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The Puritan Gift - The Best Twenty Bucks You'll Ever Spend

by [BILL WADDELL](#)

[The Puritan Gift by Kenneth and William Hopper](#) is a first for me - the first time I have used these pages to endorse anything. I knew it would be good before I read it for the simple reason that Jim Huntzinger recommended it very highly. Jim is the driving force behind the Lean Accounting Summit, the TWI Summit and the Lean and Green Summit. He is a great lean thinker and a great guy, and his recommendation carries a lot of weight with me. And Jim did not steer me wrong.

If you want to understand management - especially manufacturing management - how we got here, what has worked and what doesn't - and how to get back on the phenomenal track American manufacturing was on before the wheels started to come off a few decades back, you have to read this book.

The Hopper brothers have done incredible research and have an easygoing writing style that makes the book hard to put down, and just about every page has an eye opening fact, anecdote or idea that will give you cause to put the book down for a moment simply to allow yourself the luxury of absorbing what you just read.

From the cultural underpinnings of the great manufacturers of the last century, the rise and negative influence of the B schools, the first hand accounts of the American experts who worked with Japan immediately after the war, and how some of the major companies are beginning to wake up and address the problems resulting from downplaying and downsizing technical "domain knowledge", these guys have covered it all.

It is not an overstatement to describe The Puritan Gift as an essential book for manufacturing management. You really will have a hole in your understanding of the art and science of manufacturing until you take the time to let the Hopper brothers fill it for you. It will be the best \$20 you ever spent.