



Managing Innovation: A Study of British and Japanese Factories

By D.H. Whittaker

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*****. Innovation is a key to corporate success, particularly in times of rapid technological change. This book sheds new light on the introduction of technology in the manufacturing sector. The author considers the use of innovative technology in both Britain and Japan by examining nine firms in each country. He focuses on computerised machine tools (CNC) and shows how the various firms have risen to the challenge of implementing the new technology. Particular emphasis is placed on the differing employment relations in the factories, the nature of operating training and workload distribution. Dr Whittaker identifies fundamentally different approaches in the two countries which have implications for competitiveness as well as future innovation. The contrast is especially attractive since Japanese industrial relations is commonly distinguished by its cooperative nature whilst industrial relations in Britain has tended to be more confrontational. These conventional views are challenged with an original perspective on the labour process and new technology.



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