that companies must select a strategy of cost leadership, which is contingent upon large market share, or a strategy of differentiation, which pursues a small market share but has the advantage. It is difficult to determine at this point in the history of American management thought whether Porter's models have widespread appeal because they actually increase competitive advantage or because they are easy to understand and apply.

If the quick-fix approach to complex issues was not bad enough in and of itself, the movement has other insidious effects when coupled with American management's penchant to measure all aspects of individual performance. Leslie Glick (1994), in his study of mid-career business graduate students, found that such students became very upset when they were asked to solve novel problems unrelated to those found in the course text or other assigned readings. This emotional distress continued, even though the feedback a student received on such assignments did not count in the course grade (p. 356). Clearly, students only wanted to be measured in situations where they felt comfortable directly applying established formulas or for which there were clearly established standards, which is how American management trains, measures and rewards its workers. There is great cause for alarm in this finding for academics and practitioners alike. What are the implications for American management, or for that matter a competitive America, if it produces and rewards a management class that seeks pat answers to novel situations?

CONCLUSION

American management thought has evolved from its origins in serious academic and scholarly research to today's ready-made formulas that meet the appetite (if
not the needs) of modern American management. Since the United States remains the world's most advanced industrial nation, it is difficult to envision how today's corporations will function and be structured 10 years hence, with or without the input of additional prescriptions, although more are certain to come.

As some writers cogently argue, an organization may pass through a life cycle that is far more contingent upon natural evolution than the effects of one particular strategy or another at any particular point in time. Simply put, organizational growth and change may be more evolutionary than revolutionary (Greiner, 1972). In that case, the future of organizations is unknowable, and any prescriptions or practices to ensure future success are, at best, educated guesswork.

Therefore, this chapter closes with the state of American management thought in a quandary. Until time reveals the winning approach, one is forced to sift among serious attempts at scholarship and management practice enhancement, à la Porter's and Hamner's contributions, along with the trite observations of many writers who offer ready-made remedies for the ailments of American management practice.

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