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Altri autori (Persone)	Dal PontJean-Pierre
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Sommario/riassunto	Process Engineering, the science and art of transforming raw materials and energy into a vast array of commercial materials, was conceived at the end of the 19th Century. Its history in the role of the Process Industries has been quite honorable, and techniques and products have contributed to improve health, welfare and quality of life. Today, industrial enterprises, which are still a major source of wealth, have to deal with new challenges in a global world. They need to reconsider their strategy taking into account environmental constraints, social requirements, profit, competition, and