Fredrick winslow taylor essay sample

Fredrick Winslow Taylor is often called ‘ The Father of Scientific Management’ because he sought to improve industrial efficiency. He was an intellectual leader whose ideas had a great impact in the Progressive Era.

Taylor thought that by analyzing work, the “ One Best Way” to do it would be found. He is most remembered for developing the time and motion study. He would break a job into its component parts and measure each to the hundredth of a minute. One of his most famous studies involved shovels. He noticed that workers used the same shovel for all materials. He determined that the most effective load was 21½ lb, and found or designed shovels that for each material would scoop up that amount. He was generally unsuccessful in getting his concepts applied and was dismissed from Bethlehem Steel. It was largely through the efforts of his disciples (most notably H. L. Gantt) that industry came to implement his ideas. Neverthless, the book he wrote after parting company with Bethlehem Steel, *Shop Management* , sold well.

Taylor believed that the industrial management of his day was amateurish, that management could be formulated as an academic discipline, and that the best results would come from the partnership between a trained and qualified management and a cooperative and innovative workforce. Each side needed the other, and there was no need for trade unions.

Louis Brandeis, who was influenced by Taylor’s writing, coined the term scientific management in the course of his argument for the Eastern Rate Case, which Taylor used in the title of his monograph *The Principles of Scientific Management,* published in 1911. His approach is also often

referred to, as *Taylor's Principles* , or frequently disparagingly, as *Taylorism* . Taylor's scientific management consisted of four principles:

1. Replace rule-of-thumb work methods with methods based on a scientific study of the tasks.
2. Scientifically select, train, and develop each employee rather than passively leaving them to train themselves.
3. Cooperate with the workers to ensure that the scientifically developed methods are being followed.
4. Divide work nearly equally between managers and workers, so that the managers apply scientific management principles to planning the work and the workers actually perform the tasks

Taylor's influence

United States

Taylor had a profound influence in United States. A lot of noted and leading industrialists and experts on the subject matter have adopted or used Taylorism. Carl Barth helped Taylor to develop speed-and-feed-calculating slide rules to a previously unknown level of usefulness. Similar aids are still used in machine shops today. Barth became an early consultant on scientific management and later taught at Harvard. H. L. Gantt developed the Gantt chart, a visual aid for scheduling tasks and displaying the flow of work. Harrington Emerson introduced scientific management to the railroad industry, and proposed the dichotomy of *staff* versus *line* employees, with the former advising the latter. Morris Cooke adapted scientific management to educational and municipal organizations. Hugo Münsterberg created

industrial psychology. Lillian Gilbreth introduced psychology to management studies.

Frank Gilbreth (husband of Lillian) discovered scientific management while working in the construction industry, eventually developing motion studies independently of Taylor. These logically complemented Taylor's time studies, as time and motion are two sides of the efficiency improvement coin. The two fields eventually became time and motion study. Harvard University, one of the first American universities to offer a graduate degree in business management in 1908, based its first-year curriculum on Taylor's scientific management. Harlow S. Person, as dean of Dartmouth's Amos Tuck School of Administration and Finance, promoted the teaching of scientific management. James O. McKinsey, professor of accounting at the University of Chicago and founder of the consulting firm bearing his name, advocated budgets as a means of assuring accountability and of measuring performance. His influence did not stop with USA but also extended to other countries.

France

In France, Le Chatelier translated Taylor's work and introduced scientific management throughout government owned plants during World War I. This influenced the French theorist Henri Fayol, whose 1916 *Administration Industrielle et Générale* emphasized organizational structure in management.

Switzerland

In Switzerland, the American Edward Albert Filene established the International Management Institute to spread information about management techniques.

USSR

In the USSR, Lenin was very impressed by Taylorism, which he and Stalin sought to incorporate into Soviet manufacturing. Taylorism and the mass production methods of Henry Ford thus became highly influential during the early years of the Soviet Union.

Taylor and his theories are also referenced (and put to practice) in the 1921 dystopian novel *We* by Yevgeny Zamyatin.

How did Taylorism affect the industry?

Taylorism began to change how organizations functioned. Before this time, organizations were usually setup in homes or in formal businesses where the workspaces were open. There were no barriers to communication and ideas could flow freely among employees. Taylorism abruptly changed this feature of organizations. He introduced and emphasized the use of a lot of concepts like Heirarchical leadership , Splitting the locations for manufacturing and office work, Offices were recommended to be compartmentalized, Work had to be specialized with divisional labor, Office features had to be used as a symbol of status , The industry had to be product/outcome focused – not customer focused , Demand must exceed supply, Manufacturing and industrial companies were the main company types. Taylorism flourished in

the progressive ra but lost significance later as the markets and their working changed.

Let us take an example of a automobile company to get a clear idea of his principles and their practical use. As early as 1908, Henry Ford saw the advantages of Taylor’s theories for the automobile industry. The new concept of series production resulted in the Model T, a no-frills car available in just one version that was within the means of a broad middle class. The manufacturing concept, combined with smart marketing—Ford developed the first consumer loans—was a big success. Some 15 million Model Ts were produced by 1927. With the rise of Fordism, Taylorized production developed spectacularly.

Starting in 1974, all areas of industry were affected by the recession. The Ford model reached its limits in automobile and other types of manufacturing. Western carmakers had to find new production methods as the Japanese had, in response to new consumption patterns. That saw the decline of Taylorism. Today, manufacturers focus on being better attuned to demand and changing market requirements. PSA Peugeot Citroën has based its manufacturing strategy and organization on quality, compliance with cost and deadline targets and flexibility in order to produce a growing number of increasingly diverse models. This system empowers workers, who no longer simply execute tasks. In changing its objectives, the shop floor has also changed its outlook.

To be sure, Taylorism transformed industrial production, but it also had a dark side: Taylorism treated people as unthinking cogs in a machine. By

necessity, these people had to accept a social system based on a coercive pattern of dominance and subordinance and centralized control from the top. Every action and every decision made in the organization was spelled out in the name of efficiency. This made it irrelevant to the current market conditions and other theories were developed which were well-suited for the present-day requirements.

Impact of Taylorism in 1990s

The impact of Taylorism decreased substantially in the 1990s due to the changing work-culture and mind-set of the people driving the industries. However, it lead to the emergence of a lot of new techniques and methodologies.

Taylorism was an important factor in the development of what most observers have held to be a uniquely indigenous Japanese system of organization and management, and that late Taylorism may have been the bridge to Total Quality Management (TQM) in the post-war period.

At the end of the 1980s the Swedish engineering industry faced a severe crisis. High inflation and high interest rates, in combination with low productivity growth, forced Swedish manufacturers to

take action for increased competitive advantage. In order to find possible development paths the government supported a lot of research that aimed at identifying work organizational changes that

would entail significant productivity improvements. Among the better known publications of this time resulting from these research efforts are two reports from the productivity delegation

(Broström, 1991; Eklund & Westerberg, 1991). The core message was rather simple and straightforward. Swedish manufacturers must adopt the principles of lean manufacturing. Furthermore, this change process has to be characterized by an abandonment of Taylor's principles of scientific management in favour of vertical and horizontal integration of work tasks. The wave of

rationalizations that were undertaken later on during the 1990s seemed to follow this advice. Many manufacturing plants met this work organizational change with a ' white-collarization' of blue-collar work. ABB's world-renowned customer focus program T-50 is a good example. The rationalizations have had effect and the negative trends of the 1980s have been broken. Most importantly, we have witnessed steady growth in productivity since the mid 1990s.

1990s saw the need to revive the classical functions of industrial engineers. Taylorism contradicted everything connected with the concepts of new forms of work and motivation. Many companies atarted using concepts such as NW&M as a strategic focus for their restructuring. In these circumstances, it was not possible to use Taylorism. Hence, most automobile companies including Ford, had to change their strategies and they had to move away from Taylorism.

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