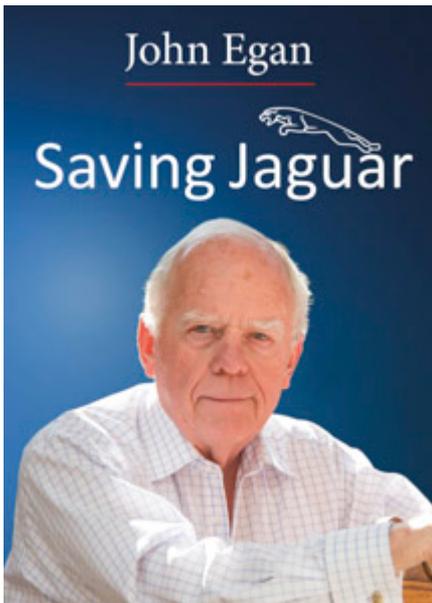




SAVING JAGUAR

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KEY INFORMATION

ISBN: 978-1907085314

Author: John Egan

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Jaguar Cars has over the years endured several ups and downs, but none more so than during the late 1970s when the unions held sway on the shop floor. To have allowed such a state of affairs to develop in a once proud, world-class manufacturing concern was surely the result of ignorance, incompetence or a head-in-the-sand approach, or perhaps a combination of all three. Whatever the reason, it was this state of chaotic management into which John Egan walked in April 1980, in which the shop stewards had been allowed to run the show and to determine who did what, and when to down tools each day. The unions ran the company, from the shop floor to the boardroom because management was too afraid to venture down to the production lines.

Having read extensively on Jaguar history and its cars, this writer was well aware of the turbulent waters that the Jaguar company had to negotiate, but not the degree that John Egan described. That he was able to resurrect the company as he and his Board managed, is little short of a miracle. With his hands-on no-nonsense approach, Sir John, as he is today, was able to put in place management methods that gradually brought the company back on track and eventually into profit.

Interestingly, the author listed three key factors that had led Jaguar down the slippery slope that brought it so close to bankruptcy and closure. The three 'enemies' he identified were: (1) complacency or incompetence of senior management; (2) the trade unions; (3) competition. Each of these three factors was as critical and important as the other, and each had to be addressed separately. Jaguar had been allowed to fall into that fatal state where it had an old product line-up, and with nothing new on the drawing board. Faced with such a situation in the market, the competition would wipe you out completely by them just carrying on as normal, while you sailed down the rapids into oblivion.

From his position as CEO of the company, Sir John was in a better place than anybody to



outline those dramatic, even perilous days, when he came face-to-face with the union officials and market reality. He has, in this book, *Saving Jaguar*, successfully outlined just how arrogant the unions were and how difficult it was to instil discipline into a workforce that had been led down the non-productive path by the shop stewards.

Egan has revealed much of what was never divulged to the public during those days, which makes this book so interesting, as it lays bare the realities that the company faced. In an uncomplicated and simple to read style, Sir John has compiled a fascinating account of his decade at Jaguar, from 1980 until the Ford takeover in 1990.

Saving Jaguar is a compelling read, not only for enthusiasts of the marque, but also for young aspiring managers in the field of manufacturing, whether it is in the motor industry or any other. Having been a dedicated Jaguar owner, and having written a book on the Jaguar E-type myself, this book opened my eyes to the scale of destruction that would have faced Jaguar had John Egan not applied for the job back in 1980. You too will find out a lot about the company during that decade, and be forever grateful that Sir John stepped into the breach...its an excellent book.

Written by: Glen Smale

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