

Learning curve theory



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Learning Curve Theory based on three assumptions:

1. The amount of time required to complete a given task or service will be less each time the task is undertaken.
2. The unit time will decrease at a decreasing rate.
3. The reduction in time will follow a predictable pattern.

Individual Learning (autonomous) workers perform tasks more proficiently; tendency for performance improvement to "plateau"; occurs naturally

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90/PAGE Order Now Organizational Learning (exogenous) new "production" methods and tools; improved service design from the standpoint of ease of "production"; layout; automation; administrative changes Interruptions in the learning curve (Re-learning) occur when:

- (i) new services are introduced
- (ii) the design of the process is changed
- (iii) intermittent "production" occurs for the same service

Plateauing typically has two phases:

- (i) initial or start-phase representing the early manufacturing experience with the service
- (ii) the steady state phase representing the point at which learning is minimal

Has been observed with a much greater frequency in machine-intensive (as opposed to labor-intensive) production environments