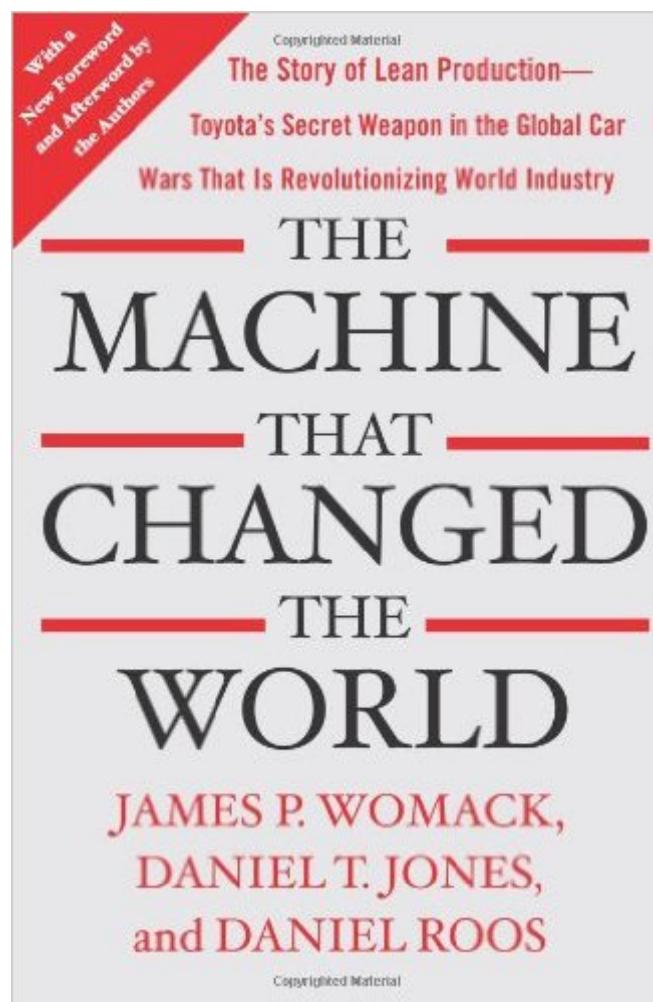


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The Machine That Changed The World: The Story Of Lean Production-- Toyota's Secret Weapon In The Global Car Wars That Is Now Revolutionizing World Industry





Synopsis

The classic, nationally bestselling book that first articulated the principles of lean production, with a new foreword and afterword by the authors. When The Machine That Changed the World was first published in 1990, Toyota was half the size of General Motors. Twenty years later Toyota passed GM as the world's largest auto maker. This management classic was the first book to reveal Toyota's lean production system that is the basis for its enduring success. Authors Womack, Jones, and Roos provided a comprehensive description of the entire lean system. They exhaustively documented its advantages over the mass production model pioneered by General Motors and predicted that lean production would eventually triumph. Indeed, they argued that it would triumph not just in manufacturing but in every value-creating activity from health care to retail to distribution. Today The Machine That Changed the World provides enduring and essential guidance to managers and leaders in every industry seeking to transform traditional enterprises into exemplars of lean success.

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Customer Reviews

I have read a lot of the so called quality books, and have a master's degree in the field, and I have found few books that had this kind of relevance to how things are produced and why they work or don't work. More importantly, this is one of the few 'academic studies' (I recall this one came out of MIT) that is actually clearly written and straightforward. Yes, Toyota is much of the focus in this book and it can sometimes seem to border on the PR level, but that doesn't take away from the information in this book. Having had access to most of the auto manufacturers when this study was

done, and seeing the nuts and bolts, it is what people do wrong at other places that is as important as what Toyota had been doing right (a trend, I might add, that in recent years has dimmed, Toyota has had embarrassing quality faults recently). The book does mention that what Toyota "pioneered" was not entirely homegrown, many of the techniques existed, but Toyota was unique in the auto world in the number of things they chose to adopt (as a counterpoint, when the 70's hit and the US auto makers started having real competition, they hired Dr. Edwards Demming as a consultant, he told them many of the things that this book points out and they basically paid the check, used it for PR about how they were serious, and ignored him). And these are not new issues and continue to plague companies, fallacies like: 1) "It is the fault of the labor force" .. while the UAW has not exactly been cutting edge, what this book points out is something known in quality circles for years, that most of the problems are using your labor force badly, not listening to them, and just plain bad management. 2) "The secret is robotics" ..

This book is a classic on the advantages of being lean - Product Design, Manufacturing, Supply Chain Management - the entire gamut from concept to delivery in the Automobile industry. What Ford's mass production did to craft production and its profound effects on the developed economies in the first half of the last century is an old but interesting story. With the advent of Ford's manufacturing techniques, there was a consolidation in the Auto industry. Within a couple of decades the number of automobile manufacturers fell from over a hundred to less than twenty and the big three cornering over ninety percent of the market share. Detroit became the center of pilgrimage for the rest of the world trying to emulate and replicate this success story in other continents. Silently, the Japanese led by Toyota were working on a different concept of putting the automobile in the hands of the customer, at better quality, lesser costs, shorter development times and with the ability to offer a wider choice. The statistics collected from these "lean systems" is mind boggling. The competitive advantage that Japan enjoyed over the American system was neither due to lower wages in Japan nor due to higher levels of automation as widely believed. It was primarily the lean machine that was conquering the mass machine. This book is based on the research done in the 1980's and published around 1990. The authors while acclaiming lean manufacturing as the panacea for the ills of manufacturing systems globally had at the time of the research and the publication of this work, probably ignored the next major change that would sweep across continents.

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