



# The Lean CEO: Leading the Way to World-Class Excellence

*Jacob Stoller*

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As organizations strive to do more with less, many are turning to Lean methodology, which is based on the same techniques that propelled the legendary turnaround of Japan's industrial sector after World War II. Few leaders, however, understand that the real secret behind Lean is a comprehensive approach to management that differs significantly from what is taught in business school. Lean initiatives, consequently, are rarely led by senior management, and seldom lead to significant change.

*The Lean CEO* reveals the true power of Lean through in-depth interviews with CEOs who have gone beyond tool adoption and established Lean as a corporate-wide management system. The all-star cast of twenty-eight leaders represents a wide variety of organizations, including global manufacturers Ingersoll-Rand and Barry-Wehmiller, healthcare icons Thedacare and Virginia Mason, the states of Connecticut and Washington, historical icons such as Wiremold, and many more.

In a series of provocative chapters, the CEOs tell in their own words how they applied Lean management to deliver sustainable financial results, empower and motivate employees, break down internal silos, and build solid partnerships with customers and suppliers. Their testimony provides a goldmine of practical advice for managers in Lean and non-Lean organizations alike as they share their unique personal insights on topics such as:

- Leading and empowering people.
- Building transparency and trust.
- Tuning into the customer experience.
- Aligning strategic direction with day-to-day operations.
- Instilling a corporate-wide culture that promotes safety and quality.
- Creating a learning organization

Thoughtful, sometimes brutally frank, these leaders challenge many of the sacred cows of traditional business, such as standard cost accounting, hierarchical management, emphasis on large batches, and our obsession with data and computers. Citing numerous examples from their experience, they provide a fresh view of today's business challenges and a positive roadmap for any organization that is striving for excellence.

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