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# Shift: A Leader's Guide To The Platform Economy

HAYDN SHAUGHNESSY

## SHIFT

A LEADER'S GUIDE TO THE  
PLATFORM ECONOMY



"Shift tells us everything we wanted to know about the

"emerging digital economy but were afraid to ask."

—Steve Denning, author of *The Leader's Guide to Radical Management*



## Synopsis

Platform disruption is the new game in town. The global economy is restructuring around super-corporations running modern business platforms causing older companies and incumbents to feel the chill wind of disruptive competition. Companies that fail to adapt to the platform shift are disappearing, while those that do are reshaping their fortunes and securing monopoly positions. Where are you in platform transformation? How can you improve your chances for success? Platform, disruption and innovation expert Haydn Shaughnessy answers these questions and more in *Shift: A Leader's Guide to the Platform Economy*. Shaughnessy explains how recent changes toward platforms have impacted all levels of business, from new employees to seasoned executives, to freelance entrepreneurs and small business owners. A Part One explains how the platform created the current turbulence in enterprise operating models. Part Two explains how successful companies adapt to a new way of doing business built around the platform. Part Three focuses on the individual by explaining how the changing economy and disrupted business models impact people, their careers and livelihood. Most importantly, this part identifies the skills and abilities required to thrive in a platform economy and the threat to Government authority of super platforms that choose their own terms of trade. A *Shift* is critical reading on the platform revolution. To ensure you and your company are adapting appropriately in uncertain times you need to understand the new business platform. Whether you are a business leader or an employee, a freelance or small business owner you are sure to find unique value in the insights from Shaughnessy's observation on an economy in flux. \*\*\*\*\* A scholarly look at how technology has radically transformed the world of commerce, coupled with advice for how to navigate this new landscape | Shaughnessy diagnoses these changes and recommends how businesses, individuals, and governments can become more nimble, acclimating themselves to a new world characterized by constant flux. • "Kirkus Review"\*\*\*\*\* If you liked *Platform Scale* and *Platform Revolution* by Sangeet Paul Choudary, or *The Second Machine Age* by Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, then you will love *SHIFT*!

## Book Information

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## **Customer Reviews**

The title "Shift: A User's Guide to the Economy" is the first sign that this book is written for anyone working at any level in any industry. It is indeed a "user's guide" which you cannot say about many other books written about the new economy. Most books speak primarily to managers and consultants. Haydn Shaughnessy speaks to them, of course, but his style and content are relevant to all people trying to make sense of the changes happening around them. Shift is easy to read and has many examples. The author explains, demystifies and creates a vision of a radically new future happening right now. So it's better to talk about a radically new present! Part of this present/future is scary for many people and Haydn, to his credit - offers no simplistic lists of "things to do to achieve success" - but rather lots of thought-provoking commentary that brings understanding and a sense that we can choose to be part of this present/future or not. I'd like to quote from the author's Afterword to illustrate my point: "There are two views of the state of the Western economy. On one side there is angst over the way large firms behave - their reluctance to invest, bloated CEO salaries, and the ever-present risk of being eclipsed, either by start-ups or through misreading changes in technology and the competitive landscape. On the other side, there is some optimism that a new commons-based economy, or collaborative economy (or sharing economy) is rewriting the rules of wealth creation and distribution. Both sides might bemoan the concentration of wealth in fewer hands but neither has a way to deal with the extent of inequality in society. In Shift, I have put the underlying changes in a different context.

Hayden, is a unitive thinker. While he is talking about complex thoughts, he writes about them in an accessible language that brings various worlds together. This makes Shift a pleasure to read. Hayden pulls from multiple disciplines such as economics, management theory, organizational systems, sociology, evolutionary theory, and technology - to offer us metaphors and insights into emergent phenomena that is transforming business, people's lives and livelihoods, and of course the world. He rightfully observes that business can no longer rely on being simply transaction based; rather, the most successful businesses in the world have become profoundly relational and relationship based - with employees, with customers, and with their extended ecosystems. This is a new marketplace that transcends boundaries of all kind - organizations, nations, corporations, and people. There is both an intimacy and an interdependency amongst relationships in this new world that "shifts" externalities from something that happens "out there" to externalities that (rightfully) impact people (stakeholders), thus making externalities a relationship issue and not something that can easily be pushed off. This is at its essence the nature of an ecosystem, where nothing is wasted. In general, I have found that while ecosystems are powerful metaphors they are not universally understood with regards to either their complexity or elegance. Hayden does a good job of expanding our understanding. At the center of his exploration is the elastic organization - described as new systems or platforms that are characterized by self-organization and self-determination- the next frontiers of democratization.

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