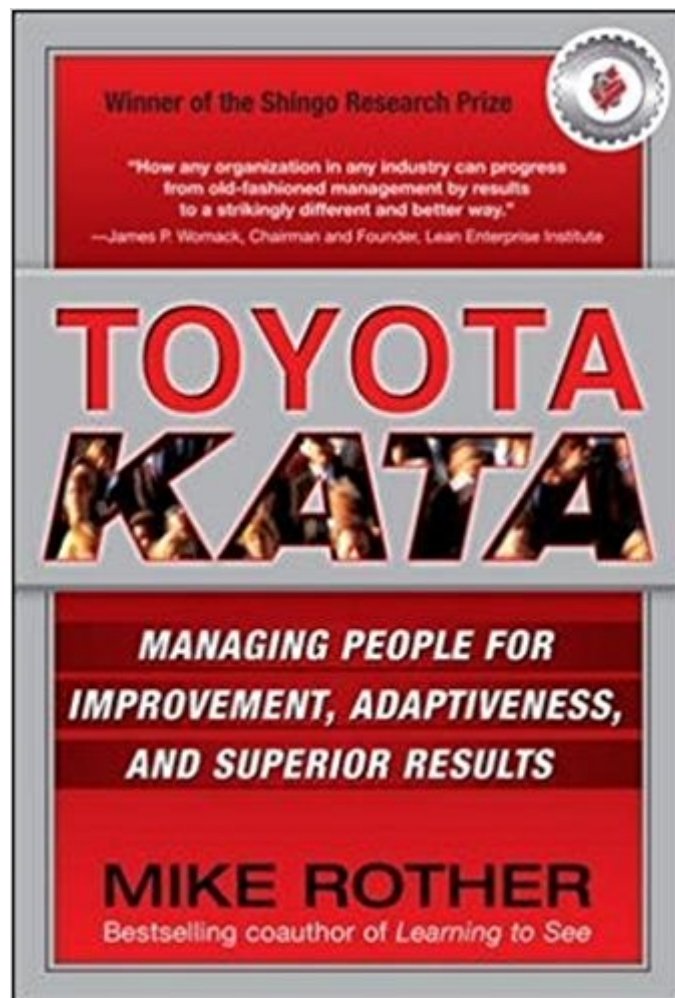




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Toyota Kata: Managing People For Improvement, Adaptiveness And Superior Results (Business Books)



Synopsis

"Toyota Kata gets to the essence of how Toyota manages continuous improvement and human ingenuity, through its improvement kata and coaching kata. Mike Rother explains why typical companies fail to understand the core of lean and make limited progress— and what it takes to make it a real part of your culture." —Jeffrey K. Liker, bestselling author of *The Toyota Way* "[Toyota Kata is] one of the stepping stones that will usher in a new era of management thinking." —The Systems Thinker "How any organization in any industry can progress from old-fashioned management by results to a strikingly different and better way." —James P. Womack, Chairman and Founder, Lean Enterprise Institute "Practicing the improvement kata is perhaps the best way we've found so far for actualizing PDCA in an organization." —John Shook, Chairman and CEO, Lean Enterprise Institute This game-changing book puts you behind the curtain at Toyota, providing new insight into the legendary automaker's management practices and offering practical guidance for leading and developing people in a way that makes the best use of their brainpower. Drawing on six years of research into Toyota's employee-management routines, *Toyota Kata* examines and elucidates, for the first time, the company's organizational routines--called kata--that power its success with continuous improvement and adaptation. The book also reaches beyond Toyota to explain issues of human behavior in organizations and provide specific answers to questions such as: How can we make improvement and adaptation part of everyday work throughout the organization? How can we develop and utilize the capability of everyone in the organization to repeatedly work toward and achieve new levels of performance? How can we give an organization the power to handle dynamic, unpredictable situations and keep satisfying customers? Mike Rother explains how to improve our prevailing management approach through the use of two kata: Improvement Kata--a repeating routine of establishing challenging target conditions, working step-by-step through obstacles, and always learning from the problems we encounter; and Coaching Kata: a pattern of teaching the improvement kata to employees at every level to ensure it motivates their ways of thinking and acting. With clear detail, an abundance of practical examples, and a cohesive explanation from start to finish, *Toyota Kata* gives executives and managers at any level actionable routines of thought and behavior that produce superior results and sustained competitive advantage.

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Customer Reviews

Lead, Manage, and Develop Your People--the Toyota Way! "Toyota Kata gets to the essence of how Toyota manages continuous improvement and human ingenuity, through its improvement kata and coaching kata. Mike Rother explains why typical companies fail to understand the core of lean and make limited progress--and what it takes to make it a real part of your culture."

Jeffrey K. Liker, bestselling author of *The Toyota Way* "By uncovering exactly what makes Toyota the standard bearer in a way that is accessible to every management level, in every industry, Rother has given the business world a true gem--Toyota Kata is a must read!"

Keith Allman, President, Delta Faucet Company "Mike Rother's Toyota Kata is a rare and exciting event--a book that casts entirely new light on a much-heralded set of management practices, giving those practices new significance and power."

from the Foreword by H. Thomas Johnson, author of *Profit Beyond Measure* "In Toyota Kata, Rother has put his finger on the heart of the coaching process at Toyota. He has distilled the PDCA process to its simplest and most essential core. Much of Toyota's success is rooted in these subtle yet powerful behaviors Mike so clearly describes. Kata provides a level of clear insight into the key principles underlying Toyota culture in a way that can be easily understood and applied. Essential reading for any company committed to lasting culture change." Bill Costantino, W3 Group, Former Group Leader TMMK (Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky, Inc.)

Mike Rother is an engineer, a teacher, and a guest researcher at the Technical University Dortmund. Rother's work has brought him to numerous companies and hundreds of

factories around the world, where he collaborates with people to test ideas and shares lessons learned. He splits his time between Ann Arbor, and Cologne, Germany. Rother has been entered into the Association of Manufacturing Excellence's Hall of Fame.

I'd previously given this book a 5 star review based upon reading. Now I can reaffirm based on DOING! Two weeks ago we launched our first real Lean "experiment"/ improvement process. I took the role of mentor in the teaching kata, and guided my Production Manager to help me write an A3 for how to dramatically reshape our shipping department. I didn't feel entirely comfortable, as I didn't have solid experience with ANY of the tools which are touted to fill up most "Lean" books. But by simply simply writing and mentoring the teaching of an A3, as taught in this book, we discovered all sorts of issues we hadn't been considering. And then, when we began to implement the formal plan -- as this book forewarned us to expect -- we uncovered a lot of additional considerations. That was several weeks ago. We are continuing to iterate on the improvement kata; it is clear we are on the right track to substantial improvement in the department and it is also more clear than ever that Lean isn't about "quick fix", short-term thinking (another lesson from this book). I've now purchased SIX copies of the book as we are picking up speed, proceeding to roll Lean out through all the aspects of our national business. It will doubtless take me years to really feel I am a fully experienced "Lean" practitioner. But I can't praise this book enough: Forget reading all the other books until you've really read this one. I wish I could take at least one star away from pretty nearly all the other Lean books out there so this one would really stand out as the shining STAR that it is.----Previous review:Of the probably 15 books I've read so far on "lean", this one stands alone in actually trying to teach the thinking *behind* Toyota's mindset of continuous improvement. As the author himself admits -- despite all the books, seminars, and consulting -- NOBODY has yet duplicated Toyota's results. You can be pretty sure you will fail, also, if you try to implement lean as a group of tools taught by a consultant. The tools are absolutely the LEAST important aspect of Toyota's success. In the author's words: "What we have been doing is observing Toyota's current visible practices, classifying them into lists of elements and principles and then trying to adopt them. This is reverse engineering ... and it is not working so well." I do think Lean has a lot to offer; It only makes sense that there a better and worse ways to do everything and that improvement really has no limits. The proper place to start, and to ground, is in the philosophy and more subtle behaviors at Toyota. The particular techniques are pretty much valueless without culture change and this is the only book I've read so far which really teaches that.

Tools, rules, techniques are necessary, but not sufficient to move an organization toward a culture of continuous improvement. It is indeed the daily behavior of the people inside the framework of the organization that defines the culture. The Improvement Kata and the Coaching Kata are not new, but they are explained here in a way that makes them an integrated whole and accessible to anyone who will take the time to study this excellent work. I remember back in the 80s when I first read Tom Peter's "In Search of Excellence". He described what is essentially the Improvement Kata and to a lesser degree the Coaching Kata. I remember how shocked I was to read his prescription for revitalizing continuous improvement -- i.e. that organizations must "fail faster". He was of course referring to rapid PDCA cycles where learning rapidly builds upon learning (through failure and success) in a never ending procession toward ever better processes. The Coaching Kata is what ties it all together so that through "respect for people" the Improvement Kata can grow progressively stronger and more pervasive throughout the organization. This is the key to what I've always thought of as "continuously improving the improvement system". Without the Coaching Kata, each improvement effort, regardless of how successful, is robbed of its full potential to create not just process change, but change in the people who created the process change. This evolution of the people, not just the processes, that is the key. Rother explains how this works with clarity and precision. I highly recommend this book.

Do you care about Quality? Do you care enough to think about it, study it, practice it, and discipline yourself to achieve it? If you do, treat yourself to Mike Rother and associates' thoughts on the subject. Read carefully, you will find a perspective, a discipline, and tools that can help you achieve satisfaction from your attention and skillful work. Placed in the context of the Toyota Production System, Mike Rother offers the benefit of years of observation, study, and practice in the kata of continuous improvement. My personal application is not in a manufacturing context and therefore must be adapted to fit the time constants and activities particular to my institution's work but the principles are clear and implementable. The down side, at least from a short term "I want results and profits NOW!" perspective, is that it takes time, especially at the institutional level, to achieve noticeable results. So, pick your payoff.

This book is useful in something aspects, in special situations when we need help to understand what we can do for get a good way to managing people at work. It told us how the workers at Toyota's plants be identified with the philosophy of TPS. I think the author of this book need put in it more energy, more passion when describe some experiences that happened in Toyota's plants....

The book describes the Toyota logic that underlines the environment where Kata is applied more than Kata itself. And that is a good thing, because Kata is more a consequence of a learning culture than its driver. Not for beginners; readers need some understanding of organization culture and the need for continuous improvement before embarking in this journey. It is a technical book after all, and not for the casual reader.

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