

## **WORK STUDY**

Work study can be defined as "those techniques which are used in the examination of human work in all its contexts and which lead to the systematic investigation of all the factors which affect the efficiency and the economy of the situation which is being reviewed in order to effect an improvement".

Therefore, this technique is concerned with the three broad factors of production, ie. land, labour and capital, working in combination. The effectiveness of a firm depends upon the way in which the three factors are organised and used.

Performance can be increased by either improving the processes of manufacture or by developing new and more suitable machines and equipment. The research for this usually takes a long time and it is called Process Study. Considerable expenditure is often required, and it is really part of Research and Development. However, it is linked with Work Study and in practice there is no clear demarcation line between the two.

Work Study can bring about speedy improvements with the outlay of little capital expenditure. It is needed because it:

- ❑ Leads to savings in production costs and makes more effective use of human effort.
- ❑ Provides information and reveals inefficiency.
- ❑ Improves conditions, methods and layout.
- ❑ Ensures a steady flow of material and an equal reward for the same skill and effort.

The techniques are applicable to all industrial and commercial activities, although the terms "organisation and methods" are more generally used when the study of clerical procedures is undertaken. To put it more simply, the objects of Work Study are to find out:

- ❑ Exactly what has to be done
- ❑ The best way of doing it

- ❑ How to remove impediments to production by the best possible method.
- ❑ The equipment, conditions and methods which would improve the job.
- ❑ The effect of existing methods, conditions and equipment on the operator.
- ❑ The effect of modifications, and the time to be taken under normal conditions by an operator.

Many people think of Work Study as being concerned solely with stop watches and incentive schemes. Stop watches are one aspect of Work Study, that is Time Study, and incentive schemes can be derived from Work Study, but Work Study does not set out to establish incentive schemes.

Another idea is that Work Study can be applied by large firms and factories, where mass production is practised. But does not the "one man band" operation also use it? Consider the following:

- ❑ The car repairer assessing the work which is involved in repairing a damaged vehicle.
- ❑ The interior decorator who assesses the time and materials to be used in decorating a house.

**The chef assessing the work and staff involved in producing a banquet meal.**

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