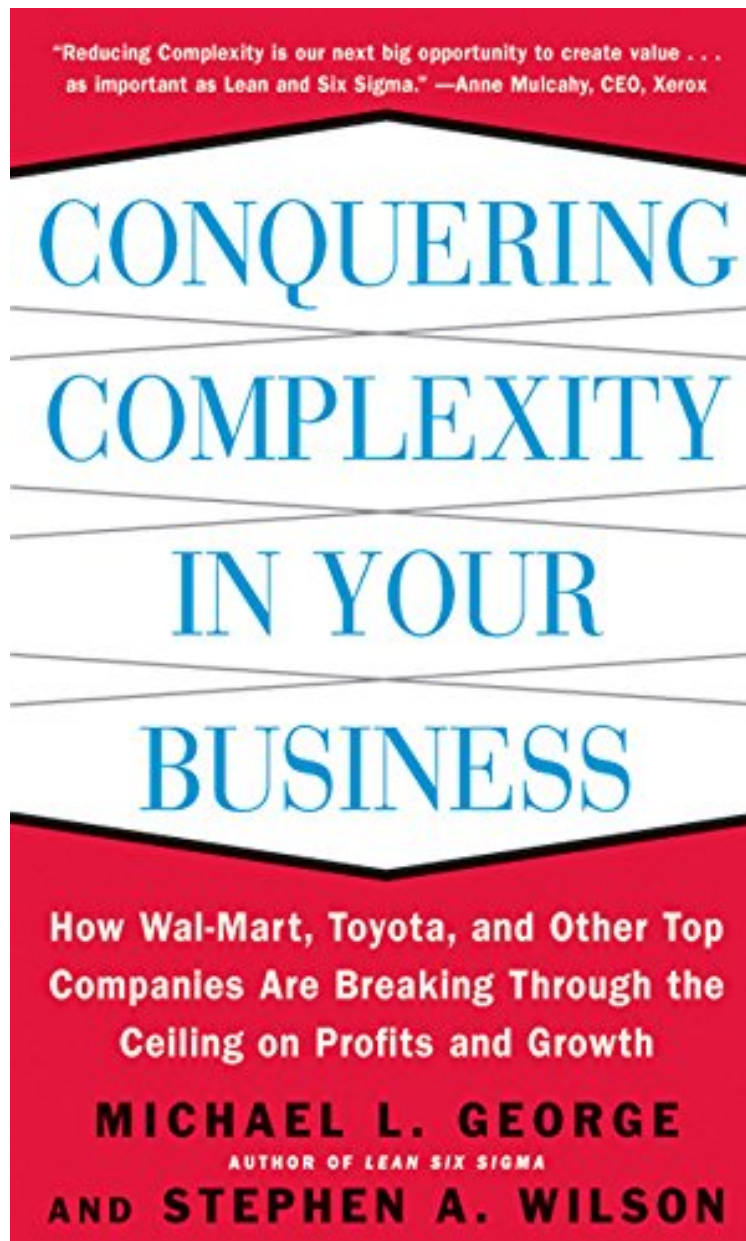


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Conquering Complexity in Your Business: How Wal-Mart, Toyota, and Other Top Companies Are Breaking Through the Ceiling on Profits and Growth: How Wal-Mart, ... Through the Ceiling on Profits and Growth

Michael L. George, Stephen A. Wilson
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2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It's an interesting approach for identifying opportunitiesBy MiBoAs the Six Sigma and Lean practice areas mature, the challenge is to discover new ways to apply these methods. Michael George proposes that an analysis that looks at complexity of a business is a way to identify areas of opportunity for improvement. The method is based on some patented equations that attempt to put numerical values on a company's complexity. When the complexity is calculated, and is found to be out of balance with the company's strategic direction, then action can be taken using Lean Six Sigma to reduce (or increase) complexity.This book proposes methods that cross conventional organizational boundaries, so the mission and the methods must be adopted by senior people who can see the benefits of crossing the boundaries. To make a difference managing complexity, these senior people must have the people and power to calculate new business measures and deploy teams that may not align with current organizations and departments.The method seems sound, although the case studies are few. Anecdotes fill in the gap between idea and practice, and the anecdotes seem forced or coincidental (for example, Wal-Mart and Toyota can be used to justify nearly every business improvement method, even if neither of these companies goes on record as having used the method).As usual in the improvement business, it's a matter of cost versus benefits. It seems to be a low risk analysis method that can reveal a potentially high risk, but high reward, payback. Since the equations are patented, presumably the only way that one can actually try this method is to contact (and hire?) Mr. George's consulting company.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Be careful when ordering this itemBy RGI ordered this item used from one of the listed vendors (rather than new from). What I was sent was not the book itself, but the executive overview of the book (which only includes part I). The executive overview has a very similar cover, so perhaps it was an honest mistake on their part, but this is one time to be very careful that what you are ordering is properly represented by the vendor.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Dan O'NeillLots of good points.

Conquering the complexity in products and services can generate larger contributions to profits and growth than nearly any other business strategy Here's a guarantee: Somewhere in your business, there is too much complexity. You may also be losing out by having too little complexity where it counts - in the products, services and options you offer to customers. Either way, the impact of complexity is enormous in terms of lost profit and missed growth opportunities. *Conquering Complexity in Your Business* shows how to break through the ceiling on profits and growth by implementing the three rules for conquering complexity: Eliminating complexity that customers will not pay forExploiting the complexity that customers will pay forMinimizing the costs of the complexity you offerYou'll find methods and tools you need to:Identify the offering and process complexity in your businessQuantify the impact of that complexityDecide which complexity you want to keep and which to eliminateSelect specific approaches to eliminate different kinds of complexity This knowledge will significantly improve your ability to grow profit, revenue, and shareholder value.

From Publishers WeeklyWhen Thoreau's injunction to simplify, simplify, is translated into the context of business management, the result is this labyrinthine treatise. George, author of *Lean Six Sigma*, and "complexity expert" Wilson contend that overcomplication is an insidious drain on businesses. A proliferation of product and service offerings intended to boost business actually imposes hidden costs and masks the unprofitability of stagnating lines, while consumers are often baffled and irritated by the plethora of superficially distinct options. The authors' cure for complexity, however, seems almost as complicated as the disease. They offer a maze of arcane diagnostic tools for assessing the complexity and profitability of products, services and customers, along with advice on how to simplify, standardize or eliminate them altogether, and pile on mathematical equations, byzantine flowcharts and highly technical case studies ("at 50KW the DC voltage doubled, cutting the current in halfmdash;which meant the design for the lower power ratings could be used all the way to 80KW"). They provide a number of useful insights, actually, although lumping them under the trendy rubric of "complexity" doesn't add much conceptual rigor. Unfortunately, the method of quantitatively analyzing the profit impact of minute components of larger processes seems itself an onerous layer of complexity to add to the project of simplifying business practices. The accountants and process design engineers who might read the book will find much food for thought, but are also likely to put it aside when it comes time to roll up their sleeves and get to work. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistThe authors are experts on the Six

Sigma and Lean Production methods used to increase efficiency, cut costs, and improve resource use in corporate environments and have written extensively on techniques for improving speed and quality. Here they make the case that every business harbors too much complexity, a "silent killer" that increases costs and drains profits and resources. The methods they offer to expose complexity could be the the next big strategic business weapon--dominant companies such as Wal-Mart, Toyota, Dell Computer, and Capitol One are already using these techniques to great success. Although some of the concepts presented are easy to understand, such as reducing the number of steps in production, reducing waste, and creating standardized tasks and procedures, others are quite advanced (functional analysis, cojoint analysis, exploiting commonality), and there are numerous equations and diagrams that require a mathematical mind to comprehend. This timely research has much to offer medium-sized to large businesses. David Siegfried Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved "The cost of complexity isn't offset by what you can charge. Complexity creates opportunities for you to fail your customer." (American Airlines President Gerard Arpey, Wall Street Journal, 9-17-2002)"