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The lean revolution is here. And while you may understand that this revolution is a profound shift away from the traditions of mass production, the concept still causes many people to scratch their head and ask, "what exactly is lean manufacturing?" Lean is much more than techniques. It is a way of thinking-a whole-systems approach that creates a culture in which everyone in the organization continuously improves their process and production. Yet even for those organizations that have come to understand the power of lean, it may be a lost opportunity if they lack the knowledge to implement its powerful concepts. Or, receiving only a piece of the puzzle, they end up falling far short of lean's potential benefits. Not surprisingly, implementing lean manufacturing has proved a challenge for many U.S. companies.

But organizations have succeeded, and now you have a unique opportunity to benefit from their experience. In *Becoming Lean*, Jeffrey Liker has compiled a collection of stories from today's manufacturers already on the front line of the lean revolution. Here is the first book to go beyond descriptions of lean management to include powerful first-hand accounts of the complete process of change, its impact on the entire organization, and the rewards and benefits of becoming lean. Twelve American manufacturing companies tell their stories of successfully implementing lean methods. In their own words, the authors offer personalized accounts of their organization's lean transformation-including struggles, successes, and surprises. Many of the executives and managers who led the charge to lean in their own organizations tell their stories here for the first time. Some of the companies you'll read about include General Motors, Freudenberg-NOK, Gelman Sciences, Western Geophysical Exploration Products, Garden State Tanning, Donnely Corporation, and Cedarworks. The accounts provide not only a realistic view of what it takes to get lean, but evidence of the performance benefits of lean production systems.