

# Essay Contest

## What Lessons Can History Provide to Companies and Managers Currently Coping with the Impact of COVID-19?

### Essay Contest Question

*During crises, managers have special responsibilities to stakeholders. COVID-19 is clearly a major crisis. What lessons for today's managers can we learn from studying how managers in the past responded to previous crises such as epidemics and pandemics as well as wars and natural disasters?*

### Contest Rules

1. **DEADLINE:** All essays must be received by Tuesday 21 April by 11pm EST (New York time). The essays must be submitted before the deadline to [contest@historylessonscovid.org](mailto:contest@historylessonscovid.org)
2. **TERMS:**
  - a. Participants are free to base their essays on either primary sources, secondary sources, or a mixture of the two but they must not break local self-isolation/social distancing guidelines in the course of preparing their essays. No going to the library!!
  - b. By submitting your essay, you declare that you are the author, is based on accurate historical data, and that you give us your consent to publish the essay.
3. **FORMAT:**
  - a. Essays must be fully referenced according to a single consistent format such as APA or Chicago footnotes and should be between 4 and 5 pages (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font) not including list of references at the end.
  - b. APA format and should be between 4 and 5 pages (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font) not including list of references at the end.
  - c. We encourage authors to **hyperlink** to cited sources whenever possible.
  - d. Each essay must begin with a one-paragraph practitioner summary that gives clear advice to managers.
  - e. All submitted essays must be in English.
  - f. Essays can summarise your own previously published research, and can draw on the existing secondary literature, or can be based on primary source you start doing now.
4. **ADJUDICATION:** The submissions will be judged by jurors drawn from the Contest's Scientific Committee, comprised of distinguished business historians who have relevant expertise and who have, in the past, made historical research findings relevant to managers (see below for the list of potential jurors.) The Committee's findings will be final.

5. PRIZES: The prize for the best essay is \$500 U.S. The prize for the second best essay is £200.
6. CRITERIA: In judging the essays, we will give equal weighting to two criteria: the utility of managers of the recommendations you provide based on your historical research and the reliability of your historical research findings. Your conclusions about what worked for managers in the past will be more convincing to the jury if they are based on solid historical research and analysis rather than a very limited and cursory review of a couple of sources.

## **Acknowledgement**

The Prize for the best essay of 500USD has been generously donated by Professor Dimitry Anastakis, L.R. Wilson/R.J. Currie Chair in Canadian Business History at the Rotman School and the Department of History at the University of Toronto.

The Prize for the second-best essay of 200GBP has been generously provided by Dr Nicholas Wong, of Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University.

Many thanks to the leadership and IT staff Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte for hosting the website associated with this conference.

## **Other Notes**

All essays deemed by this jury to be of sufficient quality will be published online at <http://www.historylessonscovid.org/> under a Creative Commons 4.0 licence. The essays will contain a disclaimer saying they have not gone through peer review and should not be construed as investment advice for individuals.

Essays must be signed with the real names of the author or authors.

The contest organisers reserve the right to *lightly* edit essays for style and English expression prior to their publication on the website. We do not expect contestants who are not native speakers to submit essays that are linguistically perfect in all respects, especially as you are working under a tight deadline. However, we do not have the resources to engage in extensive editing so please ensure your writing is reasonably clear before you submit.

The contest is open to everyone: academics, students (graduate, MBA, undergraduates), practitioners, independent scholars.

We define history as the study of episodes in the past. You are free, therefore, to distil lessons for today's managers from relatively recent historical events (such as the SARS outbreak, the 2011 earthquake the disrupted supply chains in Japan) as well as more distant ones, such as Hong Kong Flu in 1968, [Asian Flu pandemic in 1957](#), and Spanish Flu in 1918. If you can derive lessons for today's managers from even earlier epidemics, such as the cholera epidemics of the nineteenth century or even the Black Death, go for it. However, we expect that the findings presented in the essays will be derived from the systemic study of historical sources rather than personal recollections. An executive's recollection of how he or she dealt with the

impact of SARS on a supply chain would not, in our view, be considered truly historical and would be unlikely to win the prize. However, we would encourage managers who have such experience to share advice with other managers in other online forums. Similarly, while we would encourage Chinese managers who successfully coped with the epidemic at the start of the 2020 to share advice with their counterparts in other countries, our essay contest is not the forum to do so as the relevant experience is not historical.

In judging the essays, we will give equal weighting to two criteria: the utility of managers of the recommendations you provide based on your historical research and the reliability of your historical research findings. Your conclusions about what worked for managers in the past will be more convincing to the jury if they are based on solid historical research and analysis rather than a very limited and cursory review of a couple of primary sources. The jury's understanding of what constitutes reliable sources of historical information will likely be informed by some of the principles outlined in Lipartito (2014).

Lipartito, K. (2014). Historical sources and data. In Bucheli, M., & Wadhvani, R. D. (Eds.). (2014). *Organizations in time: History, theory, methods*. Oxford University Press. pages 284-304.

#### **Scientific Committee:**

Alfred Reckendrees, Copenhagen Business School

Andrea H. Schneider-Braunberger, Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte GUG e.V., Frankfurt-am-Main

Aparajith Ramnath, Amrut Mody School of Management, Ahmedabad University

Catherine Casson, University of Manchester

Charles Harvey, Newcastle University Business School

Chris McKenna, Saïd Business School and Brasenose College, Oxford

Dimitry Anastakis, Wilson-Currie Chair in Business History, University of Toronto

Greig Mordue, ArcelorMittal Chair in Advanced Manufacturing Policy, McMaster University

Hubert Bonin, Université de Bordeaux

Jan Ottosson, Professor of Economic History Uppsala University

John Wilson, Newcastle Business School

Kenneth Lipartito, Florida International University

Laurence B. Mussio, PhD, SIERC, Inc.; Co-Founder, Long Run Initiative (LRI).

Ludovic Caillaet, EDHEC Business School, Paris and Lille

Marcelo Bucheli, Gies College of Business, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Nicholas Wong, Newcastle Business School

Peter Miskell, Henley Business School

Pierre-Yves Donzé, Osaka University, Graduate School of Economics

Rika Fujioka, Faculty of Commerce, Kansai University

Robert E. Wright, Rudy and Marilyn Nef Family Chair of Political Economy at Augustana University

Tom Buckley, University of Sheffield Management School