



Japanese Manufacturing Techniques: Nine Hidden Lessons in Simplicity

Richard J. Schonberger

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Japanese productivity and quality standards have fired the imagination of American managers, but until now there has been little explanation of *how to do it* -- how to apply Japanese methods at the actual operating level of U.S. manufacturing plants.

This book shows you how, exposing otherwise well-informed westernized readers to a new world of management ideas. Author Richard J. Schonberger demonstrates that the Japanese formula for success is based on a number of specific, interrelated techniques -- stunning in their simplicity -- and he shows how these techniques can be put to work in American industries today.

Here, in a clear, handbook format, are nine "lessons" for American manufacturers, introducing scores of techniques aimed at simplifying the overly-complex purchasing, inventory, assembly-line, and quality-control processes of U.S. firms.

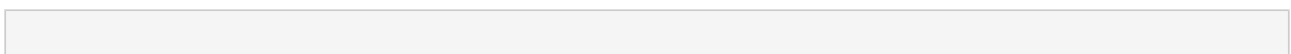
At the heart of Japanese manufacturing success are two overlapping strategies: "just-in-time" production and "total quality control." Some American manufacturers already know a little about these methods, but Richard Schonberger provides the most comprehensive description of these techniques available: how they developed, how they all fit together, why they are so potent, and how they "snowball" -- unleashing a powerful chain reaction of productivity and quality control improvements each time more simplification is introduced.

Japanese Manufacturing Techniques will change the way you think. Much of the received wisdom of American management -- "just-in-case" order quantities, statistical sampling for quality control, and large inventory buffer stocks, for example -- is dismissed by the Japanese as *muri*, *muda*, *mura*: excess, waste, unevenness. In many cases, the Japanese technique is exactly the opposite of American practice ("just-in-time" ordering, quality control at the source, and elimination of buffer stocks altogether).

By emphasizing practical techniques, Schonberger shows how you can implement new methods right away - without waiting for government policy or market conditions or worker behavior to change. The techniques themselves will improve your productivity and quality, provide strategic advantages in gaining market share, and transform worker behavior. And the author backs his nine lessons with concrete examples of how Japanese techniques are being applied in U.S. plants today.

Nearly 20 tables and figures illustrate the "lessons" given here, and a special appendix describes in full the Toyota-developed *kanban* inventory system, with the first explanation in English of single-card versus dual-card *kanban*.

This remarkable book carries you beyond theories and concepts. It's for practical managers who want *results*: better quality control and greater productivity. Implement these simple steps, and you can begin improving your division's performance *now*.



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