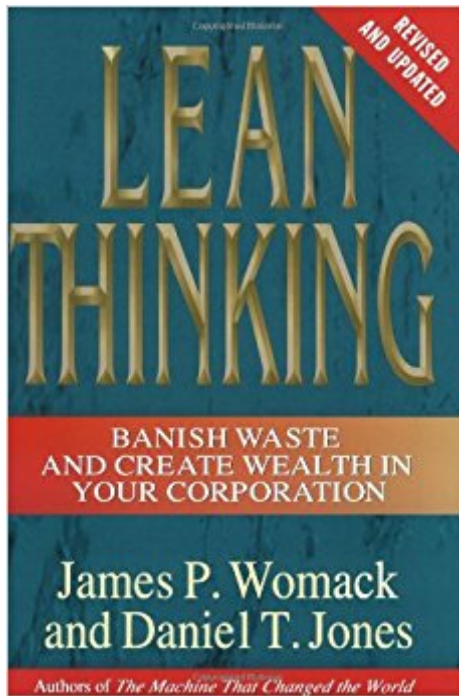


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# Lean Thinking: Banish Waste And Create Wealth In Your Corporation, Revised And Updated



## Synopsis

The authors begin by summarizing the five inherent principles in any lean system: Correctly specify value so you are providing what the customer actually wants Identify the value stream for each product family and remove the wasted steps that don't create value but do create muda (waste) Make the remaining value-creating steps flow continuously to drastically shorten throughput times Allow the customer to pull value from your rapid-response value streams as needed (rather than pushing products toward the customer on the basis of forecasts) Never relax until you reach perfection, which is the delivery of pure value instantaneously with zero muda. (The first part of Lean Thinking devotes a chapter to each of these principles.) In the second part, the authors describe in detail how managers in a wide range of companies and industries - small, medium and large, North American, European, and Japanese - transformed their business by applying the principles of lean thinking. Chapters are devoted to Pratt & Whitney, Wiremold and Lantech in North America, Porsche in Germany, and Showa Manufacturing in Japan. Based on these cases and many others as well, the authors summarize in the last part of Lean Thinking the necessary steps in the necessary sequence to apply lean thinking successfully in your business. They pay special attention to the need to map product-family value streams at the outset in order to identify the most important areas for improvement and to avoid wasted effort on activities that may be technically challenging but which are of little importance to your business. Lean Thinking has sold more than 300,000 copies in the English language hardcover version alone because it's an indispensable companion for every manager making the lean journey.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 396 pages

Publisher: Productivity Press; 2nd edition (June 1, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0743249275

ISBN-13: 978-0743249270

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.4 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (112 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #13,665 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 in [Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Quality Control & Management > Quality Control](#) #19 in [Books > Business & Money > Management & Leadership > Strategy & Competition](#) #55 in [Books >](#)

## Customer Reviews

This is a new and expanded second edition of a book first published in 1996. Of special interest to me was what Womack and Jones had to say in the preface regarding what has since happened to the companies previously discussed. Apparently lean thinking has enabled Toyota, Wiremold, Porsche, Lantech, and Pratt & Whitney to sustain operational excellence and economic prosperity. Briefly, how do Womack and Jones define lean thinking? It is the opposite of muda (a Japanese) word for anything which consumes resources without creating value. In a word, waste. Lean thinking is lean because "it provides a way to do more and more with less and less -- less human effort, less equipment, less time, and less space -- while coming closer and closer to providing customers with exactly what they want." Lean thinking is thus a process of thought, not an expedient response or a stop-gap solution. The challenge, according to Womack and Jones, is to convert muda into real, quantifiable value and the process to achieve that worthy objective requires everyone within an organization (regardless of size or nature) to be actively involved in that process. Once again, in this new edition they address questions such as these: 1. How can certain "simple, actionable principles" enable any business to create lasting value during any business conditions? 2. How can these principles be applied most effectively in real businesses, regardless of size or nature? 3. How can a relentless focus on the value stream for every product create "a true lean enterprise that optimizes the value created for the customer while minimizing time, cost, and errors"? In Part IV, Womack and Jones update the continuing advance of lean thinking.

I think this book is largely bogus. Sure there is logic in having an efficient system to your manufacturing process and in buying the machines you actually need instead of something too big or too inflexible. But while the Japanese may have ninjas and 'Asian sexual secrets,' they haven't discovered any new principles of manufacturing that we insecure Americans didn't already know a long time ago. Despite the stylish Japanese mumbo-jumbo, there isn't much in this 'lean thinking' that Henry Ford didn't already have figured out by 1914, although the limitations of the technology of that day prevented him from implementing his ideas fully. Speaking of Henry Ford, among the historical inaccuracies in this book is the oft-repeated untruth that all the millions of Ford Model T cars produced over 19 years were all exactly alike. The truth is that several body styles, ranging from open touring cars to 'Torpedo Roadsters' to closed sedans were produced, and the entire line went through at least two major styling changes and thousands of mechanical improvements. Some

parts of this book just don't make any sense at all, revealing amazingly poor writing on the part of the authors and -- given that this is the revised edition -- an astonishing lack of critical thinking on the part of eager readers. For example, on page 178 it is told how Pratt & Whitney replaced a particularly inefficient turbine blade grinding machine with 'eight simple three-axis grinding machines.' But in the very next paragraph they mention 'each of the nine machines,' and then go on to say, 'The number of parts in the process would fall from about 1,640 to 15 (one in each machine plus one waiting to start and one blade just completed).'

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