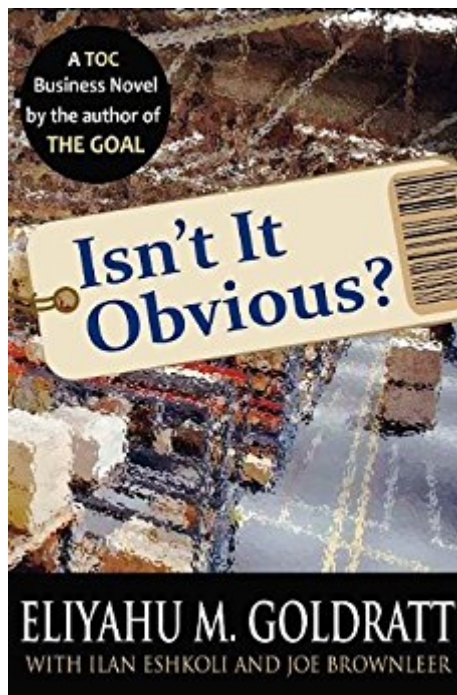




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Isn't It Obvious?: A Business Novel On Retailing Using The Theory Of Constraints



Synopsis

THIS BOOK DOES FOR RETAILING WHAT GOLDRATT'S INTERNATIONAL BEST-SELLER, "THE GOAL" DID FOR MANUFACTURING. A breakthrough solution is exposed when some unexpected events force Caroline and Paul, a married couple working for their family's retail business, to make a few small changes in the way things are done. A solution that propels the family's regional chain of stores into a very profitable, rapidly growing, international enterprise. If there is a hint of Jonah, from THE GOAL, reappearing in this novel, it is Henry, the soon-to-retire president and majority owner of the company who logically states that, "if you do not deal directly with the core problem, don't expect significant improvement." Eli Goldratt's Theory of Constraints is woven throughout this book but answers are not handed to you. The reader, along with the characters in the book, work through the process together to discover solutions. The elegant but simple solutions give the reader that sensation that followers love about Goldratt: "Ah-ha! Now I get it!" And that's when Goldratt says: "Isn't It Obvious?"

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Customer Reviews

This Eli Goldratt's last novel, it's about Distribution and Retail. He had first *The Goal* with Production, *Critical Chain* with Projects, and now the Distribution solution, which is one of the TOC's most known applications today and one of the most successfully. The solution is so obvious that it is also the name of the book. The point is like many other TOC (Theory of Constraints) applications it is not quite well known and it is less implemented. We could say it is ignorance but I think it is not the case. Every manager that works on logistics and on Retail/Distribution can know TOC but the obvious, so obvious to implement, gets stuck in the traditional way of thinking. In this book Goldratt gives us not only the rationale for the solution, the solution itself, but also the way to cover the change management part, which by the way is the most difficult to deal when we are talking about implementations. So it's all in one, in a common language with the minimum of technicalities. It's a good story also, and a superb job in describing a superior management tool, for the Retail industry. The only point I think Goldratt could improve this fantastic book was the story itself. But for this he needed at least more 100 pages or so.

I did enjoy the story as it was told. I do believe that it is easy to get lost in the story and develop envy for the position Paul is in and how that aids in his ease of fixing the challenges he faced. I did experience some challenge with that so I stepped back, actually stopped reading the book for a few days to regain my perspective. As a manager in a high volume, fast paced and high visibility location, I experience similar issues and find the guiding principles in the theory of constraints an excellent tool to have on my belt. Interestingly enough, despite my environment being that of a shop, I actually found more value in the story as it was told in *The Goal*, perhaps because of the challenges I am presently faced with. I highly recommend both books to leaders of people and systems. Certainly tools worth having.

I picked this book up as I enjoy reading business novels and learning new concepts in a "real" setting. *Isn't It Obvious* is about Hannah's Shop in Boca Raton, FL. As this is from Eli Goldratt the book is about Theory of Constraints (TOC). The book starts out with a struggling company trying to get a handle on their business and understand their problems. Fortunately they have a Jonah (*The Goal*) they can turn to for help and guidance. The book takes you through retail issues such as SKUs, partial orders, inventory, and controlling base costs. I am not too familiar with retail terms so I had to fight through some of these parts to make sure I understood what was being discussed. Chapter 14 was helpful in describing inventory turns (stores yearly sales divided by

average cost of the inventory). They realized how helpful understanding this ratio can be to understanding sales. One good point was holding inventory where they sell less than one a day, but were holding 15 in inventory. Chapter 18 was another helpful chapter where the authors take the readers through supply lead time, inventory and lead time for replenishment. As with most books bits and pieces can be applied to any size company, but the sweet spot will be for the small businesses who carry different inventory in competitive locations. The story was a little dry, but easy to fight through and root for the owners and the business to thrive and grow.

Quick easy read with incredibly powerful ideas that seem "too easy". I guess that's why more businesses do not use them - they would have to acknowledge that all that expensive software and computer systems were a waste.

Now this is the Goldratt I came to love in The Goal. I wish the book was twice as long, since the meat of the material seemed a bit rushed. The first few chapters took a bit longer than I would have liked however, as he attempted to set the scene for what was to come. I wasn't too sure about this book the first time I read it, as in many ways it was very different than the Goal, and I was expecting much of the same. While there were similarities, there were also many differences as the story revolved around a very different kind of business, that of retail. Now that I have read this a second time, I feel it is a must read, in addition to the Goal. It reinforces the concept of the Theory of Constraints, yet does so from a new perspective. It would be fantastic if Goldratt's collection of business novels would include several other business types; that would truly build a foundation of this important principle.

Another gem from the master himself. Based on Theory of constraints, the story revolves around how a family run business is faced with adversity (flooding of shop warehouse). The main characters from the family go through a journey of introspection where they observed how they conduct their business, what are the paradoxes that exist in their operations and with their supplier's operations. They then meticulously reviewed the paradoxes and the underlying assumptions and in the process they armed themselves with an invaluable knowledge which was gained by evaporating incorrect assumptions, they create new ways to conduct business in the retail world and along the way create a decisive competitive edge. Great read!!

As a business major undergrad student, this book cements all of the supply chain management

information deep within your brain. I find myself remembering long forgotten principals and how to measure and apply those ideas into ways to put it to use. I definitely recommend this book to any professional in retail, distribution, manufacturing, and any business school student!

Should be required reading for all retail managers. More relevant to businesses with multiple locations than single locations, but still has a lot of valuable insights. The Theory of Constraints is a fresh way of looking at any business and I find it valuable if only to force myself to look at my business from a different perspective. I am ordering copies for my management team.

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