

Preface

Textbook and case studies in Logistics – two parts of one idea

Within the last two years, the two books *Logistik* by Gleißner/Femerling and *Fallstudien Logistik* by Gleißner/Möller were published. They represent a basic structure of a textbook complemented by a set of related case studies. Based on their own experience from teaching, the authors decided to produce English editions of these two books to support teaching situations where a direct translation of the original German text could be useful.

With the textbook on *Logistics* by Gleißner/Femerling, the foundation for a solid step into the subject matter is laid. Within the complementary part on *Case Studies in Logistics* by Gleißner/Möller, the fundamental logistics methods and instruments described in the textbook are further discussed and applied.

The contents of the books should be seen from the following perspective. The chapters contained in the textbook deliver the basic knowledge pertaining to the central themes addressed in the case studies book. Within the central themes, various sub-topics are identified, developed for the application concepts and subsequently presented in the form of case studies. The multitude of logistics tasks requires the inclusion of supplementary content or methodological prerequisites, which are provided at the appropriate places. This additional information is essential for the completion of the case studies and enriches the topics presented in the fundamental work.

Practical applicability is the primary distinguishing feature of the case studies contained in this book. The focus lies on the conceptual application of theory to real problems rather than on the expansion of the theoretical knowledge itself. Thus, through the design of the case studies, a link is forged to tasks from everyday working life. The case studies are based entirely on real business problems. For the sake of objectivity in the reading and completion of the case studies, company names and other references have been changed.

Didactics und Methodology

Working with the case studies requires basic knowledge; familiarity with the textbook is necessary. Thus, each case study represents a further test of this accumulated knowledge. Additionally, the introduced application concepts expand the participant's methodological knowledge. While a textbook cannot do justice to all individual requirements, case studies offer the opportunity to delve into the application of methodology. Ultimately, the collaborative processing of a case by a student group encour-



Preface

rages open discussion of results as well as a reflection of one's own findings, thereby promoting the integration of new ideas and perspectives.

This approach results in a considerable enrichment of the knowledge and skills of budding logistics managers in terms of content, methodology and communication. It should be stated that a vast range of possible solutions for the case studies exists; there is no single unequivocal solution.

This book emerged from a lecture series which the authors, in practice-oriented teaching, have offered jointly and developed progressively. In this context, we would like to express our gratitude to the students who worked on the case studies and whose constructive criticism has contributed to this book's clarity and practicability.

We also extend our thanks to the editorial team, consisting of Deborah Blecken, Dominic Nitsche and Matthew Stinson, who put the finishing touches on this book with constant and systematic precision. In particular, we thank Matthew Stinson for producing the English edition as a direct translation from the original book. Finally, we would like to extend our gratitude to Renate Weißhaar and Ralph Kauffman for useful tips and advice concerning the finalization of the German and English versions of the text, respectively.

Pforzheim, November 2010

Harald Gleißner and Klaus Möller