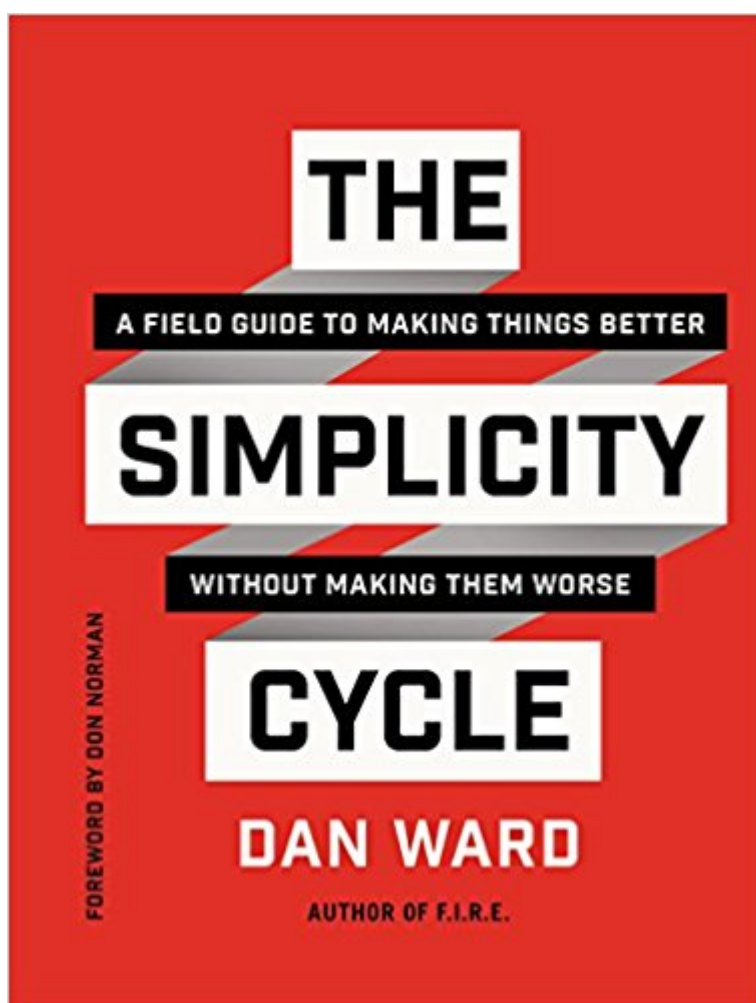




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The Simplicity Cycle: A Field Guide To Making Things Better Without Making Them Worse



Synopsis

The award-winning engineer, Air Force lieutenant colonel, and author of F.I.R.E offers a road map for designing winning new products, services, and business models, and shows how to avoid complexity-related pitfalls in the process. With a foreword by design guru Don Norman. Humans make things every day, whether it's composing an e-mail, cooking a meal, or constructing the Mars Rover. While complexity is often necessary in the development process, unnecessary complexity adds complications. The Simplicity Cycle provides the secret to striking the proper balance. Dan Ward shines a light on how complexity affects the things we make for good or ill, taking us on a journey through the process of making things, with a particular focus on identifying and avoiding complexity-related pitfalls. The standard development process involves increasing complexity to improve the outcome, Ward explains. The problem comes when the complexity starts getting in the way—but often we don't know where that point is until we pass it. He suggests a number of techniques for identifying the problem and fixing it, including how to overcome several types of wrongheaded thinking—such as the idea that complexity and quality are the same. In clear, compelling language, and using his trademark mix of examples from research, personal experience, and pop culture, Ward offers a universal concept, visually described with a single, evolving diagram. Ideal for business leaders and technologists, The Simplicity Cycle is helpful for anyone looking to simplify and improve everything we do, whether we work in an office, at home, or at the Pentagon.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“If I could ask my clients to read one book before we work together, it would be The Simplicity Cycle by Dan Ward. It’s simply brilliant.” (Peter Morville, President of Semantic Studios.)

“In The Simplicity Cycle Dan Ward presents a straightforward graphical way of looking at design that is both easily grasped and profoundly enlightening.” (Henry Petroski, author of To Forgive Design and The House with Sixteen Handmade Doors)

“The Simplicity Cycle’s combination of powerful tools and memorable case studies makes it an essential addition to any innovator’s book shelf. (Scott Anthony, author of The Little Black Book of Innovation)

The Simplicity Cycle is an engaging and accessible field guide that equips readers with practical tools to produce elegant, effective designs. It takes a deep but lighthearted look at the way complexity enhances or diminishes the things we make and use, from PowerPoint presentations and pizzas to spacecraft and software, and shows readers why simplicity is the key to innovation and good design—whether you’re creating new products, services, or consumer experiences.

Dan’s new book was featured in a college magazine article last year. While the topic of his book sounded intriguing, I took extra interest since we both graduated the same year from the same upstate NY engineering school (not sure I can promote that school by name here, but it provided a great foundation for both of us). So I decided to make the small investment and, at a minimum, help out a classmate with their dream. Usually when I read a book, I’m asleep in the first 5 pages and it takes me way too long to finish. But I picked up this book and couldn’t put it down. After 20 years working for an engineering consulting firm, every few pages reminded me of a struggle I’d had during those 20 years and perhaps a better way I could have approached those issues. I now have his trademark Simplicity Cycle figure memorized and use it on a regular basis as I start new designs or work to refine previous designs. My plan is to buy a few more copies and send it to other alumni who also work in this firm (one of which also graduated in the same class) because I know they’ll appreciate it and find value in it, too. Great work, Dan!

Excellent resource! This book is applicable to practically everyone. I often read book and find the author’s main points early, only to see them waste pages to fulfill a magic page number, but this

book is filled with wisdom from cover to cover!

I suspect this book is marketed to too narrow of an audience. Yes, I can definitely see how it is an effective field guide for those in the design world, BUT it is just as helpful for those of us who work in the social sciences. Far from being stuffy, the Simplicity Cycle is laced with wit, humor, and helpful anecdotes. I felt like Ward was my personal coach standing by my side as I contemplated the best way to approach projects at my organization. I also really appreciated how richly documented this book is. Ward provides the reader with numerous options for further learning on several topics. Whether you are looking to cut costs, maximize profit, save time, or sharpen your interpersonal skills, this simple book will be worth your time.

Good book. Its a quick read and has some great concepts especially if you are in the product development business.

EAsy to read and has some good guildlines for making things simple.

In Simplicity Cycle, Dan Ward has produced an exceptional follow up to his first book, FIRE: How Fast, Inexpensive, Restrained, and Elegant Methods Ignite Innovation. In FIRE, Ward provided excellent insights on the intersection of system design and defense weapons programs, making it a must read for national security professionals. In Simplicity Cycle, Ward achieves liftoff, taking his audience to the next level in understanding the key design imperative of minimizing complexity and achieving goodness. For national security professionals, the new realm is less familiar but just as critically important. National security professionals must cope with matters of immense complex scope and, sometimes under staggering bureaucracy -- Simplicity Cycle offers a roadmap on how to succeed. Lastly, Ward writes with a brisk light touch that is instantly accessible to all readers -- here's to hoping he can move into fiction! Highly recommended

This book delivers completely on the promise of the title! I am certainly looking forward to reading more of Dans writing!

Tremendous read! Once again, Dan Ward delivers an insightful and highly useful book. Have read many works on complexity and design, but this one is truly unique. A must read for anyone responsible for concept development or project management.

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