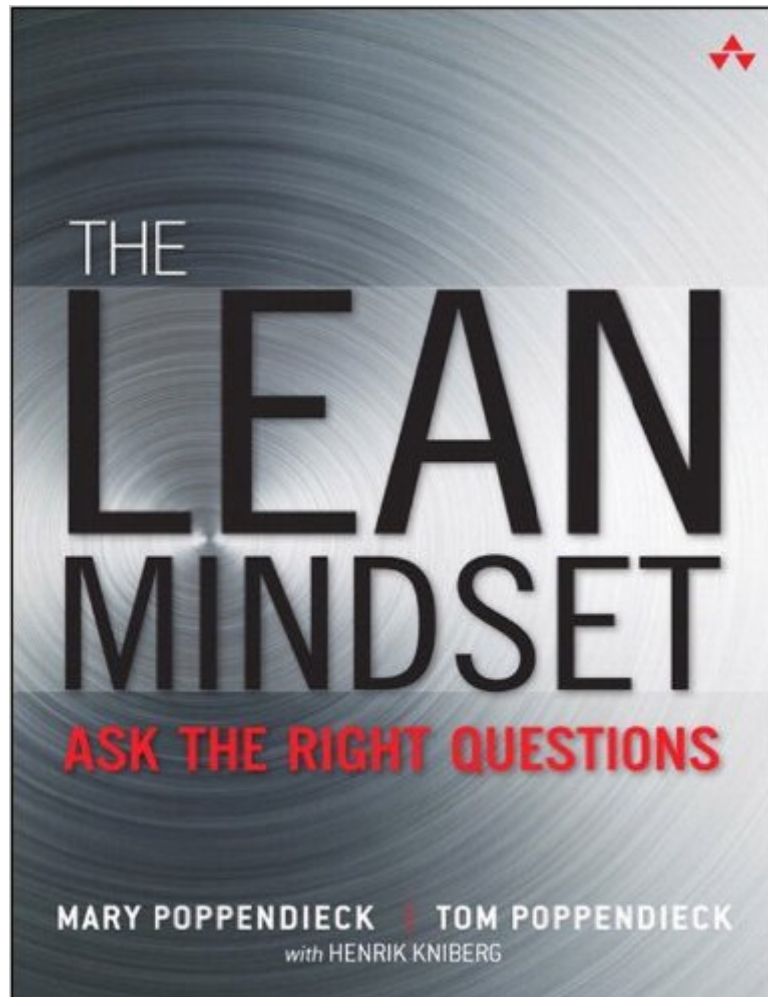# The Lean Mindset: Ask The Right Questions (Addison-Wesley Signature Series (Beck))

Synopsis

What company doesnâ ™t want energized workers, delighted customers, genuine efficiency, and breakthrough innovation? The Lean Mindset shows how lean companies really workâ "and how a lean mindset is the key to creating stunning products and delivering amazing services. Â Through cutting-edge research and case studies from leading organizations, including Spotify, Ericsson, Intuit, GE Healthcare, Pixar, CareerBuilder, and Intel, youâ ™ll discover proven patterns for developing that mindset. Youâ ™ll see how to cultivate product teams that act like successful startups, create the kind of efficiency that attracts customers, and leverage the talents of bright, creative people. Â The Poppendiecks weave lean principles throughout this book, just as those principles must be woven throughout the fabric of your truly lean organization. Â Â Learn How To   Start with an inspiring purpose, and overcome the curse of short-term thinking   Energize teams by providing well-framed challenges, larger purposes, and a direct line of sight between their work and the achievement of those purposes   Delight customers by gaining unprecedented insight into their real needs, and building products and services that fully anticipate those needs   Achieve authentic, sustainable efficiency without layoffs, rock-bottom cost focus, or totalitarian work systems   Develop breakthrough innovations by moving beyond predictability to experimentation, beyond globalization to decentralization, beyond productivity to impact   Lean approaches to software development have moved from novelty to widespread use, in large part due to the principles taught by Mary and Tom Poppendieck in their pioneering books. Now, in The Lean Mindset, the Poppendiecks take the next step, looking at a company where multidiscipline teams are expected to ask the right questions, solve the right problems, and deliver solutions that customers love. Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Lean Mindset is the 4th book of Mary and Tom Poppendieck in the Lean Software series. The book is in a similar format as the previous books. It contains lots of different stories (mostly referring to others work) and ties those together in one consistent message. The Lean Mindset is a bit different as the previous books in the series as it is less software focused, but also much less 'lean' focused (Lean in the Womack/Jones definition). In that sense, the title Lean Mindset is a bit off, yet it is still a useful book.The book five chapters, each of about 30 pages or so, making the total page count around 170 (smaller than previous books, as far as I remember). The chapters are 1) The Purpose of Business, 2) Energized Workers, 3) Delighted Customers, 4) Genuine Efficiency, and 5) Breakthrough Innovation.The first chapter "The Purpose of Business" challenges the concept of companies existing purely for maximizing shareholder benefits. Instead they ought to serve a larger purpose, which also brings us to the second chapter "Energized Workers" challenges that people should just be workers and instead should continuously grow and develop themselves. When they do that, they can chapter 3 "Delight Customers" by not just implementing requirements but by using design thinking to actually solve a problem for the customers. They'll need to do that in a chapter 4 "Genuine Efficiency" way. Efficiency not measured in the utilization of resources but in the flow of value throughout the organization. This usually requires some Chapter 5 "Breakthrough Innovation".The book contains lots of stories (mostly taken from history) and a couple of case studies in which the Poppendiecks have been in contact with.

The Lean Mindset is the latest book by two of my favourite authors, Mary and Tom Poppendieck. As expected from a continuation of their Lean series, the book tackles a topic much wider than just software delivery, but with great case studies that help put those things into a software delivery perspective.One of the central concepts of the book is the move from process efficiency to product

management and product delivery, which is probably the most important topic for organisations that have successfully adopted Scrum, Kanban or any of the related processes. Pushing software out of the door in a reliable and predictable manner is pretty much a solved problem now, and the next big improvement for many teams will have to come from somewhere else - and in my mind this is clearly by using that process effectiveness to remove bottlenecks in product management. Quoting one of the contributors to the book, "Our agile projects were consistently producing affordable, high-quality software with almost every customer priority included. [...] Stakeholders might have been satisfied with project performance, but rarely was the audience delighted, wowed, or blown away by novel innovation or creative design.". If you recognised your team or organisation in the previous sentence, then this is absolutely the book you have to read next.The FBI case management story was particularly interesting as it shows one of the pitfalls of iterative delivery - that the pressure to show constant progress causes people to constantly select easy tasks until wicked problems requiring serious engineering surface. This is often caused by a disconnect between business objectives and technical delivery, and the authors list several tools and models that can help avoid that "Air Sandwich".

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