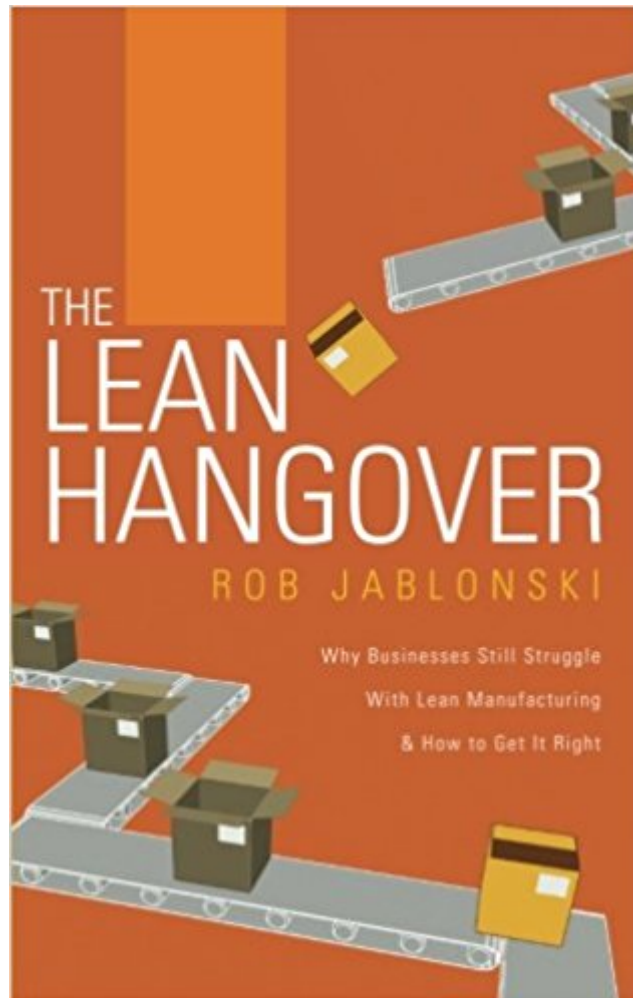




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The Lean Hangover



Synopsis

One of the most powerful ways businesses have improved profits over the past two decades has been by moving away from mass production to lean manufacturing. Many, many businesses have successfully learned to use the lean way to generate stronger profits and growth. But even today, even after what feels like a barrage of training, books, consultants, and everyone chasing lean, there are still way too many businesses that just aren't getting it right. And a few of these lean 'wannabes' have even damaged their performance to the point that they've fallen into a downward spiral as a direct result of poorly executed lean changeovers. After nearly a generation of business leaders chasing lean manufacturing, why do so many businesses still struggle to get it right? Having experienced successful and not-so-successful lean transformations, this is the question Rob Jablonski tackles in *The Lean Hangover*. Every business leader today wants to run their operations leaner, but many still don't understand how to develop and manage the organization that actually does the work of becoming lean. Lean is not just a different way to run manufacturing within your existing organization; it is a different way to run your organization to design, implement and sustain lean manufacturing systems. Jablonski has studied these core differences in lean manufacturing approaches throughout his career and has developed these lean lessons, his proven methods for organizing the business to get lean over the learning curve and for avoiding the key pitfalls that can creep up even in mature lean businesses to create *The Lean Hangover*!

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Customer Reviews

"The Lean Hangover" is one of the BEST books I have read on Lean Manufacturing. The author gives great details on his personal work history and real life experiences with Lean Manufacturing, good and otherwise. The author knows how to tell a very entertaining, yet educational story. This is an area where most books of this nature fall flat and can make them difficult to read. "The Lean Hangover" is hard to put down once you start reading. I've recommended "The Lean Hangover" to the members of my manufacturing team and upper management as we start down our Lean Journey in a very 'old fashioned' manufacturing facility.

This is one of the more interesting books on Lean. It is well written and easy to read, with many first hand case studies. I liked Jablonski's presentation of how labor costs can skyrocket if inventory reduction is attempted without first reducing change over times. I also liked his comments on how developing lean processes demands a sustained and focused effort over a long time. It is not just new kind of game that is introduced to make work fun.

The Lean Hangover is a refreshing approach to the lean library in that it brings real world experience of success and failure of lean implementation to light. I have read far too many books and listened to numerous consultants that over simplify the changes necessary to successfully implement lean principles in an organization. As a bonus, the author has the gift of story telling that few business authors possess making The Lean Hangover an enjoyable read.

New students of quality processes can get a realistic look at the reality of a buzz word gone mad and frustrated old hats will be kicking themselves for not having read this first, (or throwing the book across the room in denial). I can think of more than a few times this book should have been left anonymously in the break room. Seriously, you can take this book's content and tell which job openings on major job boards are doomed to fail by how a posting is written.

The author is clearly experienced in Lean in both positive and negative situations. He does a good job setting the foundation for Lean thinking and then provides strong insights as to why many lean implementations fall short of expectations. The reader can learn a lot toward making an implementation successful or perhaps selecting a different tool for process and productivity improvement.

"The Lean Hangover" is the first book that I have read that describes the "hardware" part of lean.

Most books describe the "software" aspects of lean. They describe lean tools and concepts but do not give the physical how-to-do-it steps. In his book, Rob has showed us the bolts and nuts of how to physically implement lean by addressing machine design and machine adjustment for right-sizing and for set-up reduction. This is an essential capability that is normally overlooked. The book also described other capabilities that should exist in a lean company. The book starts with a very nice introduction in Part 1 of comparing mass production with lean manufacturing and describes in easy-to-follow steps why lean is better. The second part of the Book is the part describing the "hardware" of lean manufacturing. In this part Rob Jablonski integrates the roles of the lean enablers: Product Engineers, Process Engineers, Information Technology and Material Management. Then he describes the System Engineering Model and shows how one-piece-flow is created through integrated engineering efforts in set-up reduction and machine design. Although the book focused on a typical discrete manufacturing environment, yet many of its lessons can be utilized in process industries. Mohammad Ajlouni

Having first-hand involvement over the years with infrastructural systems and process change from the C-suite, as a hands-on division manager and as an external auditor and process analyst, I can relate to the author's passion for, and frustration with this topic. Although each project will differ due to industry/corporate structure/technology etc, I found this book both a great reminder of the structural project framework that management must understand before embarking on such a project, and also a source of some very specific insights that only come from "living" a project like lean. I think that several of the general principles can also be usefully applied to similar productivity or process re-engineering projects in industries other than manufacturing. The book takes you through the history of mass production and lean, key principles of lean and how to implement them, how not to revert to old ways after the implementation, and some case studies. How often have CEOs walked out of a board or planning meeting barking that they need to cut \$2 million in expense by next week, and tell you it will be possible because you will implement (presumably overnight) wide scale productivity improvements through structural change. Sound familiar? If you wish to avoid a quality and continuity "hangover" that may harm rather than help your business, expectations need to be adjusted and detailed planning conducted, no matter how difficult that may be to communicate upwards. If this has happened to you, this book is a great reminder of the project steps and considerations you need to evaluate before committing to that expense cut and timeline. The book flows clearly, is written with passion, and has some valuable examples, advice and lessons. If you have not been through a project of this nature, or just wish to do it better next

time, I think this book may be very helpful.

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