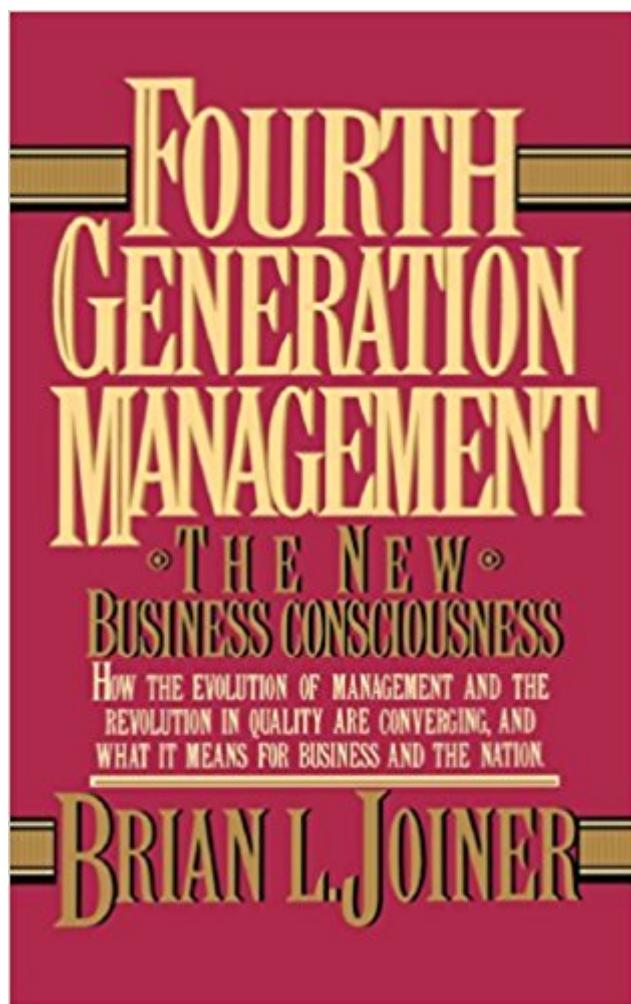


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Fourth Generation Management: The New Business Consciousness



Synopsis

In the past decade, an increasingly global marketplace has driven companies to seek more effective ways to manage. The methodologies that emerged from this investigation include total quality management (TQM), continuous improvement, reengineering, time-based competition, visionary leadership, and many others. What is still missing, however, is a clear explanation of the basic principles that underlie and unify these seemingly diverse approaches. Now, from Brian Joiner, the most articulate voice of the new breed of management gurus, comes Fourth Generation Management. This landmark book provides a coherent and concise synthesis of the best ideas being implemented today and the most promising ones taking shape for tomorrow. The key elements of Fourth Generation Management are a dedication to quality as defined by the customer, a scientific approach to rapid learning, and the creation of team-spirited relationships both within and beyond our organizations.

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Customer Reviews

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Management. This landmark book provides a coherent and concise synthesis of the best ideas being implemented today and the most promising ones taking shape for tomorrow. The key elements of Fourth Generation Management are a dedication to quality as defined by the customer, a scientific approach to rapid learning, and the creation of team-spirited relationships both within and beyond our organizations.

McGraw-Hill authors represent the leading experts in their fields and are dedicated to improving the lives, careers, and interests of readers worldwide

The author, Brian Joiner, was a student of Dr. Edward Deming who is a legend the world of Quality & Productivity. I have always enjoyed reading Deming's work and I agree with the vast majority of Dr. Deming's philosophy. My only problem with Deming is that in my opinion, he is a little too idealistic about the way people and companies "ought to be". Brian Joiner's work feels much more practical - dealing with reality the way that it is and giving solid advice on how to analyze and modify the current reality to make it work much better. I used this book as a textbook in a graduate level systems class I taught to a cohort of students who had taken a graduate level quality class with me the previous semester. The feedback from my students was unanimously positive on this book as everyone one of them could relate to Joiner more easily than they could Deming the previous semester.

Good read minus the statistical portion, would recommend overall

"This book is never far from my sight. It demonstrates why a "new" style of management is needed, especially if an organization wants to thrive in the 21st century. It is no longer sustainable to continue to carry on with 20th century management in the 21st century. Managers who are serious about turning their business around, need to understand the difference between noise and signal in order to make better business choices, as well as understand why it is so important to develop employees in a way that demonstrates respect, should read this book."

My book had lots of pieces of paper left in it. It also had writing in it. That was a bit distracting. The notes were helpful though.

Brian Joiner really captures the key concepts leaders need to understand to lead their businesses

today. His explanation of variation should open many eyes and help many businesses avoid over-correction and over-compensation for what is just occurring. And that is just one of the many useful concepts this book provides. This book is a classic and should be core to business school curricula.

This book is outstanding for anyone want to move their business forward. Our country is stuck in 3rd generation management and it is time to move forward if our country wants to remain competitive with the world. Easy to read and understand. Follows a lot of Deming's principles.

Good reading --- was required for a class at Purdue...

This is an excellent book, with many breakthrough ideas explained in a very compelling way. I recommend this book for practitioners working with Lean, Systems thinking or general operational improvement, however, if you are into six-sigma you will not understand the profound knowledge this book contains. There are a many reasons why I like this book, it has some memorable insights and phrases. Such as 'don't work on costs, work on the causes of costs'. Joiner also highlights how most managers manage their business without any theory behind their actions.. 'We should be thankful if the action of management is based on theory...' Joiner relentlessly pushes the notion that organisations must be 'understood and managed as a 'system', while developing process thinking, making decisions on customer data and understanding the theory of variation'. He then goes on to say that the typical management response to calls for improvement is to either 1) distort the system or 2) distort the figures instead of improving the system. Most people in the world of operational improvement will have come across the Deming PDCA (Plan Do Check Act) cycle, Joiner explains and supports this process very well but he adds a significant insight, what he says is, that when starting to make improvements you must start at CHECK, in fact he devotes a whole chapter to this important variation on Deming's PDCA theme. 'Performing check is what most organisations fail to do. Check uncovers things we would just as soon not know, it forces us to look at the huge wastes in each of our activities and exposes it all, and the non productive or plain stupid things we have unknowingly been doing for years. It creates the gut level energy to do a better job of taking Action, of Planning and Doing'. Joiner states that 'a fundamental tenant is that nothing happens in a predictable, sustainable way unless you build mechanisms that cause it to happen in a predictable sustained way' He talks about listening to management conversations for insights into the organisations real intent and focus he says ... 'The way top management spends its time and the

questions they ask of each other and the rest of the organisation is critical in determining the focus of the organisation.'The book goes on to explain how to reduce process variation, the sections about how managers respond to variation would be amusing if they were not real, i.e. how managers work on the people instead of working on the system and the injustice that results in addition to the loss in organisational performance.A good example of system variation resulting in perverse decisions and behaviour is illustrated by an example Joiner uses in telling a real story about a bank teller, who on several occasions got rewarded for her performance and at other times chastised....finally, she was unlucky enough to loose her job. Later, when talking to a friend she said that she never understood why she being praised because she hadn't done anything different and likewise the chastisement. Further conversation revealed that she had been a victim of system variation, the performance factors were attributed to her and not where they should have been that is to the system in which she worked. Essentially she had lost the Variation Lottery. He quotes Dr. Lloyd Nelson `failure to understand variation is the central problem of management'Joiner also wallops the inappropriate use of standards (accreditation schemes like ISO and BSI) because they are a barrier to improvement and creativity. He argues that standards far from improving the organisation often result in a loss of performance. `They stifle creativity, deflect attention from customers, increase red tape and make work inflexible, while providing only the minimum acceptable outputs'When it comes to people motivation he states that `to optimise the organisation as a whole, intrinsic motivation works better than rewards and punishment'Finally he states that in order to get `better results you must have better methods' and he goes on to explain what those methods are.This is a fine book, with excellent practical ideas as long as you see people as an asset capable of improving their own workplace and not as a cost to be `managed'.

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