



MONARCH MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

Open Course Network · Micro-Course 10

COURSE PROSPECTUS

Finding and Breaking the Bottleneck

A one-week, applied micro-course on the Theory of Constraints — a practical method for finding the one factor that limits a system's output and managing it so the whole delivers more, worked on a real system of your own and taught with its limits.

1 wk

One weekly module

6

Sections

70%

To pass · unlimited attempts

Monarch Management Institute

UGSM-Monarch Business School Switzerland · umonarch.ch/MMI

Online Management Education for Working Professionals

At a glance

Duration	1 week — one weekly module of six sections
Study time	≈ 6 directed hours
Level	Introductory; no prior study of operations management required
Assessment	1 auto-graded scenario assessment · 70% to pass · unlimited attempts
Award	MMI Certificate of Knowledge
Format	Fully online, self-paced

What you will gain

By the end of this course you will be able to apply the Theory of Constraints to a real process or system you own — identify the constraint that limits the whole, exploit it and subordinate the rest of the system to it, and judge whether to elevate it — to produce a defended plan that raises the throughput of the whole rather than the efficiency of its parts.

And what it counts toward

You earn the Monarch-endorsed Certificate of Knowledge and 1 MMI-Credit. MMI-Credits carry toward MMI program progression (PD-001).

What this course is

Finding and Breaking the Bottleneck is a fully online, self-paced micro-course on the Theory of Constraints. Most organizations try to improve everywhere at once — every department busier, every cost lower, every resource more fully used — and are surprised when the whole barely moves. This course teaches you why: a system's output is set by its constraint, the way a chain's strength is set by its weakest link, so effort spent anywhere else is motion without progress. You will learn to find that constraint and manage it so the throughput of the whole rises.

You choose one real process or system you own in the opening section — a production line, a service or approval workflow, a project pipeline, a hiring process — and carry it through all six, so the course produces a defended improvement plan you can act on, not a certificate of attendance.

The machinery you will learn to apply

- **The constraint** — the single step that governs a whole system's output
- **The throughput measures** — throughput, inventory and operating expense
- **The five focusing steps** — identify, exploit, subordinate, elevate, repeat
- **Drum-buffer-rope** — pacing the whole system to its constraint

Who this course is for

- Operations, production, service and delivery managers responsible for the output of a system
- Project, program and portfolio leaders managing pipelines, flow and delivery bottlenecks
- General managers and executives who need whole-system performance to rise, not just local efficiency
- BBA, MBA or DBA candidates seeking a rigorous, applied foundation in operations improvement

What you will accomplish

- Distinguish a true constraint from a symptom and a local inefficiency with spare capacity
- Identify the one step that governs a whole system's output — the step everything waits behind
- Measure improvement on throughput, inventory and operating expense, not local efficiency
- Exploit a constraint at no cost and subordinate the rest of the system to it (drum-buffer-rope)
- Judge when to elevate a constraint, and anticipate where the constraint will move next
- Produce a defended plan that raises the throughput of the whole system

Your week, section by section

Section	Title
1	The System and Its Constraint
2	Measuring What Matters — Throughput, Not Local Efficiency
3	The Five Focusing Steps
4	Exploit and Subordinate — Drum, Buffer, Rope
5	Elevate, Repeat, and the Limits
6	Synthesis — A Repeatable Constraint-Management Routine

Each section follows the same four steps — Explain, Show, Do, Feedback — worked through a running case (Nadia Okonkwo turning around Vantor Systems) and then on your own system.

Assessment and certificate

One auto-graded 15-item scenario assessment at the end of the module. Each item presents an unfamiliar situation and supplies the facts, so it tests judgment rather than recall. A score of **70%** passes, with unlimited untimed attempts, and a full explanation is shown for every item. On passing you earn the **MMI Certificate of Knowledge**.

Taught with its limits

The Theory of Constraints is powerful but bounded. This course teaches its limits alongside the method — where its single-constraint logic strains, how strong its evidence really is, and why the hardest constraints are policies rather than machines — so you learn to use it as a disciplined lens, not a formula that settles every operational question.

Pick a real system, and find the constraint that governs it.

