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# About Structure and Approach

*Contemporary Management*, as seen in the Table of Contents, is different from other traditional management texts that take a more sequential approach. This book still covers all the same core issues as other introductory management texts, but it places topics within a broader and more realistic context. It takes the view that it is not possible to clearly delineate between the management functions as Fayol's framework (planning, leading, organising and controlling) would suggest, and thus provides a far more integrative approach with a critical perspective. After all, managers are people working within an organisational context and the complexity of such situation needs to be recognised.

Part 1 starts with the 'evolution of management thought' rather than 'historical background', which suggests there is little or no connection with the present and the past. This theme 'evolution versus revolution' recurs throughout the book and culminates with the final chapter challenging the notion of 'fads and fashions'. Students are encouraged to ask the pertinent question: Is management different today from yesterday? What are the similarities and/or the differences?

The complexity of management needs to have a context and Part 2 of the book presents the diverse sources of influence on managerial decision making, both internal and external. It is presented early in the text so students understand that there are no simple answers nor is there an uncomplicated checklist approach to management. The task of managers is covered in Parts 3 and 4: managing people as well as managing within organisations. This approach focuses on the relationships that managers need to develop as well as the processes in which they need be skilled. It becomes quite evident that management is about working within an organisation consisting of people with varied incentives, interests and abilities.

Just as there is no 'one best way' of managing, nor is there a prescriptive framework to learning about management. This book attempts to present an alternative approach which is far more realistic and practical.

