

H. Wille, K. Gewalt and H. D. Weber, Netzplantechnik. Methoden zur Planung und Überwachung von Projekten. Band I: Zeitplanung. R. Oldenbourg, Munich-Vienna 1966; 168 pp., price DM 40, -

This is the first volume of a German book on network planning methods for project planning and control. It is exclusively concerned with time-planning, whereas the second volume will deal with the additional aspects of capacity and costs. The discussion is restricted to well-known methods such as C. P. M. and PERT, with additional information on the 'Metra Potential Method' (M. P. M.), developed in France by ROY et al. In this method, instead of events, the nodes represent activities of given or expected duration. The arcs between the nodes are connected here with time intervals, presented as additional requirements with respect to starting and completion times of related activities. The material is presented in three rather disconnected parts: description of methods, data processing questions, and mathematical foundations. The latter are related to the concept of potentials on a graph, as discussed by ROY. The reader for which this third part is intended, if not preferring the original presentation of the theory, will have some difficulty to connect it with the first part. In fact, this first part gives a description of the methods, which is rather unsatisfactory, since it lacks any clear definition. The purpose of the authors to avoid the use of formulae here is carried too far, and the practical reader, for which this part is intended, is left with a poorly explained set of verbal rules. The discussion of PERT, for example, is much too simple, which obscures its essential difference with C. P. M. The second part presents a lengthy discussion of the problems of data processing involved in the use of the methods. This section seems to be most satisfactory part of the book, in which some experience from practice has been included.

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