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## P R E F A C E

MCDM has been an active research area for over 20 years and the previous conferences clearly showed a tremendous growth of interest. A variety of successful applications and recent developments of interactive computer software to support decision making confirm a sustained progress. We therefore decided to make our theme "Improving Decision Making in Organisations". The aim was to take stock of the impact of multicriteria concepts in organisations and to involve management practitioners from a wide range of backgrounds. To this end the conference was organised round five broad themes and papers were solicited on the following topics:-

- Psychology - how do individuals in practice use and relate to the methodologies.
- Organisation - how do our models fit into the decision making framework of real organisations.
- Application - how have the models been used in practice and what is the users view.
- Methodology - what are the new areas in model development.
- Related Areas - is there complementary work eg. Expert Systems which may be attempting to solve very similar problems.

The call for papers produced an overwhelming response of over 100 papers. They were from a variety of disciplines and applications, and we decided to devote approximately one day to each of the five areas. We are very impressed by the results which can be seen in this edited proceedings.

The papers are too numerous to discuss individually and it would be improper to highlight just a few. However, some impressions remain from the event which we think are worth noting. Many techniques have passed the "age of consent" and are used in real life situations by interested decision makers. Although technical problems still confront us the emphasis has now shifted to process issues and implementation. How and why do people use these methods, and how can they be adopted to every day decision making in the management environment? We should be encouraged by the conference but at the same time appreciate the research that needs to be done.

Such an edited text, however, cannot convey the interaction and integration of the live event. Over 100 people from 27 different countries took part - a mini United Nations. For five days we listened, talked, and discussed in both formal and informal sessions. We hope we played some part in creating a broader based MCDM network which will continue long after the event.

Manchester  
United Kingdom 1989

Geoff Lockett  
Gerd Islei

The papers have had to receive some degree of selection and the ones chosen reflect the original intention behind the theme. Some papers presented at this conference are not included in the proceedings. Their abstracts can be found at the end of the volume.

#### Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the organisations who sponsored our event. Without them the international character of the conference would have been greatly diminished. We also wish to express our gratitude to the staff at Manchester Business School for caring for our creature comforts.

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