Quantitative methods and tools are often taught in a simple context. Reality is usually more difficult. The real World is not so easily reduced to a point where such models are useful. This book describes a framework where such models can be elaborated to a point where they are useful. It highlights a number of settings where these tools can be directly applied.

**Conventional models are too simple**
Real problems that most decision makers face are complicated. These situations do not easily fit the simple models provided in most text books. Quantitative models usually rely on a set of simple assumptions. These may not completely reflect reality which in turn reduces the benefits of using the models. As a result of these factors, the effort required to build too simple a model is not justified and they fall from use.

**The book is a set of ‘tales’**
This book provides a set of tutorials, presented as ‘tales’ or case studies. Each tale is in a realistic setting. Each shows how to take the basic models, decision trees and probability models, and apply them to the particular situation. The case studies range from inventory models to strategic planning. They cover problems relating to tendering, safety and portfolio management. The key theme in all the ‘tales’ is the degree of uncertainty and how to model it.

Each case begins with a simple model of a problem. It then explores the situation in more depth until a realistic picture of the situation has emerged. The cases also build on the content of each other so that there is little repetition through the book beyond the basic key principles.

**A simple problem made real**
The first tale in the book describes a simple order quantity decision. This tale is typical of the whole book. In the tale a common situation, often seen as a simple problem, is set out. When fully explored an interesting and unexpected result emerges. In this example the ‘economic order quantity’ model is quickly dealt with, and a more integrated supply chain approach examined. The outcome is a model that accounts for escalating costs, as well as risk areas that simpler techniques may miss.

**The book requires careful study**
Application of the small set of techniques presented in this book would provide organisations with greater confidence in managing uncertain situations. The 498 page book requires quite careful study and is not an easy or quick read. It is of use as the foundation for those who wish to improve decision processes. It also provides an in depth teaching aid. It is packed with practical uses for decision trees and associated modelling approaches.

Despite its title, the book is more about managing uncertainty than project management. What it contains is of great relevance to all project managers, but it has an important message for all managers.

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