



The Perfect Engine: Driving Manufacturing Breakthroughs with the Global Production System

Patricia E. Moody, Anand Sharma

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Most manufacturing companies with batch-and-queue 'push' production systems have been blindsided by today's consumer who expects quality products and services delivered on demand and customized to individual taste. In *The Perfect Engine*, manufacturing experts Anand Sharma and Patricia E. Moody describe for the first time how leading 'pull' production pioneers build to order by reducing inventory, decreasing cycle time, minimizing floor space, and eliminating waste. Drawing on scores of examples and detailed case studies of three leaders in the demand economy field -- Maytag, Pella, and Mercedes-Benz -- Sharma and Moody demonstrate how these companies achieved astonishing results using the pathbreaking Lean Sigma SM Transformation. Combining lean production and quality elements from the famous Six Sigma process, Lean Sigma produces annual productivity gains of 15 percent to 20 percent. In addition, the authors show, inventory turns more than quadruple; cycle times drop by more than 70 percent; and floor space reductions of 30 percent to 50 percent are not uncommon. Sharma and Moody provide immensely readable explanations of key technical aspects of the process--for example, how cell-based one-piece flow can replace batch-and-queue with dramatically improved lead times and inventory turnover. A chapter on a revolutionary design technique the authors call Design for Lean Sigma or 3P (product and production preparation) shows how to build flexibility into the product design and the production systems at very low risk, which will be especially helpful when forecasts and customer orders deviate from original projections, as they usually do. Further, the Design for Lean Sigma method is devised to produce profitability at short-term volume projections, which makes it a perfect tool for the new demand economy. Essential, timely, and important, *The Perfect Engine* is perfect reading for this new manufacturing era.

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