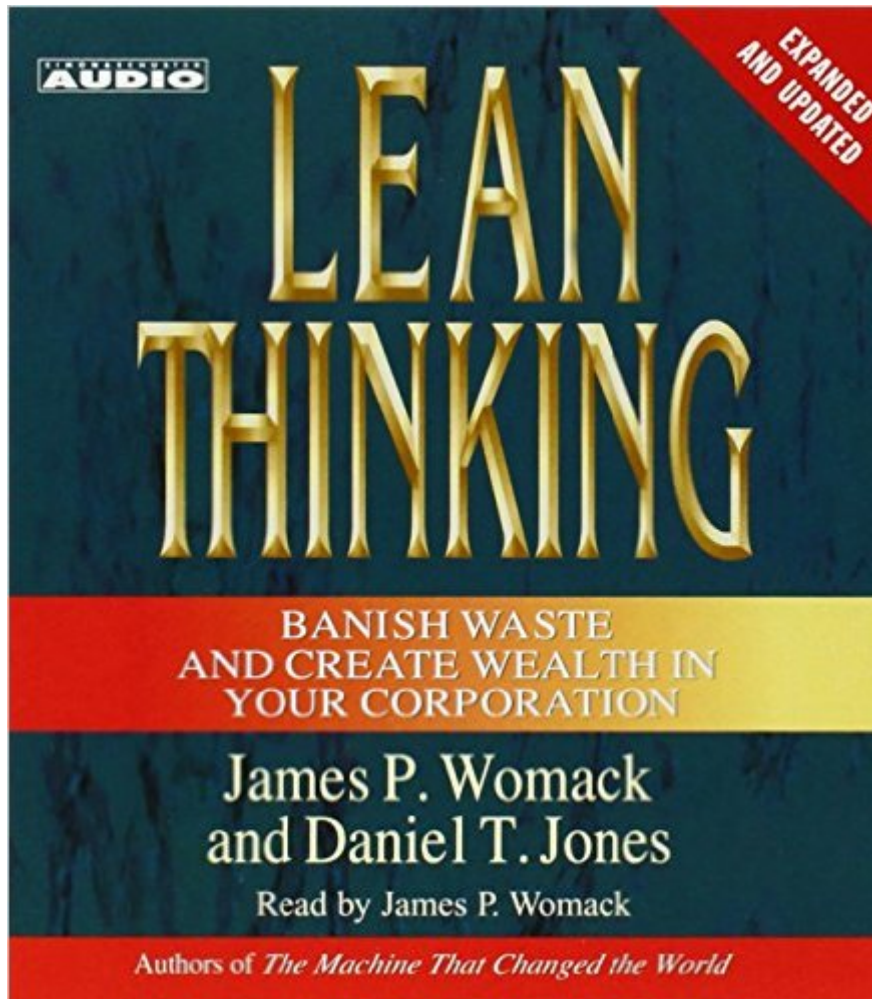


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# Lean Thinking: Banish Waste And Create Wealth In Your Corporation, 2nd Ed



## Synopsis

Expanded, updated, and more relevant than ever, the bestselling business classic by two internationally renowned management theorists shows how companies of any size in any industry can seize opportunities in the post-bubble economy. Lean Thinking begins by helping listeners to identify value, asking, "What does the customer really want?" instead of "What can we try to convince the customer to accept?" Lean thinkers then identify the value stream -- every step required to move a specific good or service from initial concept into the hands of the customer -- for each product and ask if each step really creates value. Those that don't -- the great majority -- are then removed, and the remaining steps are conducted in continuous flow at the pull of the customer, as the firm manages toward perfection. As a consequence, lead times, costs of all sorts, and defects shrink, while responsiveness to customer needs and selling prices increase. In an economic downturn, many companies are searching desperately for a sustainable formula for renewed growth and success. Lean Thinking is that formula -- a proven blueprint and specific action plan that will help any company stabilize its position and grow steadily while better serving its customers, employees, suppliers, and investors.

## Book Information

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## 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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