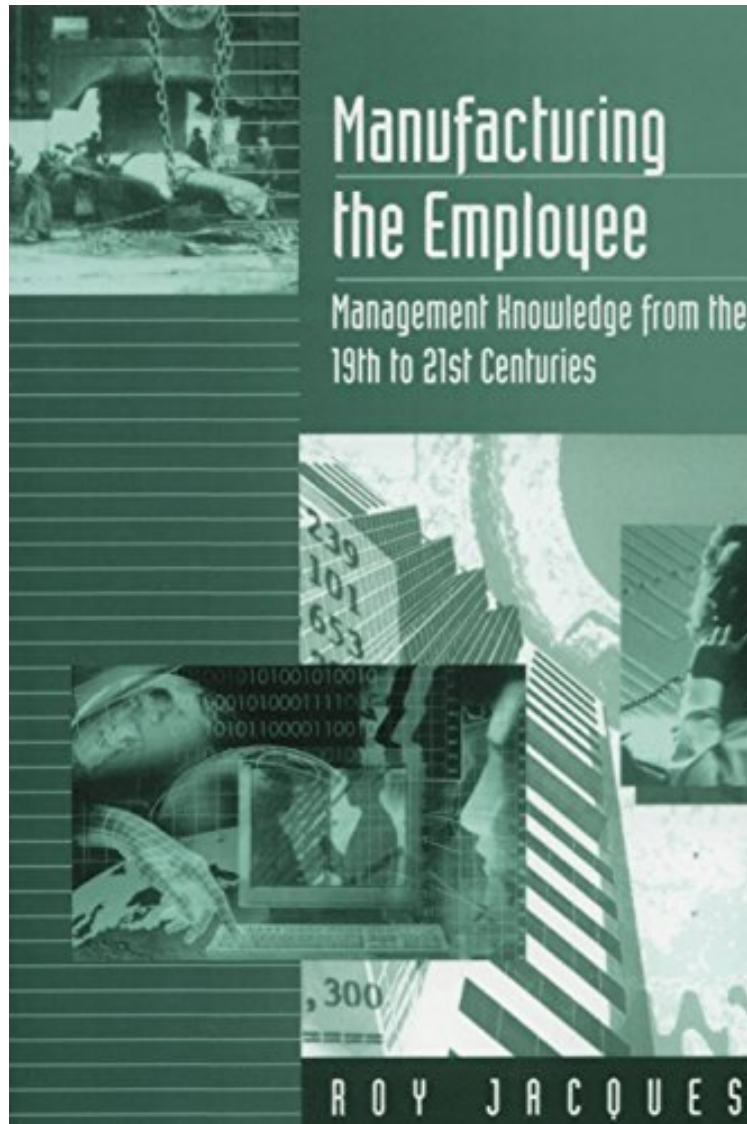


Manufacturing the Employee: Management Knowledge from the 19th to 21st Centuries

Roy S. (Stager) Jacques

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Roy S. (Stager) Jacques : Manufacturing the Employee: Management Knowledge from the 19th to 21st Centuries before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Manufacturing the Employee: Management Knowledge from the 19th to 21st Centuries:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Antidote to Fad of the MonthBy David CreelmanAn enjoyable book based on sound research. It looks at the history of management ideas and helps us better appreciate the whole subject of management. A historical perspective provides a welcome antidote to the cult of the new and the fad of the month.0

of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ever pondered how the reality of life inside our organizations came to be? By James Thomas I found this book to be not only a useful introduction to the history of 20th century management practices, but also an illuminating critique of the unquestioned assumptions that we typically consider to be the bedrock principles on which all organizations must necessarily be based. Jacques's motivation for his line of inquiry is to understand what is limiting the effectiveness of our modern organizations, particularly given the continuous considerable efforts by organizations, their leaders, and business academics over one hundred years to improve organizational outcomes. In Jacques's words: "When I first applied to doctoral programs a decade ago I saw (and see) myself as a pragmatic person, a practicing manager in the field of financial software development. My decision to return to school was motivated by two very concrete questions: (1) why don't organizations work better than they do?; (2) why was my MBA degree of so little use in answering the first question?" p. x. Jacques argues that many of our organizational practices, and the assumptions and principles on which these practices are based, are merely constructs. This is good news, he points out, since many of the assumptions made by the fathers of "modern management" at the turn of the 20th century have questionable relevance now, one hundred years later. Just as Gary Hamel insistently argues in "The Future of Management," I believe that there is an entirely different and far more appropriate set of assumptions and principles out there waiting for us to explore and implement in building more effective management practices and organizations. But first, we have to recognize the "semantic eclipses" that our current management language, rituals, and traditions trap us in. If you've ever pondered how our organizational reality came to be, or wondered what alternative organizational cultures might be possible, this book is an excellent place to start.

Contemporary thinking about management is still frequently presented as a set of universal, eternal verities. In this fascinating book Roy Jacques presents a discursive history of industrial work relationships in the United States which powerfully demonstrates that they are not. A central concern is to show that current 'common-sense' in management forms an historically and culturally specific way of thinking about work and society which is often inappropriate for 'managing for the twenty-first century'. The author is equally interested in revealing the cultural basis for American management ideas, currently exported round the world as an objective science, disconnected from its cultural and historical roots. Roy Jacques considers: the Federalist world of the U S (c 1800-1870) and the traces of 19th century 'pre-management' notions continuing in 20th century management and industrial discourse; the emergence and development of industrial organization and big business; the profound remapping of the boundaries of social life which occurred with the creation of jobs and wages; and the evolving construction of the employee as increasingly a disciplinary subject of psychological, personnel and general management knowledge. He also looks at several major current management and organizational topics such as: motivation, leadership and power in organizations; productivity and efficiency; work and the family; ideas about Total Quality Management, Business Process Re-engineering, 'knowledge work' and so on.

"Roy Jacques has, in this book, produced a most remarkable and fascinating analysis both of the nature of the history of management knowledge and of episodes within that history. It is a book which could and should be read with pleasure and profit by almost anyone with an interest in management and organizations. It directly, coherently and accessibly challenges much current commonsense about management and to my way of thinking is one of the most important studies of management to have been published.... In sum, I found this a tremendously stimulating and rewarding read which I have recommended to colleagues and to students' - Management Learning (Christopher Grey, University of Leeds "Yet as often as I made margin notes that said "what about..." more often I scribbled "interesting," "intriguing," "fascinating" or some other laudatory comment.... Roy Jacques has explained why current practices will not work and why we need to examine our basic premises for studying organizations. Read this book - you may learn something' - Personnel Psychology " "Manufacturing the Employee" is an antidote to the one-dimensional view of organisational reality provided by some management texts. Although Jacques is not the first to explore this territory, this book is a useful addition to the debates about the future of organisations and the future of understanding about organisations' - Work, Employment Society "Roy Jacques presents a detailed discursive historical analysis of US work organizations and the ways of thinking that have informed their development. Revealing the importance and inseparability of "past," "present" and "future" in the complex processes that constitute organization, he has produced a stimulating and at times provocative text that all those interested in the analysis of workplace processes should read' - "David Collinson, University of Warwick "The book is clearly written, contains welcome and witty debunking of what passes for knowledge in business schools, demonstrates depth and breadth in preparation, and grapples with important.. contemporary issues.' - " ing Sociology Roy Jacques has, in this book, produced a most remarkable and fascinating analysis both of the nature of the history of management knowledge and of episodes within that history. It is a book which could and should be read with pleasure and profit by almost anyone with an interest in management and organizations. It directly, coherently and accessibly challenges much current commonsense about management and to my way of thinking is one of the most important studies of management to have been published.... In sum, I found this

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