What the speaker says:

The video focuses on the history of the automobile industry as well as the influence Japan had over the American car company, Chrysler. Henry Ford pioneered the idea of the assembly line, which increased production capabilities and made cars more affordable. For many years, America was the top producer of cars worldwide. However, by the 1970s the landscape had shifted, as Japan continuously innovated and streamlined its car production till it surpassed America’s auto capabilities. In particular, Chrysler studied Japanese companies such as Toyota and Honda in hopes of gaining insights into how it could improve and recover. Chrysler updated its policies, and changed its management and production to mirror that of the Japanese.

* Automobile industry introduced mass production to the world
  + Henry Ford pioneered the production line process
    - Created machine tools that could create perfect parts with exact dimensions
    - Tasks were simple so that workers only worked with one part
  + Japanese cars are higher quality than American cars
  + 1953 – three out of four cars in world were made in America
    - Economy was growing and cars were still inexpensive
      * Cars were not well-designed
        + Engines weren’t great, they just looked nice

Cars just had to look nice to be seld

* + 1970 – gas prices rose and demand for small, fuel efficient cars increased
    - Honda Civic rose in popularity for being cheap and efficient
    - White house agreed to reduce Japanese car imports
      * Increased domestic market
        + Chrysler produced a hit Van that drove like a car
* Chrysler – small U.S. car company
  + Existence threatened by shrinking U.S. automobile demand
  + 1990s – Chrysler made questionable investments in irrelevant industries
    - Robert Lutz came into power as president of Chrysler
      * Shifted focus from short-term profits to quality, long-term products
* Toyota – to gain good employees they guaranteed lifetime employment
  + Encouraged innovation and teamwork
    - Employees performed a variety of tasks
  + Studied assembly line to find faults
    - Made it easier to find defects, reduce inventory
    - Flow of parts is well coordinated so one line can make 7 vehicles at a time

Your thoughts:  
For as long as I can remember, my family has driven Hondas and Toyotas. My father drove the same corolla for over a decade, while my mother drove an Odyssey which lasted for 13 years. Because Japanese car companies are so reliable, they insisted on getting me a Japanese made car when I earned my license. I now drive a used 2000 Honda CRV, and it still works perfectly thanks to its great craftmanship. Generally, I enjoy the designs of American and European based cars more than Japanese designs. However, I will most likely always drive a Honda or a Toyota because it is impossible to beat their longevity and value. In my opinion, the Japanese produce the highest quality cars due to their unwavering commitment to innovation. They are never complacent and are constantly looks for ways to streamline processes. Employees have a strong sense of loyalty and purpose I their professions, and they are willing to go above and beyond to fulfill their duties. While I was visiting Japan, bus drivers actually went on strike in order to secure better working conditions. However, their strike involved continuing to drive their routes while allowing passengers to ride for free. This unmatched level of commitment and honor is what separates Japanese companies and employees from their American counterparts.

Synthesize:

In the documentary, Chrysler seemed to be making positive changes and trending in the correct direction. Unfortunately, it seems as though their changes have not panned out into permanent success. Looking at the automobile market today, Chrysler has decreased in popularity over time. Conversely, Honda and Toyota continue to be successful. Currently, Chrysler offers only two vehicles, and its name recognition is barely existent in America, which Is its only major market. It seems as though even with all of Chryslers work in the documentary, the company is still struggling to survive. The documentary has been helpful in showing me exactly why Americans still prefer Asian made cars. Back then and in the present, Asian made cars are higher quality than American made ones. My sentiments crossover with those of the Wall Street analyst; the Japanese work ethic and commitment to always improving is indominatable. Almost all of my friends drive Toyotas or Hondas, and if not those two brands then most likely Nissans. This speaks volumes about the consistent level of production from Japanese car companies.