



What Machines Can't Do: Politics and Technology in the Industrial Enterprise

Robert J. Thomas

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Virtually every manufacturing company has plans for an automated "factory of the future." But Robert J. Thomas argues that smart machines may not hold the key to an industrial renaissance. In this provocative and enlightening book, he takes us inside four successful manufacturing enterprises to reveal the social and political dynamics that are an integral part of new production technology. His interviews with nearly 300 individuals, from top corporate executives to engineers to workers and union representatives, give his study particular credibility and offer surprising insights into the organizational power struggles that determine the form and performance of new technologies.

Thomas urges managers not to put blind hopes into smarter machines but to find smarter ways to organize people. As U.S. companies battle for survival in an era of growing global competition, *What Machines Can't Do* is an invaluable treatise on the ways we organize work. While its call for change is likely to be controversial, it will also attract anyone who wishes to understand the full impact of new technology on jobs, organizations, and the future of the industrial enterprise.

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