

The Toyota Way To Lean Leadership Achieving And Sustaining Excellence Through Leadership Development

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Leading Lean McGraw Hill Professional

"John Dewey famously pointed out, 'We don't learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.' Here's your chance to learn as the three authors reflect on the (successful) struggle to build a Lean production and management system at Zingerman's Mail Order. Thousands of people visit and benchmark ZMO. This book delivers the backstory in a richly illustrated way." -- Mike Rother, author of the bestselling books *Toyota Kata* and *The Toyota Kata Practice Guide* This clever and highly engaging graphic novel details a story about one organization's Lean journey with inspiration from the Toyota Way. Over the years, common misunderstandings about what Lean is, what the journey is like, and how to advance have proliferated. Often, these misunderstandings come from the way people simplistically talk and think about Lean as if it is some concrete thing that you insert into an organization and step back to watch the results. The authors, however, view the organization as a living system with interacting parts and constant exposure to the environment. It is dynamic, so it's hard to predict what obstacles you will face next. Just when you think you have it solved, new challenges arise from the market, competitors, government regulations, and every direction you turn to. When you look at your organization in this way, you see Lean through a different lens. The goal is to make your processes and people into a more adaptive system so you can navigate through all the complexity and uncertainty to continually achieve your goals. This is how Toyota views things and they summarize the Toyota Way as continuous improvement and respect for people. Each person becomes a partner in struggling to learn and adapt, and specific tools are used in very different ways throughout the company to accomplish their goals. The story presented here focuses on a small company called Zingerman's Mail Order (ZMO). Tom Root was one of the founders of this spin-off of the Zingerman's delicatessen. The deli was founded to bring high-quality artisanal food to Ann Arbor, Michigan. The purpose of this book is not to provide a "recipe for implementation" - the authors want you to get a feeling for the struggle, for the learning process. They explain and demonstrate many Lean tools within the context of the journey and how they were adapted for this particular business. Toyota kata became the centerpiece of developing scientific thinking skills to begin to bring continuous improvement to life.

Summary of Jeffrey K. Liker's *The Toyota Way to Lean Leadership* by Milkyway Media CRC Press

The world's bestselling Lean expert shows service-based organizations how to go Lean, gain value, and get results—The Toyota Way. A must-read for service professionals of every level, this essential book takes the proven Lean principles of the

bestselling Toyota Way series and applies them directly to the industries where quality of service is crucial for success. Jeff Liker and Karyn Ross show you how to develop Lean practices throughout your organization using the famous 4P model. Whether you are an executive, manager, consultant, or frontline worker who deals with customers every day, you'll learn how take advantage of all Lean has to offer. With this book as your guide, you'll gain a clear understanding of Lean and discover the principles, practices and tools needed to develop people and processes that surprise and delight each of your customers. These ground-tested techniques are designed to help you make continuous improvements in your services, streamline your operations, and add ever-increasing value to your customers. Fascinating case studies of Lean-driven success in a range of service industries, including healthcare, insurance, financial services, and telecommunications, illustrate that Lean principles and practices work as well in services as they do in manufacturing. Drawn from original research and real-world examples, *The Toyota Way to Service Excellence* will help you make the leap to Lean.

The Sensei Way at Work Simon and Schuster

The book presents a mixed research method adopted to assess and present the Toyota Way practices within construction firms in general and for firms in China specifically. The results of an extensive structured questionnaire survey based on the Toyota Way-styled attributes identified were developed and data collected from building professionals working in construction firms is presented. The quantitative data presented in the book explains the status quo of the Toyota Way-styled practices implemented in the construction industry, as well as the extent to which these attributes were perceived for lean construction management. The book highlights all the actionable attributes derived from the Toyota Way model appreciated by the building professionals, but alerts the readers that some attributes felled short of implementation. Further findings from in-depth interviews and case studies are also presented in the book to provide to readers an understanding how these Toyota Way practices can be implemented in real-life projects. Collectively, all the empirical findings presented in this book can serve to enhance understanding of Toyota Way practices in the lean construction management context. The readers are then guided through to understand the gaps between actual practice and Toyota Way-styled practices, and the measures that they may undertake to circumvent the challenges for implementation. The book also presents to readers the SWOT analysis that addresses the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats towards the implementation of the Toyota Way in the construction industry. The book prescribes the Toyota Way model for use in construction firms to strategically implement lean construction management. The checklist presented in the book enables readers to draw lessons that may be used additionally as a holistic assessment tool for measuring the maturity of firms with respect to their Toyota Way implementation. Consequent to this, management would then be in a better position to develop plans for Toyota Way implementation by focusing on weak areas, strengthening them, and thus increasing the likelihood of success in the implementation of the Toyota Way. In a nutshell, this book

provides a comprehensive and valuable resource for firms not only in the construction industry but also businesses outside of the construction sector to better understand the Toyota Way and how this understanding can translate to implementation of lean construction/business management to enhance profitability and survivability in an increasingly competitive global market place.

[The Lean Manager](#) Lean Enterprise Institute

When James Womack, Daniel Jones, and Daniel Roos wrote THE MACHINE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD in 1990, Japanese automakers, and Toyota in particular, were making a strong showing by applying the principles of lean production. However, the full power of lean principles was unproven, and they had not been applied outside of the auto industry. Today, the power of lean production has been conclusively proved by Toyota's unparalleled success, and the concepts have been widely applied in many industries. Based on MIT's pioneering global study of industrial competition, THE MACHINE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD offers a groundbreaking analysis of the entire lean business system, including product development, supplier management, sales, service, and production - an analysis even more relevant today as GM and Ford struggle to survive and a wide range of British and American companies embrace lean production. A new Foreword by the authors brings the story up to date and details how their predictions were right. As a result, this reissue of a classic is as insightful and instructive today as when it was first published.

[A Graphic Novel about Lean and People at Zingerman's Mail Order](#) McGraw Hill Professional

Love, learn, let go. Three decisions. Three actions. Three habits. Together, these offer leaders insight (Leadersights) into the true nature of leadership and can create the type of workplace that can thrive in a demanding future. Leadersights: Creating Great Leaders Who Create Great Workplaces focuses on how organizations of all types can create a leader-development system that defines critical leader behaviors, provides simple techniques for building and improving the skills that drive those behaviors, and establishes a mechanism for monitoring and enforcing those behaviors. This book details how leaders can do the same for their employees; defining and promoting behaviors required for sustaining continuous change. In addition, it synthesizes current research on change, servant leadership, group and team dynamics, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, psychological flow, and individual self-efficacy. If you are stuck in a culture of compliance where an increasingly frustrated workforce continues to rely too much on leaders to solve problems, this book will guide you by: Focusing on the critical few leadership skills that provide better results Demonstrating proven improvement techniques, tools, and structures for higher satisfaction levels in colleagues Offering a new leadership model blending existing theories into an integral structure Explaining complex human systems in plain language and how they align with Lean principles Providing several "Leadersights" - simple suggestions for immediate improvement You will understand how to create the structure necessary to engage leaders and colleagues while driving new behavior and culture change. The author builds an effective leader development system based on current research on change, leadership, group and team dynamics, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, psychological flow, and self-efficacy to create the kind of workplace where people love coming to work and where they become better thinkers, leaders, and teachers.

[Developing Your People the Toyota Way](#) McGraw Hill Professional

Lean Process Creation teaches the specific frames—the 6CON

model—to look through to properly design any new process while optimizing the value-creating resources. The framing is applicable to create any process that involves people, technology, or equipment—whether the application is in manufacturing, healthcare, services, retail, or other industries. If you have a process, this approach will help. The result is 30% to 50% improvement in first-time quality, customer lead time, capital efficiency, labor productivity, and floorspace that could add up to millions of dollars saved per year. More important, it will increase both employee and customer satisfaction. The book details a case study from a manufacturing standpoint, starting with a tangible example to reinforce the 6CON model. This is the first book written from this viewpoint—connecting a realistic transformation with the detailed technical challenges, as well as the engagement of the stakeholders, each with their own bias. Key points and must-do actions are sprinkled throughout the case study to reinforce learning from the specific to the general. In this study, an empowered working team is charged with developing a new production line for a critical new product. As the story unfolds, they create an improved process that saves \$5.6 million (10x payback on upfront resource investment) over the short life cycle of the product, as well as other measurable benefits in quality, ergonomics, and delivery. To an even greater benefit, they establish a new way of working that can be applied to all future process creation activities. Some organizations have tried their version of Lean process design following a formula or cookie-cutter approach. But true Lean process design goes well beyond forcing concepts and slogans into every situation. It is purposeful, scientific, and adaptable because every situation starts with a unique current state. In addition, Lean process design must include both the technical and social aspects, as they are essential to sustaining and improving any system. Observing the recurring problem of reworking processes that were newly launched brought the authors to the conclusion that a practical book focused on introducing the critical frames of Lean process creation was needed. This book enables readers to consider the details within each frame that must be addressed to create a Lean process. No slogans, no absolutes. Real thinking is required. This type of thinking is best learned from an example, so the authors provide this case study to demonstrate the thinking that should be applied to any process. High volume or low, simple or complex mix, manufacturing or service/transactional—the framing and thinking works. Along with the thinking, readers are enabled to derive their own future states. This is demonstrated in the story that surrounds the case study.

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Special 100th Birthday Edition CRC Press

The definitive inside account of Toyota's greatest crisis—and lessons you can apply to your own company "Those who write off Toyota in the current climate of second guessing and speculation are making a profound mistake and need to read this book to get the facts. Toyota is a company that will channel the current challenges to push themselves to even more relentless continuous improvement." —Charles Baker, former Chief Engineer and Vice President for R&D, Honda of America "Toyota Under Fire is a superb book and should prove very helpful to American industry's understanding of the problems faced and how any company can prevent similar occurrences in the future." —Norman Bodek, author, founder of Productivity Press, and inductee in 2010 Industry Week Manufacturing Hall of Fame "As a former automotive supplier executive and student of Toyota, I was concerned to see the many negative reports and investigations into the quality and safety of its vehicles. Toyota Under Fire tells the story of how this great company is growing wiser and stronger by living its culture and values." —Michael Fisher, CEO, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center "Just as Toyota has put itself through excruciating soul-searching in order to understand what went wrong, so should we all take advantage of the opportunity for learning presented to us by Toyota's misfortune. In these pages, you will find that the actual circumstances were far more complex, nuanced, and uncertain than you saw reported in the news." —John Y. Shook, Chairman and CEO, Lean Enterprise Institute "The most comprehensive and detailed review to date of the circumstances that led to the crisis, and the events and contexts that caused it to escalate." —Strategy & Business About the Book For decades, Toyota has been setting standards that are the envy—and goal—of organizations worldwide. Its legendary management principles and business philosophy, first documented by Jeffrey K. Liker in his influential book *The Toyota Way*, changed the business world's approach to operational excellence. Granted unprecedented access to Toyota's facilities worldwide, Liker, along with Timothy N. Ogden, investigated the inside story of how Toyota faced the challenges of the recession and the recall crisis

of 2009–2010. In both cases, the company was caught off guard—and found that a root cause of the challenges it faced was its failure to live up to its own principles. But the fundamentals were still there, and the company has ultimately come out of the most challenging years of its postwar existence even stronger than before. *Toyota Under Fire* chronicles all the events of the recession and the recall crisis in detail, providing valuable lessons any business leader can use to survive and thrive in a crisis, no matter how large: Crisis response must start by building a strong culture long before the crisis hits. Culture matters far more than decisions made by top executives. Investing in people, even in the depths of a recession, is the surest path to long-term profitability. Because it had founded its culture on such principles, Toyota didn't need to amass an army of public relations, marketing, and legal experts to "put out the fire"; instead, it redoubled efforts to live up to its founding tenet, going "back to basics." Toyota began solving this crisis more than 70 years ago, when its organizational culture was first established. Apply the lessons of *Toyota Under Fire* to your company, and you'll meet any future management challenge calmly, responsibly, and effectively—the Toyota Way.

Kaizen Express CRC Press

How to speed up business processes, improve quality, and cut costs in any industry In factories around the world, Toyota consistently makes the highest-quality cars with the fewest defects of any competing manufacturer, while using fewer man-hours, less on-hand inventory, and half the floor space of its competitors. The Toyota Way is the first book for a general audience that explains the management principles and business philosophy behind Toyota's worldwide reputation for quality and reliability. Complete with profiles of organizations that have successfully adopted Toyota's principles, this book shows managers in every industry how to improve business processes by: Eliminating wasted time and resources Building quality into workplace systems Finding low-cost but reliable alternatives to expensive new technology Producing in small quantities Turning every employee into a qualitycontrol inspector

Welcome Problems, Find Success Tata McGraw-Hill Education

Lean Thinking was launched in the fall of 1996, just in time for the recession of 1997. It told the story of how American, European, and Japanese firms applied a simple set of principles called 'lean thinking' to survive the recession of 1991 and grow steadily in sales and profits through 1996. Even though the recession of 1997 never happened, companies were starving for information on how to make themselves leaner and more efficient. Now we are dealing with the recession of 2001 and the financial meltdown of 2002. So what happened to the exemplar firms profiled in *Lean Thinking*? In the new fully revised edition of this bestselling book those pioneering lean thinkers are brought up to date. Authors James Womack and Daniel Jones offer new guidelines for lean thinking firms and bring their groundbreaking practices to a brand new generation of companies that are looking to stay one step ahead of the competition.

The Kaizen Event Planner Lean Enterprise Institute

The Toyota Production System model, or Lean, originated in manufacturing but has since emerged as a powerful tool for providing safe, compassionate, error-free healthcare. This book examines trailblazing work in several organizations that committed to applying Lean principles and processes in a new environment, and it shares the insights of leaders who credit Lean with dramatically improving their operations and outcomes. This book explains what Lean is, how it works, and how it can benefit your organization. The implementation of Lean can

increase patient and staff satisfaction; improve patient care; cut waste, clutter, and confusion; eliminate errors that result in patient and staff harm; lower costs; raise profitability; and enhance your operation's reputation. This new edition explores how Lean can transform healthcare at any level. Four new chapters describe the implementation of Lean in the healthcare system of Saskatchewan, Canada--a province that employs more than 40,000 healthcare workers to serve a population of 1.13 million people scattered over 251,900 square miles. The authors share numerous lessons learned from launching such a large-scale improvement effort, addressing such issues as overcoming resistance to change and engaging patients and care providers in the implementation. No organization is too big to tackle a Lean transformation: The bigger the system being improved, the larger the potential gains. In addition, a new epilogue presents an update on previous cases and shares the perspectives of three leaders looking back on their implementations, considering long-term success, and offering their most seasoned advice. "Today, 14 years into our journey, the answer is still clear. Lean is the management system Virginia Mason needed. We're past the tipping point, and the results continue to be powerful in their positive impact for our patients and staff." --Gary Kaplan, CEO, Virginia Mason Medical Center

The Toyota Way to Lean Leadership McGraw Hill Professional

The Toyota Way, explain's Toyota's unique approach to Lean--the 14 management principles and philosophy that drive Toyota's quality and efficiency-obsessed culture. You'll gain valuable insights that can be applied to any organization and any business process, whether in services or manufacturing. Professor Jeffrey Liker has been studying Toyota for twenty years, and was given unprecedented access to Toyota executives, employees and factories, both in Japan and the United States, for this landmark work. The book is full of examples of the 14 fundamental principles at work in the Toyota culture, and how these principles create a culture of continuous learning and improvement. You'll discover how the right combination of long-term philosophy, process, people, and problem solving can transform your organization into a Lean, learning enterprise--the Toyota Way.

The Gold Mine McGraw Hill Professional

The ability to bring new and innovative products to market rapidly is the prime critical competence for any successful consumer-driven company. All industries, especially automotive, are slashing product development lead times in the current hyper-competitive marketplace. This book is the first to thoroughly examine and analyze the truly effective product development methodology that has made Toyota the most forward-thinking company in the automotive industry. Winner of the 2007 Shingo Prize For Excellence In Manufacturing Research! In *The Toyota Product Development System: Integrating People, Process, and Technology*, James Morgan and Jeffrey Liker compare and contrast the world-class product development process of Toyota with that of a U.S. competitor. They use extensive examples from Toyota and the U.S. competitor to demonstrate value stream mapping as an extraordinarily powerful tool for continuous improvement. Through examples and case studies, this book illustrates specific techniques and proven practices for dealing with challenges associated with product development, such as synchronizing multiple disciplines, multiple function workload leveling, compound process variation, effective technology integration, and knowledge management. Readers of this book can focus on optimizing the entire product development value stream rather than focus on a specific tool or technology for local improvements.

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Achieving Rapid Improvement in Office, Service, and Technical Environments Pearson Education India

In this book, author Nate Furuta, former chair and CEO of Toyota Boshoku America Inc., shares the story of his decades of experience directly leading the establishment of Toyota cultures outside Japan. Furuta was the first Toyota employee on the ground at New United Motor Manufacturing Inc. (NUMMI), Toyota's joint venture in California with General Motors, where he directly led the establishment of the most revolutionary labor-management agreement in the history of the US auto industry. In addition, Furuta was the first Toyota employee on the ground in Georgetown Kentucky at Toyota's first full-scale, wholly owned manufacturing operation outside Japan, where he led (working directly with President Fujio Cho) the establishment of Toyota's general management systems and culture there. This book tells the stories of establishing successful operations in those two iconic organizations as well as others. Furuta reveals details, both stories and process descriptions that only he can tell. He takes you along as he and others lead Toyota's intense globalization from the early 1980s to recent days. He introduces you to the critical leaders in Toyota's history, such as Taiichi Ohno and Fujio Cho as well as Kenzo Tamai, the head of the company's HRM function in the 1980s. This book is not about human-resource management (HRM) policies and procedures. It provides a deep dive into the way senior leaders embody deep awareness of HRM matters, developing and executing company strategy while at the same time developing organizational capability. The role of senior leaders isn't just a matter of directing the company to achieve objectives; it is a matter of building the capability to achieve those objectives, consistently, and further developing capability as it executes. Key to this is to develop the awareness, attitude, capability, and practice of identifying problems as progress is made toward achieving objectives, which is, in fact, attained through steadily eliminating each problem as it arises. This becomes a self-reinforcing loop of the organization, tapping in to the essence of solving problems while simultaneously developing ever better problem-solving skills and better problem solvers. This loop propels an organization toward meeting its purpose while developing capability for capability development. Essentially, this book reveals Toyota's general management systems from the firsthand experience of a Toyota Japanese senior manager and describes, with stories and process examples, the attitude, behaviors, and systems needed to successfully establish and lead in a true Lean business

environment.

The Toyota Way Simon and Schuster

From the bestselling author of "The Toyota Way," the missing link to sustainable lean success a four-step leadership model that aligns company culture with lean processes

The Toyota Product Development System McGraw Hill Professional

COMMEMORATING THE 100th BIRTHDAY OF TAIICHI OHNO Businesses worldwide are successfully implementing the Toyota Production System to speed up processes, reduce waste, improve quality, and cut costs. While there is widespread adoption of TPS, there is still much to be learned about its fundamental principles. This unique volume delivers a clear, concise overview of the Toyota Production System and kaizen in the very words of the architect of both of these movements, Taiicho Ohno, published to mark what would have been his 100th birthday. Filled with insightful new commentary from global quality visionaries, Taiichi Ohno's Workplace Management is a classic that shows how Toyota managers were taught to think. Based on a series of interviews with Ohno himself, this timeless work is a tribute to his genius and to the core values that have made, and continue to make, Toyota one of the most successful manufacturers in the world. "Whatever name you may give our system, there are parts of it that are so far removed from generally accepted ideas (common sense) that if you do it only half way, it can actually make things worse." "If you are going to do TPS you must do it all the way. You also need to change the way you think. You need to change how you look at things." -- Taiichi Ohno "This book brings to us Taiichi Ohno's philosophy of workplace management--the thinking behind the Toyota Production System. I personally get a thrill down my spine to read these thoughts in Ohno's own words." -- Dr. Jeffrey Liker, Director, Japan Technology Management Program, University of Michigan, and Author, The Toyota Way Based on a series of interviews with Taiicho Ohno, this unique volume delivers a clear, concise overview of the Toyota Production System and kaizen in the very words of the architect of both of these movements, published to mark what would have been his 100th birthday. INCLUDES INSIGHTFUL NEW COMMENTARY FROM: Fujio Cho, Chairman of Toyota Corporation Masaaki Imai, Founder of the Kaizen Institute Dr. Jeffrey Liker, Director, Japan Technology Management Program, University of Michigan, and author John Shook, Chairman and CEO of the Lean Enterprise Institute Bob Emiliani, Professor, School of Engineering and Technology, Connecticut State University Jon Miller, CEO of the Kaizen Institute

A Story of Innovative Lean Process Development McGraw Hill Professional

Building upon the international bestselling Toyota Way series of books by Jeffrey Liker, The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement looks critically at lean deployments and identifies the root causes of why most of them fail. The book is organized into three major sections outlining: Why it is critical to go beyond implementing lean tools and, instead, build a culture of continuous improvement that connects operational excellence to business strategy Case studies from seven unique industries written from the perspective of the sensei (teacher) who led the lean transformation Lessons about transforming your own vision of an ideal organization into reality Section One: Using the Plan-Do-Check-Adjust (PDCA) methodology, Liker and Franz contrast true PDCA thinking to that of the popular, superficial approach of copying "lean solutions." They describe the importance of developing people and show how the Toyota Way principles support and drive continuous improvement. Explaining how lean

systems and processes start with a purpose that provides a true north direction for all activities, they wrap up this section by examining the glaring differences between building a system of people, processes, and problem-solving that is truly lean versus that of simply trying to "lean out" a process. Section Two: This section brings together seven case studies as told by the sensei who led the transformation efforts. The companies range from traditional manufacturers, overhaul and maintenance of submarines, nuclear fuel rod production, health care providers, pathology labs, and product development. Each of these industries is different but the approaches used were remarkably similar. Section Three: Beginning with a composite story describing a company in its early days of lean implementation, this section describes what went right and wrong during the initial implementation efforts. The authors bring to light some of the difficulties the sensei faces, such as bureaucracies, closed-minded mechanical thinking, and the challenges of developing lean coaches who can facilitate real change. They address the question: Which is better, slow and deep organic deployment or fast and broad mechanistic deployment? The answer may surprise you. The book ends with a discussion on how to make continuous improvement a way of life at your company and the role of leadership in any lean transformation. The Toyota Way to Continuous Improvement is required reading for anyone seeking to transcend his or her tools-based approach and truly embrace a culture of continuous improvement.

Springer

The Toyota Way to Lean Leadership: Achieving and Sustaining Excellence Through Leadership Development McGraw Hill Professional

Creating Toyota Cultures Around the World McGraw Hill Professional

"Mike Woods urges his retired father into helping out a friend's failing company. But for Bob Woods, another struggle to introduce lean manufacturing quickly rehashes production battles that he's long since fought. And not even the senior Woods, son Mike, or friend Phil and his colleagues really grasp what's in store for them."--Cover.

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REVIEW OF THE TOYOTA WAY TO LEAN LEADERSHIP ACHIEVING AND SUSTAINING EXCELLENCE THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Augustine's name is not tossed around as much as that of Plato or Caesar or many other famous men and women of antiquity, but there is no doubt that he is one of the most important thinkers in all of Western history, and he in fact created the theory of "The West" that has over time become our identity. Augustine, classically educated, a religious experimenter, Rome's top university professor and greatest scholar, and the premier thinker of the contemporary church, reacted to the fall of Rome by creating a whole new approach to what it is citizens are to look to for their citizenship and community. He postulates a new world order centred on the Christian revelation, but including all that is good from Roman and Greek civilization. Since Rome fell, the kind of fantasy world of Roman myth and lore kept in the popular imagination by Virgil's Aeneid and related art and literature could no longer hold water. It was time for a stronger

focal point for patriotism and self-definition. That would be a Christian one, including Rome and Greece, to be sure, but the major element would be Christ. The Bible would gently nudge aside Virgil, and perhaps Augustine, aware of his own extraordinary literary prowess, saw his own monumental works edging aside the other great Latin writers such as Cicero and Sallust. This would all be quite some bit of bombastic or farsighted folly were it not to prove true. Augustine's work was indeed adopted as the 'mind' of Christendom, his City of God being read to emperors and kings, and leading the thoughts of the leaders of Christian Europe for over a thousand years. His 'grand unifying theory' of Western civilization, uniting the organization of Rome with the thought of Greece and the revelation of the Bible, has been accepted as the de facto definition of what it means to be Western until only the very last few decades of our time. Augustine, apparently aware of his talents, must have been aware that his epic work outshone anything written before, and is itself a testament to the civilization that he advocates: a fully coherent combination of Greek philosophy, Roman civilization and Biblical wisdom. This seamless blend of literary prowess from Rome's greatest scholar and highest ranking professor generates for the reader a powerful education in philosophy, history and theology, tied together with awesome rhetoric, that is uniquely powerful, erudite, insightful and useful all at once. From a historical and literary perspective, this may have been the very most important book ever written by reputedly human hands. As it is written for the leaders of society and not for the average citizen, be ready to be intrigued, challenged to thought, and impressed with every line. By no means must the reader have any kind of religious belief to benefit from this book, nor must the reader agree with all that Augustine postulates, nor can the

reader, due to the great distance of time separating him from us and improvements in scientific knowledge since his time. The importance, greatness and power of the writing itself commend it to us.

- Between September of 1994 and before the end of february of 1995, I read the first six books. They were amazing!! I loved them!! I loved the characters, the world, and EVERYTHING in them!!!! Then, just over a year later, this came out. I waited year for the eighth book, so i could read them together, but it never came out, so i read a crown of swords. Unfortunately, I understood very little of anything that was going on. And now, another year later, the next book still isnt out. Robert Jordan has created an amazing series, but he has gotten too carried away. There are too many plots, subplots, character, lands, peoples. In short, he has created his own little world. It might have worked, and if you decide to read this series, read it all together, but RJ spends way too much time between books. And unfortunately for him, a readers interest cannont be sustained for 10 or so years when there are other authors who atleast give 1 book a year, and they create amazing worlds too. At one time, for books 1-4, this story was unbelievable. In books 5 it slipped, and in Lord of Chaos, it slipped even further. The end of Lord of Chaos made the entire book worth while, though. However, a Crown of Sword has absoutely nothing of value in it. The is so much in this series, and so many things start to happen, you stop caring about each individual event. And individual events are what books are based on. In short, I am likely going to continue to read this series, but only when it is completed, and then i will start from the beginning, and see if i can recapture the love i once had for this series.