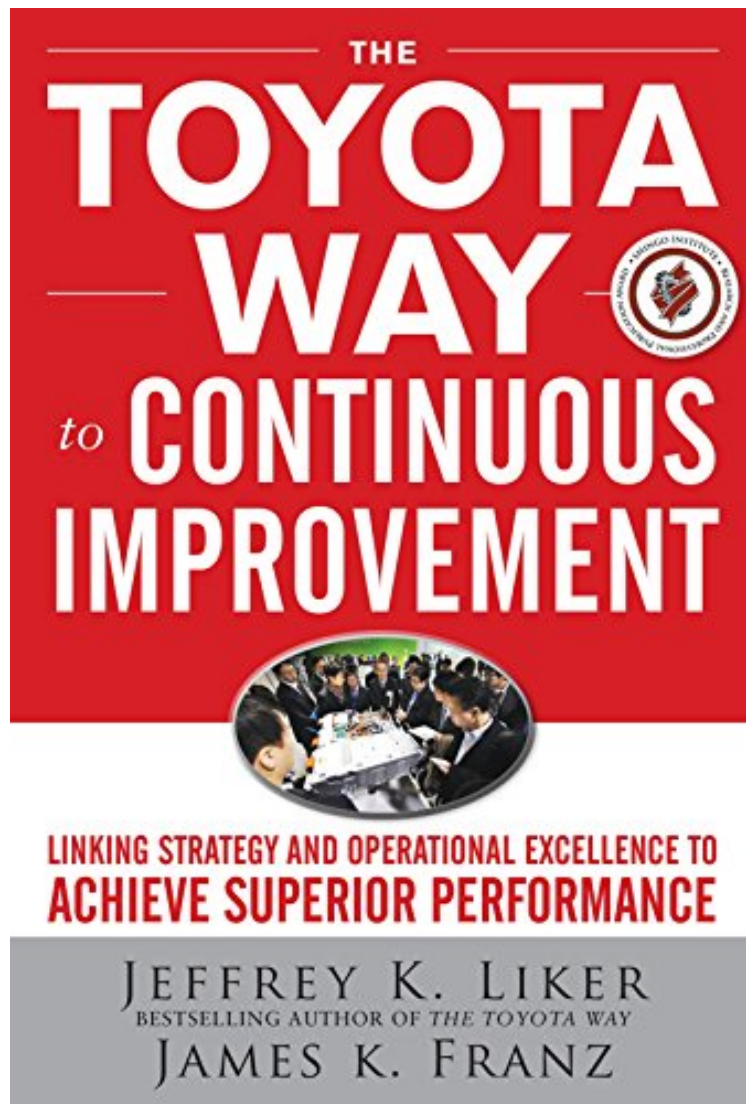


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# The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement: Linking Strategy and Operational Excellence to Achieve Superior Performance

*Jeffrey K. Liker, James K. Franz*  
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Jeffrey K. Liker, James K. Franz : The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement: Linking Strategy and Operational Excellence to Achieve Superior Performance before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement: Linking Strategy and Operational Excellence to Achieve Superior Performance:

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CookExcellent book for continuous improvement. Try the other Toyota way books, Talent and Lean Leadership, to gain a more wholistic view and more complementary tools to this one!3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Mandatory for Lean expertsBy b.urselmanI have read all books by Jeff Liker and most of them more than once. His "The Toyota Way", "Toyota Culture" and "Toyota Talent" are classics for anyone interested in Lean (Toyota Business System). They give a good and detailed view in the way Lean works for Toyota.Many Lean Masters/Practitioners are working in a less ideal situation and are struggling to get Lean implemented or to sustain/improve Lean in an organization. As with 5S, sustaining is the hardest part of being Lean."The Toyota Way for Continuous Improvement" brings the understanding that the PDCA cycle is the necessary part in a CI process. As a consultant I notice that the CA part of this cycle is often forgotten and the operation mostly falls back to its old levels.Most companies that start with their Lean adventure, start with the ideal of getting Lean but actually look for a nice head count reduction. After a first start the operations always falls back to a basic level of Lean with every now and then an eruption of some Lean activities. Which is preferably linked with the next headcount reduction?This book gives good guidelines on what to do when such a fallback has taken place. The 8 cases Liker/Franz describe, give a good view on how to improve these operations. What I have learned from this wide variation of companies, is that it takes about 6 to 8 years to really implement Lean in companies that already understand some things about it. What I also recognized is the general feeling in such divers companies, is what I call "we are different" feeling within such companies. Often they have a Lean faccedil;ade (as Jeff Liker calls it so strikingly). I've heard this "different-saying" from Banks, Hospitals, Government organizations, and so on. The cases in this book show that the Lean tools can work everywhere, whenever there is waste.Reading this book often brought a recognizing feeling of stages companies are in, who mention themselves as being Lean. No empowerment, 5S only on a basic level, only limited visual management, CI as a saving tool. This book can help every Lean Master/Practitioner to bring the company they are working for to the next level of Lean in a never ending journey.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Much deeper than just Lean toolsBy Joseph F ElyJeff Liker walks the talk. This alone makes this book truly credible and makes it a necessary read for each of us seeking process excellence.In this latest effort, Prof. Liker and coauthor Jim Franz take us deeper than kanban and hoshin kanri to the real philosophy behind Toyota's consistent expertise in manufacturing. The authors use insight and experience to tell the story of WHY Toyota has achieved excellence. The consistent theme is the PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Adjust). This practice is not new; Demming gave it to the world years ago. But just as the concert pianist and brand new piano student can both play a C-Scale, the master has done it longer, better, with more nuance and breadth. So Toyota has more deeply understood the learning from PDCA than any of the rest of us.Most useful, to me, were sections such as chapter 5; "Lean Out Processes or Build Lean Systems?" In these more philosophical chapters, Liker and Franz both force and lead the leader into deeper understanding of WHY; why does Lean work for Toyota when it seems to underperform for others? Is it a kanban card which sparkles more brightly? Is it better charts on the wall? Or is it the investment in people made in the context of process excellence? And, if so, just why is this the case?It's a long book. You won't read it in one setting. Similar to Liker's other books, there is just a lot to work through. There are more case studies here which will add for some readers and clutter for others. But, face it, it is tough to make a process-oriented business work so don't be surprised you'll have to work to understand this at a depth to be sufficiently useful.This book reaches the level of Womack and Jones' "Lean Thinking" and Spears' "Chasing the Rabbit" as necessary books for Lean leaders to read and know.

Building upon the international bestselling Toyota Way series of books by Jeffrey Liker, The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement looks critically at lean deployments and identifies the root causes of why most of them fail. The book is organized into three major sections outlining: Why it is critical to go beyond implementing lean tools and, instead, build a culture of continuous improvement that connects operational excellence to business strategy Case studies from seven unique industries written from the perspective of the sensei (teacher) who led the lean transformation Lessons about transforming your own vision of an ideal organization into reality Section One: Using the Plan-Do-Check-Adjust (PDCA) methodology, Liker and Franz contrast true PDCA thinking to that of the popular, superficial approach of copying "lean solutions." They describe the importance of developing people and show how the Toyota Way principles support and drive continuous improvement. Explaining how lean systems and processes start with a purpose that provides a true north direction for all activities, they wrap up this section by examining the glaring differences between building a system of people, processes, and problem- solving that is truly lean versus that of simply trying to "lean out" a process. Section Two: This section brings together seven case studies as told by the sensei who led the transformation efforts. The companies range from traditional manufacturers, overhaul and maintenance of submarines, nuclear fuel rod production, health care providers, pathology labs, and product development. Each of these industries is different but the approaches used were remarkably similar. Section Three: Beginning with a composite story describing a company in its early days of lean implementation, this section describes what went right and wrong during the initial implementation efforts. The authors bring to light some of the difficulties the sensei faces, such as bureaucracies, closed-minded mechanical thinking, and the challenges of developing lean coaches who can facilitate real change. They address the question: Which is better, slow and deep organic deployment

or fast and broad mechanistic deployment? The answer may surprise you. The book ends with a discussion on how to make continuous improvement a way of life at your company and the role of leadership in any lean transformation. The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement is required reading for anyone seeking to transcend his or her tools-based approach and truly embrace a culture of continuous improvement.