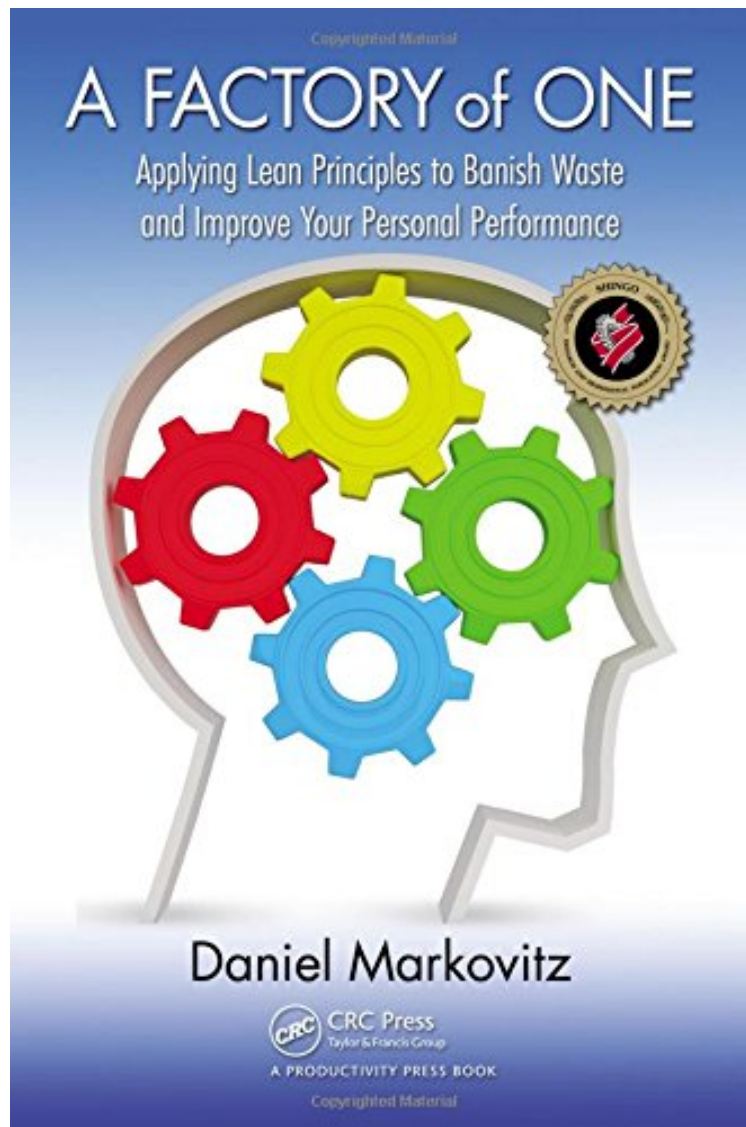


(Mobile book) A Factory of One: Applying Lean Principles to Banish Waste and Improve Your Personal Performance

## A Factory of One: Applying Lean Principles to Banish Waste and Improve Your Personal Performance

*Daniel Markovitz*

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**Daniel Markovitz : A Factory of One: Applying Lean Principles to Banish Waste and Improve Your Personal Performance** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Factory of One: Applying Lean Principles to Banish Waste and Improve Your Personal Performance:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Brings together great conceptsBy Rick SlineThis book is easy to

read yet chock full of great advice from multiple references - mind maps; kanban; kaizen; PDCA; desk, e-document email management just to name some. Although I plan to do a few things slightly differently overall this is best single source of information I've come across. Supplemental thoughts: Was anxious to get initial positive review out quickly. After reviewing the book and actually purchasing another copy for a co-worker - this book is great!! I'm in an unusual position in that I'm responsible for many clinical research databases in a very research-prolific group in a medical school. I architect design all, and program support most. I'm responsible for the data integrity of each and have a lot of follow-up with researchers, statisticians and data entry people. Additionally I'm creating infrastructure policies and procedures for our entire data management operation. For my specific needs there are far too many tasks and moving pieces to use sticky notes - only do that for collaborative efforts at a high level. For the bulk of my work I use 3x5 index cards in a small case I carry with me (and larger cases on my desk once done). Have divider tabs for the major sections - I've customized the categories and have tweaked them a bit. Since I'm in a lot of meetings, it's easy as I'm given a new task just to write it on a blank card with current date drop it in Backlog. I endeavor to review backlog at least every other day (sometimes while waiting for a meeting to start). I might have 10+ items between Ready Today (my own creation of must-do's today), but only move a few to Doing until an emergency comes up. When the task is complete, I'll drop in (waiting for) Retrospective and ultimately to Archive. Sometimes a task is canceled and the card is moved to the Canceled section. In the roughly one month I've been in the office doing this I've moved over 100 to Retrospective or Archive and about a dozen to Canceled. One of the great benefits of this system is I can review what I've done, when it was assigned and when it was completed. As appropriate I'll put brief notes on the cards.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good practical advice

By I. Gurin I view all self-help books through the lens of Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In addition to his specific framework (the seven habits), he gives a general criterion for distinguishing good advice from bad advice. Any proper self-help or personal management tool should work from the "inside out": come to the situation with a sound understanding and a constructive approach, and let your response come from that knowledge, rather than trying to "fix things up" by simple "tricks" or "tools". The drawback of *Seven Habits* is that it's short on details. *A Factory of One* fills in many of those details. Furthermore, unlike many other personal management books, it passes the "inside out" test. (For Covey fans, most of Markovitz's advice falls into the category of Habit 3, with bits of Habits 1 and 2 for good measure.)

Big disclaimer before I get into the meat of this review: My personal bias is that half of what Markovitz says, I already generally knew that I had to do, but didn't know how. If you have a different mindset, your mileage may vary. Markovitz first asks you to draw, essentially, a graphical job description. This is the key, because you can't tell what waste is unless you know what value is. His more practical advice rests on three pillars: eliminating clutter and distraction, structuring your work, and continuous improvement. I'll discuss the first two first, since they go together, and the third one later. Cleanliness, quiet and order help you focus on each task as you do it, without having to constantly look up at the "big picture", which can be daunting, or think about other tasks. ("Living in the now", anyone?) Although Markovitz takes many examples from factories, his tools are very helpful for knowledge workers whose work resists standardization. As he says, again and again, if your work is hard to streamline, that only makes it more important to do so. This may seem to lead to rigidity, which would mean death to most of us, but that's where continuous improvement comes in. If your structures don't work, you change them. Always look out for sources of waste, or weaknesses in your workflow, and attack them with vigor. The specific tools in this last chapter are not as strong as the others, but once you've built up a foundation from the rest of the book, it doesn't matter too much how you go about your continuous improvement.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. What Does Lean Mean to Me - Answered

By Rick Foreman As a director of lean development within an organization, I'm often asked by office, administrative, sales and marketing, "How does this lean stuff apply to me?" or "What does it really mean?" The author does a great job of sharing how the "rubber-meets-the-road," for a daily process, improvement focus. With the constant and never ending influx of information, through email and digital media, how can an individual, team or organization truly focus on continuous improvement. Dan does a great job of first driving reflection on "what is the value we provide," and not simply "the work we do." From there he takes on a meaningful journey to spotting the value and waste, within the processes. In addition, the book provides some very realistic applications to flow, visual management and problem solving. We kicked off a book study with discussions, questions, and application using this wonderful book and the feedback has been tremendous. Our Sales and Marketing team engaged at a level not seen before with very tangible results from implemented actions. I've yet to hear of one team member who wanted to give up their book for another group going through the study. For those of us coaching and mentoring change, connecting and engaging beyond the factory floor is critical and Dan has helped us move to a new level of lean thinking, with the "Factory of One."

Most business readers have heard of the Lean principles developed for factories a set of tools and ideas that have enabled companies to dramatically boost quality by reducing waste and errors producing more while using less. Yet until now, few have recognized how relevant these powerful ideas are to individuals and their daily work. Every person at a desk, drafting table, workstation, or operating table must (like a factory) deal with the challenge of

reducing the waste that creeps into their work. The same Lean principles that have improved efficiencies on the factory floor can be just as powerful in fact, far more so in helping individuals boost personal performance. Winner of a 2013 Shingo Research and Professional Publication Award! *A Factory of One: Applying Lean Principles to Banish Waste and Improve Your Personal Performance* describes how you can foster a new mindset and improve your performance by applying Lean methods to your work. It translates powerful Lean tools such as visual management, flow, pull, 5S, and kaizen to your daily work, revealing how they can help to improve efficiency, reduce waste, and link you ever more closely to customer value. This practice will help you develop better self-awareness, more disciplined problem-solving skills, and the ability to self-correct errors. This book not only provides the tools, but also teaches you how to find the root causes underlying your inefficiencies so you can eliminate them permanently. It will enable you to immediately improve personal productivity while developing the skills needed for continuous improvement. It includes real-world examples that illustrate how these principles have been successfully applied across a range of industries. Providing the perfect mix of what-to-do with why-to-do it, the text details a step-by-step approach to applying Lean principles to your work. Listen to what Daniel Markovitz has to say about his new book, *A Factory of One*. Part One Part Two View the book's website at [www.afactoryofone.com](http://www.afactoryofone.com). View the author's website at [www.timebackmanagement.com](http://www.timebackmanagement.com).

Dan Markovitz brings a thoughtful and supremely practical perspective to the fundamental scarcity faced by us all: time. His approach blends conceptual frameworks and concrete specifics—a powerful and useful combination—to reduce the noise and clutter in our lives and work. Markovitz can help us all to be more effective! Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great* and co-author of *Built to Last* and *Great by Choice* No matter what your role is in your company, or whether you're an independent consultant or even unemployed, you will love Dan Markovitz's new book, *A Factory of One*. This gem will improve even the most efficient person's work life in powerful ways. The introduction alone got me motivated to adopt those practices that he writes and aren't yet part of my standard work. ... It's short, sweet, and to the point. You're never left wanting more, but you never wish the author would get on with it. ... relates powerful Lean manufacturing tools such as visual management, flow, pull, 5S, and kaizen to daily work, revealing how they improve efficiency, reduce waste, and link the individual worker ever more closely to customer value. This practice helps business professionals develop greater self-awareness, more disciplined problem-solving skills, and a heightened ability to self-correct errors. Read Dan's book—and then apply the tips he gives. Karen Martin, Principal, Karen Martin Associates; and keynote speaker, ASQ Lean and Six Sigma Conference 2012 About the Author Daniel Markovitz is president of TimeBack Management ([www.timebackmanagement.com](http://www.timebackmanagement.com)), a consulting firm that radically improves individual and team performance by identifying and eliminating root cause impediments to productivity. He is a faculty member at the Lean Enterprise Institute and teaches at the Stanford University Continuing Studies Program. He also leads a problem solving workshop at the Ohio State University's Fisher School of Business. Dan lived in Japan for four years and is fluent in Japanese. He's also an avid distance runner, an enthusiastic (but somewhat tentative) cyclist, and a determined (if slow) swimmer. He holds an MBA from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business. You can reach him at [dan@timebackmanagement.com](mailto:dan@timebackmanagement.com) or via Twitter @timeback.