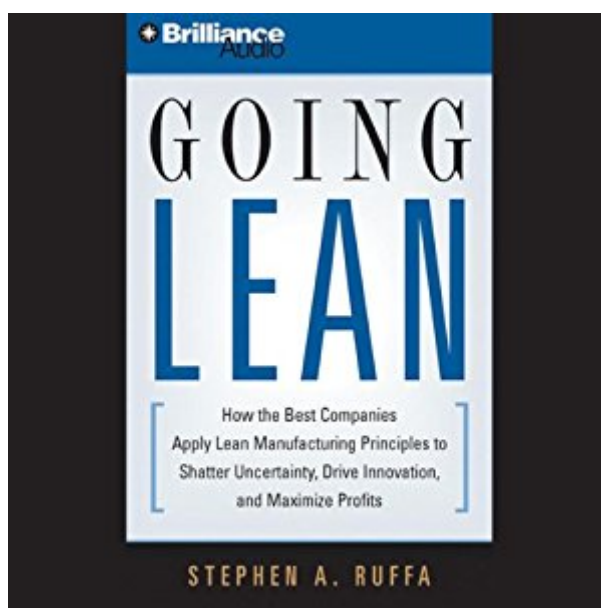


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# Going Lean: How The Best Companies Apply Lean Manufacturing Principles



## Synopsis

In the wake of economic downturn, foreign competition, spiking oil prices, and even war, American business throughout this decade has been thrust into crisis. To improve their performance, corporations everywhere have adopted a wide range of tools and techniques, yet many continue to struggle. Going Lean points to a better way. Drawing from the lessons of a new breed of companies that have stood apart, it sets aside the notion that efficient operations and powerful innovations are possible only when business is steady and demand is growing. By using lean dynamics—based on principles from the now-famous Toyota Production System—it shows how companies everywhere can thrive across a broad range of changing conditions. In Going Lean, you will learn how to:

- set a critical foundation for achieving sustained excellence
- identify sources of lag and create robust value streams that thrive in today's dynamic conditions
- describe the underlying techniques to maintain steady and predictable flow
- create a system driven by customer demand that consistently introduces new innovation even during downturns
- strive for perfection
- deliver industry-leading returns

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In "Going Lean: How the Best Companies Apply Lean Manufacturing Principles to Shatter Uncertainty, Drive Innovation and Maximize Profits", Steve Ruffa has taken the mathematical insight of an Aerospace engineer and combined it with in-depth analysis of three industry leading

companies, Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines and Toyota to bring us the concept of Lean Dynamics. In this time of changing business conditions "Lean Dynamics" can be used to survive, thrive and grow. The industrial countryside is littered with companies that have started Lean programs just to find sustainability too elusive. This book answers the questions of dealing with lag, how to create a steady and predictable flow in a customer driven supply chain and how to apply the lean dynamic tool to measure sustainability in changing business climates. By showing us the mistakes of some of the early industrial leaders Mr. Ruffa leads the reader through steps on how not to repeat them. Including the wisdom of Ducker and Deming with the successful systems of Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines and Toyota we find things everyone can learn from past and present Lean Leaders. This Book is a must read for all Industry and Government leaders in this turbulent time.

Going Lean is a must read for any company that wishes to compete in today's challenging, uncertain business environment. It contains rigorous research, undeniable hard data and assessment of cutting edge projects--along with further exploration of the findings from the unprecedented study of the aerospace and defense industry first revealed in Breaking the Cost Barrier. Going Lean succeeds in laying out a path to improvement that is as clear as it is compelling--getting past the confusing jargon so prevalent in other improvement regimens--to make reading and understanding these bold new concepts enjoyable. Companies of all types should consider applying Lean Dynamics. It's a logical, systematic approach to tie together disparate tools employed by managers and workers who have become frustrated by a confusing mix of solutions that often don't seem to work. Going Lean will be one of the most important reads for managers, corporate executives and investors to prepare for the decade ahead.

I believe this book offers a great pile of facts on why some of the production factories go terribly off the road recently. Thumbs up for the style, precise and covering structure of thought and usage of analogies (which are both entertaining and hitting the bull-eye). The only bit that takes it from 5 stars super-book is the length of the text. Not too many readers would be patient to go through. I understand that author's mission was to walk the reader through the whole argument and build the castle brick by brick. That is all fine, but sometimes the comments on how bad the actual environment is get repeated and obsolete. You can slap the actual operational setting into the face at the start very hard with some bolder statements and then promise to answer why the slap was actually well deserved in the text. And oh yes you can prove the slap with the text in this book!!!

I picked up "Going Lean" without any recommendation as "just another Lean book." I usually enjoy reading Lean books and already consumed quite a few of them. I sort-of struggled through "Going Lean" and it wouldn't be on my list of Lean books to recommend. I felt it is shallow, repetitive and even fairly traditional (rather than Lean :P). Going Lean consists of 3 parts each containing 4 chapters. Part 1 is called "From Crisis to Excellence." This is sort-of an introduction part where the author describes the problems with the current system of management and how this will need to change. He dives into history to look at Ford and Toyota and how Ford created a huge innovation but then lost their competitive edge because of their disability to compete based on changes. Chapter 3 introduces one of the key concepts of the book called "value curve" which basically describes that traditionally businesses are optimized towards a certain amount of production (economy of scale) and lean companies are optimized towards a more linear cost/value ration (which other authors might call "economy of flow"). Also, this part of the book introduces a term the author seems to have invented called "lean dynamics" which is the the authors flavor of lean. I found it unneeded to introduce another flavor of Lean and was slightly annoyed by this. Part 2 is called "The Foundational Element" which suggests fairly abstract things that would need to be in place in order to implement "lean dynamics". It starts with a focus on measurement and it especially criticizes internal measurements and promotes more external measurements of value. It talks about the "bullwhip" effect and how you shouldn't optimize from your company perspective but throughout the whole value stream. It covers leveling the variation by grouping different products into "product groups" (which the author stressed a lot) and explains how organizations ought to move from push production to lean pull productions. Part 3 is called "Implementing Lean Dynamics" which basically describes all the traditional top-down driven change management concepts for implementing a "Lean Dynamics Program" even though some of the Lean proponents lessons from Toyota have always been that Lean isn't a Program but a result of a problem-solving culture. Here, I personally felt very disappointed with the authors writing as it focused very little on the people and the culture of an organization and much more on management and measurement and traditional aspects of organizations. The last chapter in this part covers several pitfalls for your lean dynamics transformation program. I didn't really enjoy the book. The writing felt like a lot of marketing and selling speech. The common examples used (Walmart, Toyota, Southwest) have been used again and again. Some other examples were interesting though (Hibbett, Garrity Tool company). I was annoyed by the amount of repetition and the shallow-ness of the book. Also, the traditional focus on how to manage change projects was... well... not interesting. All in all, I wouldn't suggest to read this book about Lean but instead pick up the traditional Womack Jones books such as  $\hat{A}$  Lean

Thinking: Banish Waste and Create Wealth in Your Corporation, Revised and Updated  
Lean Solutions: How Companies and Customers Can Create Value and Wealth Together  
or the Liker Toyota books such as The Toyota Way: 14 Management Principles from the World's Greatest Manufacturer  
or Toyota Culture: The Heart and Soul of the Toyota Way. For more original insight on Toyota, I'd look for Ohno and stories such as Taiichi Ohno's Workplace Management  
and The Birth of Lean. Even as an overview to Lean, I don't think this is a book that you ought to pick up, especially as the author cherry-picks lean concepts and adds his own favorites (e.g. value curves). All that said, this book wasn't bad either. It didn't contain much things that were wrong and the author did share some of his own experiences which added some new value and insights. Therefore, I've been thinking about whether it ought to be a 2 or a 3 star rating and decided to stick with 2 stars. Leave this and look for other Lean books, unless you read all the others already (but then this one doesn't provide much new insights)

This will help me understand more relating to my employers lean initiatives. I would recommend this to anyone who is employed or plans to be.

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