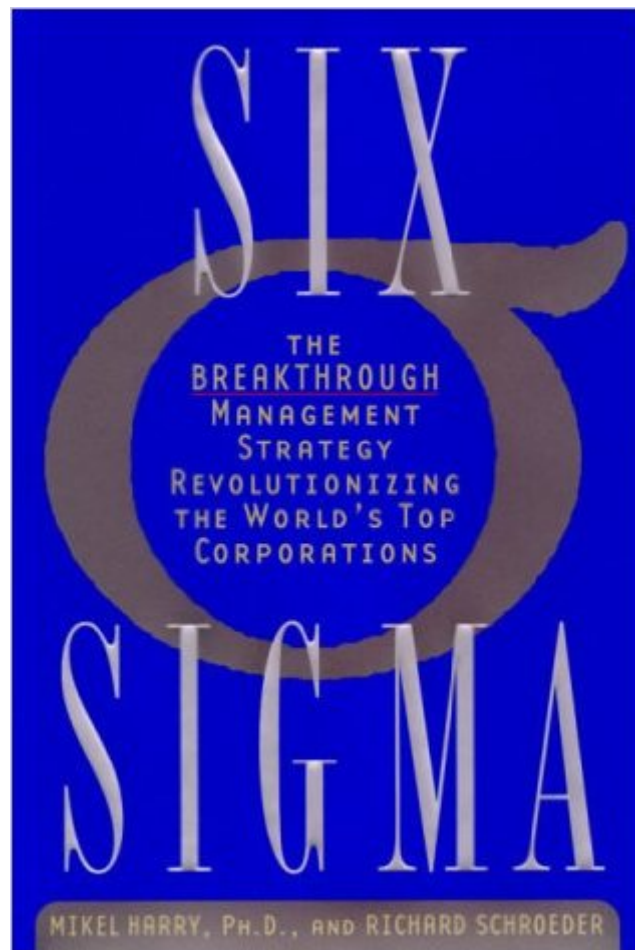


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Six Sigma: The Breakthrough Management Strategy Revolutionizing The World's Top Corporations



Synopsis

The extraordinary breakthrough management program--heralded by GE, Motorola, and AlliedSignal--that is sweeping corporate America with its unprecedented ability to achieve superior financial results. Six Sigma is the most powerful breakthrough management tool ever devised, promising increased market share, cost reductions, and dramatic improvements in bottom-line profitability for companies of any size. The darling of Wall Street, it has become the mantra of Fortune 500 boardrooms around the world because it works. What is Six Sigma? It is first and foremost a business process that enables companies to increase profits dramatically by streamlining operations, improving quality, and eliminating defects or mistakes in everything a company does, from filling out purchase orders to manufacturing airplane engines. While traditional quality programs have focused on detecting and correcting defects, Six Sigma encompasses something broader: It provides specific methods to re-create the process itself so that defects are never produced in the first place. Most companies operate at a three- to four-sigma level, where the cost of defects is roughly 20 to 30 percent of revenues. By approaching Six Sigma--fewer than one defect per 3.4 million opportunities--the cost of quality drops to less than 1 percent of sales. This is because the highest quality also results in the lowest costs. When GE reduced its costs from 20 percent to less than 10 percent, it saved a billion dollars in just two years--money that goes directly to the bottom line. This is the reason Wall Street and corporations as diverse as Sony, Ford, Nokia, Texas Instruments, Canon, Hitachi, Lockheed Martin, American Express, Toshiba, DuPont, and Polaroid have embarked on corporate-wide Six Sigma programs. Six Sigma should be of paramount importance to every forward-thinking executive and manager determined to make their company world-class in their industry.

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Customer Reviews

If I were to write a book consisting of a few (but not all) themes from Moby-Dick, several (but not all) characters from The Great Gatsby, and a few (but not all) subplots from Tom Clancy's latest potboiler, would you be likely to shell out your hard-earned money for the privilege of reading such a thing? Probably not. (But if you would, please call me ASAP! I'm not selling a book, but I do have this really cool bridge in Northern Michigan) But that's exactly what Mikel Harry and Richard Schroeder expect you to do. Reading their Six Sigma: The Breakthrough Strategy Revolutionizing the World's Top Corporations, I could not escape the feeling of déjà vu. Hardly a page went by without my thinking, "Been there. Seen that." While Six Sigma purports to be the seminal tome on the newest, best management strategy ever, it is in fact a pastiche of concepts, tools, techniques, and methodologies that have been around for a long time. Included in the Six Sigma "strategy" are bits and pieces of a generic Strategic Planning 101 course; a few of Deming's fourteen points and two of his four elements of profound knowledge; about one-and-a-half legs of Juran's Quality Trilogy; a little of Tom Peters' management by walking around, and an incomplete version of Hammer and Champy's business system diamond. Six Sigma is short on precise details about the "strategy." Instead, the book reads like a 300-page advertisement designed to generate business. And no wonder! The book's dust jacket informs us that Messrs. Mikel and Schroeder are (Surprise! Surprise!) CEO and President, respectively, of the Six Sigma Academy. We learn also that the Six Sigma Academy raked in over \$100 million in consulting/training fees in 1998.

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