



# The Lean Manager: A Novel of Lean Transformation

*Michael Balle, Freddy Balle*

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The Lean Manager: A Novel of Lean Transformation, by lean experts Michael and Freddy Ballé, addresses the critical problem that most companies face today: how can they advance beyond realizing isolated gains from deploying lean tools, to fundamentally changing how they operate, think, and learn? The book gives companies a definitive guide for sustaining their ability to learn and to improve operations and financial performance, while continually developing people. "The only way to stay lean is to produce lean managers," says Jim Womack, author, lean management authority, and LEI founder. "Every isolated effort will recede -- or fail -- unless companies learn to use the lean process as a way of developing individual problem-solvers with the ownership, initiative, and know-how to solve problems, learn, and coach new individuals." The Lean Manager, the sequel to the Ballé's international bestselling business novel The Gold Mine, tells the compelling story of plant manager Andrew Ward as he goes through the journey to becoming a lean manager. Under the guidance of Phil Jenkinson (whose own lean journey was at the core of The Gold Mine), Ward learns to use a deep understanding of lean tools, as well as a technical know-how of his plant's operations, to foster a lean attitude that sustains continuous improvement. He learns how to use tools to unleash the creativity and motivation of people, so they learn how to solve problems as well as coach and teach others to solve problems. "I am excited and have hopes that this book will enlighten readers about what it really means to live a business transformation that puts customers first and does this through developing people," said Jeffrey Liker, author of The Toyota Way. "People who do the work have to improve the work. There are tools, but they are not tools for 'improving the process.' They are tools for making problems visible and for helping people think about how to solve those problems."

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