

Call for communications

1st day of research on the Theory of Constraints

Theory of Constraints and managerial practices

on the topic

"Focus on the weak link, a managerial innovation"

**on 27 March 2014
in Strasbourg**

The EM Strasbourg and the association TOC France are holding a research day open to practitioners and lecturers/researchers interested in the Theory of Constraints.

The Theory of Constraints (frequently abbreviated to TOC) is the term dreamed up by Eliyahu Goldratt, its inventor, to describe all the concepts making up its understanding of organisations, the treatment of the complex problems they encounter and their management. The Theory of Constraints is disseminated internationally both from a managerial point of view and an academic point of view and a large number of works have been published in well-known magazines; hence, the study conducted by Mabin and Balderstone in 1999 identified more than 350 academic articles, more than 100 case studies and more than 40 books on the TOC world-wide between 1986 and 1999.

The following is the definition of the TOC in the TOCICO dictionary (Theory of Constraints International Certification Organization): "a holistic management philosophy by Dr. Eliyahu M. Goldratt based on a principle: complex systems have an inherent simplicity. In other words, that at any given time, a very small number of variables (maybe just one called a constraint) limits a system's capacity to generate more units in its objective; even for a very complex system made up of thousands of persons and pieces of equipment."

Various domains in management sciences (Strategy, Production Management, Human Resources Management, Marketing, Project Management, Management Control, etc.) use the TOC, and it has developed a large number of management tools within many organisations: small, medium and large enterprises, public defence organisations, health-care systems, educational systems and non-governmental organisations.

The development of the management system called "Theory of Constraints (TOC)" started with the introduction of the planning software OPT (Optimized Production Technology) in 1979 (Goldratt & Cox, 1984). Academic literature and the trade press then examine the TOC technical applications in a variety of fields of application: project management (Goldratt, 1997; Leach, 1999), marketing and sales (Gardiner, 1993; Goldratt, 1994), supply chain management (Rahman, 2002; Watson & Polito, 2003), the process of continuous improvement (Schrage and Ronen, 1991; Atwater and Chakravorty, 1995), as well as in a variety of production environments (Jacobs, 1983).

The objectives of the first day of research into the Theory of Constraints held in EM Strasbourg with the laboratory HuManiSis to propose an inventory and to discuss managerial practices stemming from work carried out with the Theory of Constraints. Proposed contributions may deal with the following questions in particular (indicative and non-exhaustive list):

- In a historical perspective: what was the source of the constraint concept, what are the major managerial innovations specific to the various fields of management science?
- What role do the various institutions, organisations or actors play in disseminating the Theory of Constraints?
- What is the Theory of Constraints so little disseminated in France? Are there French specific features concerning major corporations and SMEs?
- Theory of Constraints: managerial trend or practice?
- Does the Theory of Constraints require specific management and if so, which?
- What is the effect of implementing the Theory of Constraints on companies' economic and financial performance? Is it greater than what is obtained with other types of innovation?
- The Theory of Constraints and the managerial practices in the various fields of management science (Strategy, Production Management, Resources Management, Marketing, Project Management, Management Control, Marketing, Change Management, etc.)

Dissemination

The communications will be produced in the traditional form of paper documents.

The best articles will be published by a scientific publication.

Submission standards

The articles may be written either in French or in English. They will have a maximum length of 12 to 15 pages (including the summary/abstract and bibliography), in single spacing. They will be accompanied by a brief summary in French and in English of a maximum of 400 characters, as well as key words for each summary (title also translated).

The name of the author and a short presentation of him/her, to what institution he/she belongs, his/her e-mail and full addresses must appear on the cover page only. The articles must not have any appendices: tables, diagrams, pictures and other additions (in black and white) are inserted in the text. The parts will be simply numbered: 1., 1.1., 1.1.1., etc.

The texts should be sent in Word format to the following address:

sylvie.gauthier@em-strasbourg.eu

Timetable

- **30 November 2013**: submission of V1 papers
- **15 January 2014**: opinions of the scientific committee sent to the authors
- **1st March 2014**: latest date for receiving the final text

For any request for information, you may contact the organisers by e-mail at:

karine.bouvier@em-strasbourg.eu

Venue

The research day will be held at EM Strasbourg
61, Avenue de la Forêt Noire, F-67085 Strasbourg Cedex.

Additional information will be gradually available on the EM Strasbourg Web site

<http://www.em-strasbourg.eu>