

A useful way to analyze large products in cases like this is to take logarithms, which causes them to become sums. Thus, let us build a graph  $G$  with a node for each stock, and a directed edge  $(i, j)$  for each pair of stocks. We put a cost of  $-\log r_{ij}$  on edge  $(i, j)$ .

Now, a trading cycle  $C$  in  $G$  is an opportunity cycle if and only if

$$\prod_{(i,j) \in C} r_{ij} > 1,$$

in other words, taking logarithms of both sides, if and only if

$$\sum_{(i,j) \in C} \log r_{ij} > 0,$$

or

$$\sum_{(i,j) \in C} -\log r_{ij} < 0.$$

Thus, a trading cycle  $C$  in  $G$  is an opportunity cycle if and only if it is a negative cycle. Hence we can use our polynomial-time algorithm for negative-cycle detection to determine whether an opportunity cycle exists.

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<sup>1</sup>ex181.273.949