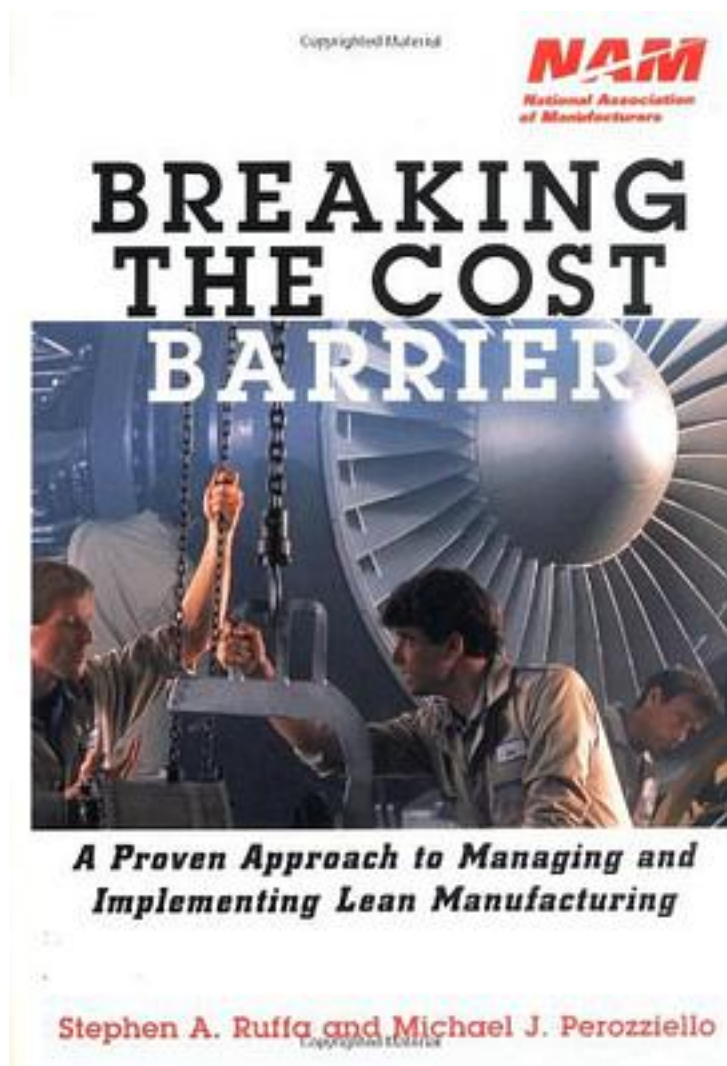


Breaking the Cost Barrier



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"Success is often the culmination of a series of lesser known accomplishments."
-Stephen A. Ruffa and Michael J. Perozziello In the Muroc, California desert over fifty years ago, a team of contractors and government engineers along with a daring young test pilot named Chuck Yeager achieved the seemingly impossible and broke the sound barrier. It was a brilliant, selfless team effort; one that opened the doors for limitless advances in aviation. Yet, once again, this industry is faced with an apparently insurmountable barrier; not one of performance, but of cost. To break this barrier, a team of manufacturing professionals led by the Department of Defense's Stephen Ruffa-was given unprecedented access by the giants of military and commercial aircraft engines and avionics production. Their mission? Go beyond the age old focus on flying farther, faster, and higher to discover how to effectively and permanently slash the cost of producing aircraft to allow this industry to continue its rapid pace of advancement. The results of their study set the stage for a new approach that will again change the face of this industry. These findings lauded by leaders across the industry and comprehensively explored in *Breaking the Cost Barrier* prove that production variation, as opposed to more common targets like labor utilization and inventory levels, is the chief cause of escalating production costs. More importantly, they reveal how companies can control spiraling production costs by first controlling the variability that has for too long been considered a necessary evil in manufacturing circles. While much has been written about what "lean production" techniques are, *Breaking the Cost Barrier* is the first book to explain how to effectively put lean techniques into place. It presents the big picture on how you can understand and adopt the industry proven techniques used in the lean production environment and coordinate the best into one powerhouse variation management program. Case studies and examples showcase how these techniques can be applied to control production variability across industries and requirements. *Breaking the Cost Barrier* provides far more than just another plug-and-play technique for increasing efficiency. Instead, it tells the step-by-step story of how one team of professionals, guided by the belief that an answer was closer than anyone realized, broke the code on production variability problems and introduced exciting, profitable, and easily adaptable variation management methods to one of the world's most important and noteworthy industries. THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS is the nation's largest broad-based industrial trade association. The NAM is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has regional offices across the country. For more information on the NAM, call David W. Walker, Vice President, Marketing and Member Services, at (202) 637-3186. The dramatic account of how a team of aerospace professionals attacked production variation to slash costs by 25% Variation Management the identification and control of variation in production processes-is critical to today's cost-conscious aerospace industry. Now, the story of how its underlying framework was discovered by a team of professionals in a cooperative effort with a range of organizations, from McDonnell Douglas and Pratt & Whitney to Westinghouse and even the U.S. government, is chronicled in the innovative and technique-packed *Breaking the Cost Barrier*. This fast-paced, highly entertaining book gives you a behind-the-scenes look at how you can design and implement a system to successfully control production variability and leverage the power of that system for your own organization. It describes what many of the components of a variability control system are and what goals they should achieve, then demonstrates from the inside out why each comprises an important part in the puzzle.

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