

Beyond Six Sigma: Profitable Growth through Customer Value Creation; Gary Plaster, Jerry Alderman; John Wiley & Sons, 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, 2006, ISBN: 0-7-471-68151-2, 303 pp. Listed: \$84.95

Just like the title of the book “Beyond Six Sigma”, It is not about the six sigma per se, it is more about where to look for the value for a company to grow.

The traditional six sigma approaches are looking inside out to look for any opportunity of profit improvement, which includes the traditional process improvement and the leaning of processes. The authors argued that this inside-out approach may not be the best way to look for growth opportunities. Instead, they proposed to look for the growth opportunities outside-in. And turns the analysis of supply chains to the analysis of demand chains.

The approaches just like the regular six sigma in first analyzing the demand chain “as is”, in the dimension of customer profitability, share of wallet and number of customers. The “could be” states should be spelled out as the ultimate for planning a “should be” state.

This book provides a valuable out of box thinking from traditional six sigma point of view. None the less, the rigor of the approach and data driven are all six sigma.

It by no means the application of the approaches of the book is easy. Since it is even a huger job to look for whole demand chains for the growth opportunities instead of focus inward to the company itself.

This book can be thought provoking, but it up to the individual company to carry out the detailed analyses as proposed by the book. The hard part is in the details, a GIGO analysis can easily happen in the application of the customer value creation as other places.

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