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Implementing the Gantt chart in Europe and Britain: the contributions of Wallace Clark

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Abstract

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to trace the European and British activities of Wallace Clark and his consulting firm with public sector agencies and private firms implement Henry L. Gantt’s chart concept.

Design/methodology/approach

Archival records and secondary sources in English and French.

Findings

Developed to meet the shipbuilding and use needs for the Great War (World War I), the Gantt chart was disseminated through the work of Wallace Clark during the 1930s in numerous public sector and private organizations in 12 nations. The Gantt concept was applied in a variety of industries and firms using batch, continuous processing and/or sub-assembly lines in mass production. Traditional scientific management techniques were expanded for general management, such as financial requirement through budgetary control. Clark and his consulting firm were responsible for implementing a managerial tool, the Gantt chart, in an international setting.

Research limitations/implications

Some firms with which Clark consulted could not be identified because the original records of the Wallace Clark Company were disposed of by New York University archival



This is the first study of the diffusion of a managerial tool, developed in America by Henry L. Gantt, into Europe and Britain through the contributions of Wallace Clark.

Keywords

- Scientific management
- Management consulting
- Budgetary control
- Gantt chart
- Henry L. Gantt
- Wallace Clark

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