

The Road to Reinvention: How to Drive Disruption and Accelerate Transformation

By Josh Linkner

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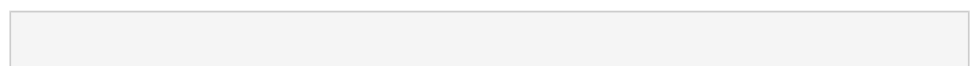
The Road to Reinvention: How to Drive Disruption and Accelerate Transformation By Josh Linkner

Companies, communities, and individuals fail for many reasons, but one of the most common—and easily avoidable—is the failure to reinvent. When people and organizations rest on prior successes rather than driving purposeful transformation, they discover too late that they have lost their market position altogether to competitors and external forces.

The most successful companies, brands, and individuals make reinvention a regular part of their business strategies. Transformation demands an ongoing process of discovery and imagination, and *The Road to Reinvention* lays out a systematic approach for continually challenging and reinventing yourself and your business. Venture capitalist and serial entrepreneur Josh Linkner identifies six elements in any business that are ripe for reinvention and shares examples, methods, and step-by-step techniques for creating deliberate, productive disruption.

Throughout *The Road to Reinvention*, Linkner also explores the history—the great rise, unprecedented fall, and now rebirth—of his beloved hometown, Detroit. First rising to greatness as the result of breathtaking innovation, Detroit had generations of booming growth before succumbing to apathy, atrophy, and finally bankruptcy. Now, the city is rising from the ashes and driving sustainable success through an intense focus on reinvention. Linkner brings an insider's view of this incredible story of grit, determination, and creativity, sharing his perspective on Detroit's successes and setbacks as a profound example of large-scale organizational and personal transformation.

Change is inevitable. You need to decide: Will you drive that change, or be driven away by it? Will you disrupt or be disrupted? By choosing to deliberately reimagine your own status quo, you can secure a strong future for both your company and your career.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review



Josh Linkner, *The Road to Reinvention*

Q&A with Josh Linkner, author of *The Road to Reinvention*

You say that it's necessary to disrupt your own status quo and reinvent—why?

Too often, companies that cling to previous successes and fail to reinvent are the ones that end up becoming dislodged by external forces, which can be competitors, market conditions, even customer fickleness. As leaders, we must embrace the responsibility of reinvention as a continuous process to ensure sustainable growth and success. If not, we run the risk of falling victim to the creativity and innovation of competitors.

Is there a best or worst time for a person or organization to approach reinvention?

The worst time is in response to a negative event, such as a major client loss, stock market decline, or new competitive attack. In fact, once companies embark on turnaround efforts—which are largely characterized by survival tactics such as cutting R&D and marketing—they are only able to regain a leadership position 10% of the time. The ideal time to reinvent is from a position of strength, at the height of success. It is much easier to use momentum and resources to reimagine what's next than it is to react to problems or setbacks.

When creating deliberate disruption, how do you prevent your company or project from going off the rails, or going too far?

In the book, I cover a variety of ways to reinvent, test, and adapt. Great reinventions are not a bet-the-farm-at-once type risk. A systematic, disciplined approach to the necessary process of continuous reinvention helps prevent false starts and flameouts.

***The Road to Reinvention* features the story of Detroit. What are the greatest opportunities you see now in Detroit? And what's the one thing you would want readers to know about your hometown?**

Detroit was once a beacon of entrepreneurship and innovation in the U.S., but ultimately we let ourselves succumb to bureaucracy and entitlement. Our decline highlights the negative results of failing to reinvent. At the same time, right now we are in the midst of massive transformation, connecting back to our entrepreneurial roots. I firmly believe that the next five years will be studied for decades as the greatest urban reinvention in American history. New industries, people, and ideas are taking root. It's an exciting time, and I share both the challenges and opportunities extensively in this book.

For someone starting a new company, app, or venture, what's the one piece of advice you'd give?

Make sure you are bringing something to market that is disruptive and truly unique as opposed to a "me too" solution. Also, build an ongoing process of reinvention deep into the DNA of your organization to ensure you adapt to the dizzying rate of change that exists today. Bottom line: disrupt or be disrupted.

Review

"Continuous reinvention has become a critical strategy to win in these challenging times. In *The Road to Reinvention*, Josh Linkner lays out a powerful and cohesive path to help you drive your own creative disruption."

—**Steve Case, cofounder, AOL**

"Josh Linkner is a truly special entrepreneur, part of a rare breed that understands that the most important lesson on how to win in business, and in life, is to never give up. *The Road to Reinvention* is filled with practical tidbits for those fighting every day to become successful."

—**Eric Lefkowsky, CEO, Groupon**

"In this compelling book, Josh Linkner reminds us that no business can afford to pause in the headlong drive to meet new challenges to the status quo, that to reinvent the workplace, we have to reinvent ourselves continually as leaders. *The Road to Reinvention* is a must-read."

—**Deborah Hopkins, chief innovation officer, Citibank**

"Reinvention can be both exciting and challenging, but successfully reinventing one's self, a business, an industry, or a community can also be truly rewarding. We are in the midst of a positive reinvention in Detroit and throughout Michigan, and I encourage you to head down Josh Linkner's road to reinvention."

—**Rick Snyder, governor, State of Michigan**

"*The Road to Reinvention* shows why great people and companies go stale—and how to stay fresh. Josh Linkner reveals what it takes to reboot your products, reshape your services, reengineer your operations, rethink your brand, and restart your career. This bold, uplifting book will reinvent the way that leaders and entrepreneurs do business."

—**Adam Grant, professor, the Wharton School, and author, *Give and Take***

"Josh Linkner has laid out a comprehensive framework for reinvention and operational innovation, which is a must-read for all leaders. With numerous inspirational examples and straight talk on what you can do to reinvent your company, *The Road to Reinvention* should be mandatory reading for your entire team."

—**Tom LaSorda, former CEO, Chrysler**

“*The Road to Reinvention* is a must-read if you want you and your team to reach the next level. Full of practical advice and engaging, illuminating anecdotes, Linkner's message is powerful, relevant, and inspiring.”

—**Keith Ferrazzi, author, *Never Eat Alone* and *Who's Got Your Back***

“In *The Road to Reinvention*, Josh Linkner creates a clear path for how to achieve transformative change—the key to all future growth and success.”

—**Bill Emerson, CEO, Quicken Loans**

“Through clear principles and examples, Josh Linkner makes it easier for anyone to reinvent their brand, company, or even career. *The Road to Reinvention* creates a template to understand the critical leadership challenge of the decade: disrupt or be disrupted.”

—**David Butler, VP, innovation and entrepreneurship, the Coca-Cola Company**

“Don't let your competition read this book before you do. *The Road to Reinvention* offers powerful insights and navigable paths forward for both personal and business reinvention. Josh Linkner is a singularly thoughtful entrepreneur who understands how to illuminate a vision of the possible.”

—**Don Katz, CEO and founder, Audible**

“Protecting your existing model is no longer an option. *The Road to Reinvention* provides the tools you need in order to be the disruptor instead of becoming disrupted. A must-read.”

– **Steve Blank, professor, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, and author, *The Startup Owner's Manual***

“As someone who has had to reinvent many times to stay on top, I highly recommend Josh Linkner's book. *The Road to Reinvention* will help you come out ahead, even when facing the roughest circumstances.”

—**Les Gold, star, *Hardcore Pawn*, and author, *For What It's Worth***

“With stories of people and companies that have succeeded (and failed) to reinvent, Josh Linkner shows you how to harness disruptive creativity so you end up on the side of success. I wish I had this book years ago!”

—**David Meerman Scott, author, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR***

“With the pace of innovation and resulting changes in consumer behavior, no company can afford to sit still. Growing a successful company requires creative assessment and disruption. In *The Road to Reinvention*, Josh Linkner illustrates how to lead your employees not only to accept but embrace the need for continuous reinvention.”

—**Carol Kruse, global CMO, Tough Mudder, and former CMO, ESPN**

“*The Road to Reinvention* is a powerful wake-up call for any organization, whether already thriving or looking for inspiration. It's also a toolkit for entrepreneurs seeking to build the next big thing.”

—**Andrew Yang, founder and CEO, Venture for America, and author, *Smart People Should Build Things***

“*The Road to Reinvention* is a valuable guide for renewing your organization in this age of disruption. Josh Linkner, having created a wide array of successful businesses, shares his proven methods for leading innovation. *The Road to Reinvention* is a must-read for anyone who needs transformational tools to remake their organization.”

—**Jeff DeGraff, professor, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, and author, *Innovation You***

“Josh Linkner is one of the most creative thinkers on the planet. *The Road to Reinvention* contains his

prescriptions for changing your product mix, your approach to the marketplace, and even your customers. Read this book if you want your company to thrive in today's crazy competitive marketplace.”

—**Nick Morgan, president, PublicWords, and author, *Power Cues and Trust Me***

“Already in a creative field, I found the tools and exercises in *The Road to Reinvention* encouraged me to think about things differently, from songwriting to expanding my business and brand. Thank you for a great follow-up to *Disciplined Dreaming!*”

—**Earl Klugh, GRAMMY® Award-winning guitarist, songwriter, and producer**

“Innovative approaches are the drivers of all human progress. In *The Road to Reinvention*, Josh Linkner shows you exactly how to reinvent your business and career with stunning precision.” —**Brad Feld, cofounder, Tech Stars and Foundry Group, and author, *Do More Faster and Venture Deals***

“*The Road to Reinvention* reflects true insight from a successful entrepreneur who has spent a career in the trenches of creative disruption. Josh Linkner has taken the concept of reinvention and broken it down into actionable, specific insights that can be put into practice on a daily basis.”

—**Al Callier, VP, strategic innovation, Universal Studios**

“*The Road to Reinvention* gives readers a clear path for renewal and resilience that is compelling, insightful, and practical. Josh Linkner presents a blueprint for leaders to follow so they are able not just to stay in the game but to stay ahead of it.”

—**Brian Owens, head, global brand strategy, eBay Inc.**

“Josh Linkner is among a rare breed of entrepreneurs. Driven and successful, yet reflective, cognizant that personal growth and professional success are intricately linked. In *The Road to Reinvention* he provides the most compelling case I've encountered for approaching today's increasingly complex business environment in a disruptive manner, all while inspiring us to truly begin living the life we've imagined for ourselves.”

—**Dave Zilko, president and vice chairman, Garden Fresh Gourmet**

“*The Road to Reinvention* is a thought-provoking work that offers a clear process for ongoing creative disruption. Josh Linkner has lived the process of leading a hyper-growth organization. *The Road to Reinvention* provides insight and inspiration through engaging stories, powerful examples, and easy-to-follow processes. Highly recommended.”

—**Scott Dorsey, CEO and cofounder, Exact Target**

“Josh Linkner is an expert on reinvention, and this book is a must-read. *The Road to Reinvention* is a fascinating new roadmap to help you envision the future and control your own destiny.”

—**Michael Abrashoff, US Navy Commander, and author, *It's Your Ship***

From the Inside Flap

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Catherine Benavidez:

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