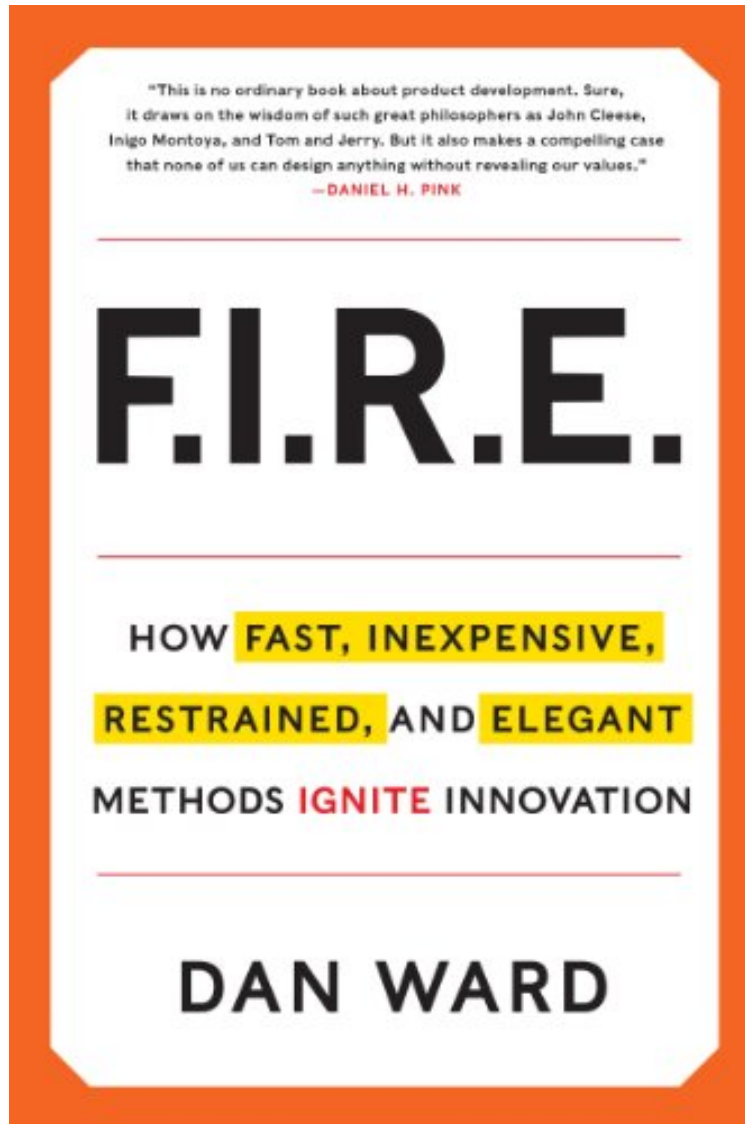


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# **FIRE: How Fast, Inexpensive, Restrained, and Elegant Methods Ignite Innovation**

*Dan Ward*

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**Dan Ward : FIRE: How Fast, Inexpensive, Restrained, and Elegant Methods Ignite Innovation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised FIRE: How Fast, Inexpensive, Restrained, and Elegant Methods Ignite Innovation:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Thought-provoking and RelatableBy Steve BehmThe best way to learn is to hear a good storyteller talk in simple, straightforward terms that use relatable specific examples to reinforce the stories. F.I.R.E. accomplishes this teaching masterfully. Dan Ward's style hooks you in with something that you

can understand and relate to, then makes his point in a way you're sure to remember. I guarantee every time I look at a ridiculously long and over complicated PowerPoint presentation, I'm going to wonder who got stoned before hitting "save". The F.I.R.E. approach, while not difficult to comprehend, is reinforced with great historical and current examples and leaves you nodding your head saying, "I can do that!" He clearly believes in this approach, but also paints it into a frame of reality by illustrating when it is or is not applicable. And while Dan's commitment to this approach is clear and resounding, it never comes off as preachy. F.I.S.T is a great cultural thought piece told in a clear, understandable, and fun way by a brilliant storyteller. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Innovative approach to Innovation! By Andrew Deardorff I think this book is terrific. As a self-proclaimed systems acquisition professional, I've read a lot of books detailing how and why things go wrong (and occasionally right) on defense programs and projects. Dan Ward's Fast, Inexpensive, Restrained, and Elegant method for product development, as well as his engaging and fun writing style, present a great antidote to much of the doom and gloom defense acquisition literature out there. The principles for product development that Dan outlines and illuminates are applicable far beyond the defense industry, however, and I finished his book with an encouraged and positive feeling that no matter what I might be working on, the F.I.R.E. approach would help to make the outcome better. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent advice fun reading By Frank H. McNally If you think simplicity is easy, you've never worked in government or tried to launch a product. Complexity waits in every corner to blow up your scope and schedule and ensure your product either a) achieves failure or b) doesn't even get off the ground. Dan's principles for fast, inexpensive, restrained and elegant innovation make for a great acronym but even better advice for product developers. And his storytelling makes for an entertaining read that anyone who has ever worked in government or technology will appreciate. He also backs it up with data, making this a solid manual for product developers and requirement owners everywhere. This book should be required reading for anyone with budget or product responsibility. Enough said!

Noted military technology expert Dan Ward's manifesto for creating great products and projects using the methods of rapid innovation. Why do some programs deliver their product under cost, while others bust their budget? Why do some deliver ahead of schedule, while others experience endless delays? Which products work better—the quick and thrifty or the slow and expensive? Which situation leads to superior equipment? With nearly two decades as an engineering officer in the U. S. Air Force, Dan Ward explored these questions during tours of duty at military research laboratories, the Air Force Institute of Technology, an intelligence agency, the Pentagon and Afghanistan. The pattern he noticed revealed that the most successful project leaders in both the public and private sectors delivered top-shelf products with a skeleton crew, a shoestring budget, and a cannonball schedule. Excessive investment of time, money, or complexity actually reduced innovation. He concluded the secret to innovation is to be fast, inexpensive, simple, and small. FIRE presents an entertaining and practical framework for pursuing rapid, frugal innovation. A story-filled blend of pop culture and engineering insight, FIRE has something for everyone: strategic concepts leaders can use as they cast a vision, actionable principles for managers as they make business decisions, and practical tools for workers as they design, build, assess and test new products.

From Booklist Ward's military career led to his expertise in high-speed, low-cost innovation, and he transposes his military principles and techniques into a marketplace-innovation system he calls FIRE (fast, inexpensive, restrained, and elegant). He explains his marketplace acronym: fast is about defining a project objective that can be satisfied on a short time line; inexpensive means delivering meaningful capabilities on a shoestring, a respected skill; restrained means self-control, tight budgets, small teams, activities focused on the short-term; and elegant values simplicity over complexity in design of organizations and processes, relying on experience and rules of thumb to solve specific problems as they arise rather than adhering to rigid rules. FIRE is an approach to innovations that focuses on outcomes rather than compliance. Ward concludes, "By placing a premium on speed, thrift, simplicity, and restraint, we can deliver first-in-class and best-in-class products without spending decades and billions." This thought-provoking book, developed with a military perspective, offers valuable insight for those striving for innovation in their business activities. --Mary Whaley "F.I.R.E. will appeal to project managers, space enthusiasts, military and tech buffs, and anyone who's ever hired a plumber or general contractor." (Success Magazine) "This is no ordinary book about product development. Sure, it draws on the wisdom of great philosophers like John Cleese, Inigo Montoya, and Tom Jerry. But it also makes a compelling case that none of us can design anything without revealing our values." (-Daniel H. Pink, author of TO SELL IS HUMAN, DRIVE, and A WHOLE NEW MIND) "Dan's refreshing philosophy promotes more effective defense acquisition and offers lessons for commercial products as well. His book helps to liberate good judgment." (-Bernard Jenkin MP (Harwich and North Essex) Chairman, PASC (Public Administration Select Committee)) "Ward blends a maestro's range of intriguing stories with intensely practical guidance. Don't let the references to Mr. Bean, Quantum Leap, and Firefly fool you. FIRE is a deep and powerful contribution to the innovation literature." (-Scott Anthony) "Dan Ward's FIRE is a minor miracle: a fast, fun, \_funny\_ read on

running procurement and technical processes. It is packed with insight, cutting through common wisdom to deliver rules of thumb that should be a must read for any project manager." (-Dr. Rachel Kleinfeld, Founder - Truman National Security Project)"For decades we have paid more and more for defense technology and gotten less and less in return. Dan Ward's FIRE approach establishes common sense principles with great promise-if we will only apply them." (- MajGen Arnold Punaro, USMC (ret.), Chairman of the National Defense Industrial Association and member of the Defense Business Board,)

From the Back Cover

Why do some projects deliver under budget and ahead of schedule, while others cost more and take longer than expected? More important, which products work better: the quick and thrifty or the slow and expensive? In a story-filled blend of quirky pop culture and practical engineering insight, Dan Ward's F.I.R.E. answers those questions and more. Ward's extensive research and firsthand experience show how the world's top technologists consistently deliver best-in-class results on shoestring budgets and cannonball schedules, and using skeleton crews. This remarkable book will make you laugh, make you think, and equip you to leverage the power of constraints. Discover the secrets of F.I.R.E. and learn how to:

- Build strategies for speed that enhance accountability and ensure your products are well aligned with the market's needs.
- Design your organizations, products, and processes with thrift in mind, solving problems with intellectual capital, not financial capital.
- Unleash the power of small budgets and small teams, using short schedules, short meetings, and short documents.
- Streamline your designs and cut through unnecessary, unproductive layers of bureaucracy.

But this is not just a book about how to win. With unflinching candor, Ward shows how the F.I.R.E. method, even when followed wisely and well, can result in a flop. Taking a deep look at several negative outcomes, he shows how to make failures optimal rather than epic. F.I.R.E. provides strategic concepts for leaders, decision-making principles for managers, and practical tools for people working on anything from spacecraft and fighter jets to websites and children's toys. Technology professionals and curious amateurs alike will come away with a deeper understanding of effective product design. Plus, there's a funny story about a dishwasher that just may change the way you buy major appliances.