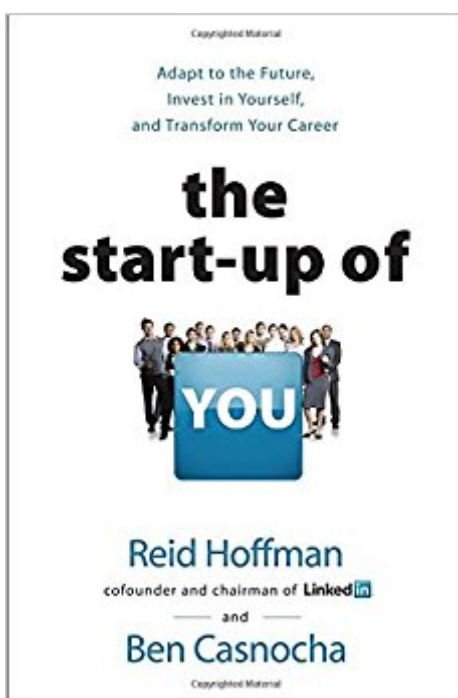


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The Start-up Of You: Adapt To The Future, Invest In Yourself, And Transform Your Career



Synopsis

A blueprint for thriving in your job and building a career by applying the lessons of Silicon Valley's most innovative entrepreneurs. The career escalator is jammed at every level. Unemployment rates are sky-high. Creative disruption is shaking every industry. Global competition for jobs is fierce. The employer-employee pact is over and traditional job security is a thing of the past. Here, LinkedIn cofounder and chairman Reid Hoffman and author Ben Casnocha show how to accelerate your career in today's competitive world. The key is to manage your career as if it were a start-up business: a living, breathing, growing start-up of you. Why? Start-ups - and the entrepreneurs who run them - are nimble. They invest in themselves. They build their professional networks. They take intelligent risks. They make uncertainty and volatility work to their advantage. These are the very same skills professionals need to get ahead today. This book isn't about cover letters or resumes. Instead, you will learn the best practices of Silicon Valley start-ups, and how to apply these entrepreneurial strategies to your career. Whether you work for a giant multinational corporation, a small local business, or launching your own venture, you need to know how to: Adapt your career plans as you change, the people around you change, and industries change. Develop a competitive advantage to win the best jobs and opportunities. Strengthen your professional network by building powerful alliances and maintaining a diverse mix of relationships. Find the unique breakout opportunities that massively accelerate career growth. Take proactive risks to become more resilient to industry tsunamis. Tap your network for information and intelligence that help you make smarter decisions. A revolutionary new guide to thriving in today's fractured world of work, the strategies in this book will help you survive and thrive and achieve your boldest professional ambitions. The Start-Up of You empowers you to become the CEO of your career and take control of your future.

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Customer Reviews

Thomas Friedman Interviews Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha Thomas L. Friedman is a New York Times foreign affairs columnist, three-time Pulitzer Prize winner, and author of international best seller *Hot, Flat, and Crowded*. Whatever you may be thinking when you apply for a job today, you can be sure your prospective employer is thinking this: Can this person add value every hour, every day--more than a worker in India, a robot, or a computer could? Can he or she help my company adapt by not only doing the job today but also reinventing the job for tomorrow? And can he or she adapt with all the change, so my company can adapt and export more into the fastest-growing global markets? In today's hyper-connected world, more and more companies cannot and will not hire people who don't fulfill those criteria. This is precisely why LinkedIn's founder, Reid Garrett Hoffman, one of the premier starter-uppers in Silicon Valley--besides cofounding LinkedIn, he is on the board of Zynga, was an early investor in Facebook, and sits on the board of Mozilla--has written *The Start-up of You*, coauthored with Ben Casnocha. Its subtitle could easily be: "Hey, recent graduates! Hey, thirty-five-year-old midcareer professional! Here's how you can build your career today." Here is our brief chat about their book.

Tom: You're a serial entrepreneur and venture capitalist. Why did you feel the need to offer this message? Reid: As you write in *That Used to Be Us*, our country faces enormous challenges. The path to the American Dream has changed. We wanted to focus on what individual professionals can do to survive and thrive in a flat world. The premise of the book is that all of us are entrepreneurs of our own lives. We must act as CEO of our careers, take control of our professional future, and become globally competitive.

Tom: Really? Anyone can be an entrepreneur? Really? Even me? Reid: Not only can anyone be an entrepreneur, but they must be. Even you, Tom! Not everyone should start companies, but everyone must be the entrepreneur of his or her own life. The skills people need to manage their careers are akin to the skills of entrepreneurs when they start and grow companies. For example, entrepreneurs can both be persistent on a plan and flexible when conditions change. They take intelligent risk. They build networks of allies and tap those networks for intelligence on what's happening in the world. Silicon Valley's most innovative entrepreneurs possess unique skills--you can learn them and apply them, no matter your

profession. Tom: Who is the target audience for this book? Reid: Jeff Bezos says that at .com "it's always day one." This is a book for people just starting out, and it's equally for people midflight in their career who need to reinvent, restart, or reimagine their career as if it were day one, as if they were in permanent beta. We think that's most people, and eventually everyone.

Tom: What does it mean to be in "permanent beta?" Reid and Ben: Technology companies sometimes keep the "beta" label on software for a time after the official launch to stress that the product is not finished, so much as ready for the next batch of improvements. For entrepreneurs, finished is an F-word. Great companies are always evolving. Finished ought to be an F-word for all of us. We are all works in progress. Each day presents an opportunity to learn more, do more, be more, grow more in our lives and careers. You will need to adapt and evolve forever--that's permanent beta.

Tom: Why the urgency of The Start-up of You? Reid and Ben: A billboard that once ran along the 101 highway in Silicon Valley summed it up pithily: "A million people can do your job. What makes you so special?" We wanted to give people tools to take control of their lives, without having to wait around for the government or a company to rescue them.

Tom: Is China going to eat America's lunch? Reid and Ben: National competitiveness is really a reflection of the individual competitiveness of its citizens. The question for each American is, "Is a professional in China going to eat your lunch?" Some will be competitive, and some will not. And the distinction is not set in stone. Just look at Detroit. All of us need to have a plan for investing in ourselves every day.

"Being an entrepreneur isn't really about starting a business. It's a way of looking at the world: seeing opportunity where others see obstacles, taking risks when others take refuge. Whatever career you're in or want to be in The Start-Up of You holds lessons for success."-Michael Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg, L.P. and Mayor, New York City

"Everyone, women and men alike, needs to think big to succeed. This is a practical book that shows you how to take control and build a career that will enable you to have real impact."-Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer, Facebook

"Forging a fulfilling career is one of the most important--and often, most difficult--challenges in building a happy life. The Start-Up of You is crammed with insights and strategies to help each of us create the work life we want."-Gretchen Rubin, author of the #1 bestseller, The Happiness Project

"The Startup of You" describes how to take the Silicon Valley approach to building a life: start with an idea, and work over your entire career to turn it something remarkable. In the world today, I think that the startup approach to life is necessary. This book distills the key techniques needed to

succeed." - Jack Dorsey, co-founder of Twitter, co-founder of Square "This great book shows that entrepreneurship is really about taking control of your life, and you don't need a big startup to be an entrepreneur - you need personal responsibility and intellectual exploration." - Penelope Trunk, author, Brazen Careerist "Silicon Valley revolutionizes entire industries through the way we work. It is now time to export our playbook to the rest of the world. The Startup of You is that key playbook: it will help you revolutionize yourself and achieve your own career breakout." - Marc Andreessen, co-founder Netscape; director at HP, Facebook, and eBay "A profound book about self-determination and self-realization. By capturing and universalizing the wisdom of successful start-up businesses, the authors provide an exciting blueprint for building a fulfilling career. Invaluable for any person who wants to be a successful entrepreneur - not in a particular company - but in the most important enterprise of all: one's own life." - Cory Booker, Mayor of Newark "The Internet has fundamentally changed the architecture of business and society. This terrific book shows you how to live, learn, and thrive in a networked world." - Joi Ito, Director, MIT Media Lab "Hoffman and Casnocha make a number of astute observations about shifts in the world of work. As well as explaining network intelligence, or why your contacts' contacts may be the best source of leads about potential jobs...the book also gives numerous tips - including ones gleaned from the world of online dating - about how best to broker effective relationships." - The Economist "If you are starting a career, it is an excellent book for thinking through the practical issues you will face in branding yourself in what is becoming a more volatile and very different labor market." - Tyler Cowen, Marginal Revolution. "The same extraordinary vision and timing that enabled Reid to found LinkedIn is once again on display with his book "the start-up of YOU." His central thesis, that every individual can benefit from acting as the entrepreneur of their own life and career, has never been more important than it is in today's increasingly globalized, competitive, and networked world." - Jeff Weiner, CEO, LinkedIn "LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman has pulled off something extraordinary in his book-writing debut. He has challenged a well-worn idea and replaced it with something better." - Fortune

I learned of this book from a mention in another book: "The Rise of the Plutocrats and the Fall of the Rest of Us" which I read as a follow on to Thomas Picketty's "Capital in the Twenty First Century. It will be helpful to anyone wanting help in navigating a changing employment/career landscape or contemplating a business startup. It is especially helpful in career related networking. One author,

Reid Hoffman, was a founder of LinkedIn. The book's chapter end exercises should be really useful in helping to build new skills in career development and networking. It has engaged me in thinking about and rethinking my own career. Also, I will give a copy to each of our five daughters; two recently graduated BS and MFA and one about to graduate and two entrepreneurial homemakers.

I have been a student of personal leadership and found that this title effectively describes insights and strategies for the current state of entrepreneurship and career development. I was immediately sold on the value of this book when I read the use of the idea of being in permanent beta, that we are all a work in progress. The book continues with additional gems of wisdom, chapter after chapter. I could go on, but it would best for you to discover and enjoy. Within the first chapter, I stopped for a moment to immediately order another copy, sent to my daughter, who had just graduated university.

I like the book for couple of reasons:- Gives good tips to professionals as to how they can "advertise" themselves similar to any corporation to improve their professional career- Written in more of a step by step guide which makes applying the principals easy. I have seen benefits of applying principals from this book in the past few months. Full disclosure: I am a huge fan of Reid Hoffman and have listened to most of his publically available material on the web.

I follow Reid Hoffman's posts on LinkedIn and tune into his podcast, so I'm familiar with his style and like how he explains different concepts or gives anecdotes from his own entrepreneurial pursuits. This book is great for anyone looking to sharpen their abilities and prepare themselves to be better at anything they do, whether a start-up or any other professional pursuit.

If this book does not wake the weary from slumber, I don't know what will. It is designed to shape the thinking of those engaged in what has shaped up to be a race in the workplace without a finish line. The prevailing quote is this: "IF YOU FAIL TO ADAPT; NO ONE IS GOING TO CATCH YOU WHEN YOU FALL" "The labor market in which we all work has been permanently altered. Forget what you thought you knew about the world of work. The rules have changed. "Ready aim, fire" has been replaced by "Aim, fire, aim, fire, aim, fire." With change, come new opportunities as well as challenges. What is required is a new entrepreneurial mind-set if you want to seize the new opportunities and meet the challenges of today's fractured career landscape, you

need to think and act like you are running a startup: your career. The world is changing. The amount of time you spend at any one job is shrinking. This means you need to be adapting all of the time. If you fail to adapt, no one is going to catch you when you fall. ~ Reid Hoffman & Ben Casnocha "THE STARTUP IS YOU"

"The Start-up of You" suggests that one should execute one's career in the same way that a Silicon Valley start-up operates. The book focuses on planning, risk taking and most of all, networking. Despite what others have said about this book's stereotypical coverage of networking that reads like an ad for LinkedIn, I found the coverage of networking to be balanced and intelligent. Granted, I do not read a lot of books about the topic, but that is because most of the books I have read are not very subtle or specific. This book is both subtle and specific. For example, while some writing about networking talks about the value of weak ties, this book not only gives specifics as to why they are valuable, but also talks about their limitations and further, gives advice on when and how to utilize strong or weak ties depending on context. While the authors illustrate their examples using features of LinkedIn, this does not mean that the advice is not more generalizable. The fundamental weakness of the book was that it seemed to have been written from a vantage point of privilege. The discussion of planning talks about the role of ABZ planning. The implication of this is that in order to be successful, one needs to take intelligent risks. The authors state that it is unacceptable to take those risks that would result in ruin in the event that one fails. The solution is to have a "Z plan", which is a plan to follow through if everything goes catastrophically wrong. Some suggested plans include utilizing a 401k for those with families or moving back in with your parents for younger people. If these options are available, good. However, what of the many who do not have the understanding, financial support, or even existence of family or the luck that it takes to have landed a job with benefits in the past? The authors do not say. They are smart enough to recognize that entrepreneurship requires a supportive social environment and that not everyone has the ability to take the same kinds of risks. But despite a brief mention of perseverance and hustling, the authors do not seriously discuss the problems of those with inadequate resources, which is a larger problem than the authors seem to recognize. Further, the examples that the authors give of successful people often have had the advantages of a solidly upper-middle class upbringing in terms of education, experience, and network. Still, the authors have a realistic view of the problems of the current employment environment and have many intelligent suggestions for turning these problems into opportunities.

I echo some of the other comments. Better for tech start-ups, but it's an easy read and is somewhat thought provoking. Not a must, but not a bust,

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