

180e Economic Frameworks for Solving Problems of Operations Management in Pilot Plants

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There are many types of pilot plants with many different purposes and scales. Designers and managers of pilot plants may try to solve operational questions in a narrow, case-by-case manner, as though each pilot plant's economics are as different as the technologies they study. In truth, when it comes to questions of staffing, setting priorities, funding, and general operation of a pilot plant, there are common approaches that can be broadly applied. Hospitals, for example, offer a case study in how to staff (doctors and nurses), equip (beds and surgical space) and set priorities (triage) to optimize service and cost for customers, while the work load (number of patients) may vary greatly day to day. The thinking translates to how to equip, staff and prioritize pilot plants for different projects. This presentation will take us through frameworks that help us think about efficient pilot plant operations.