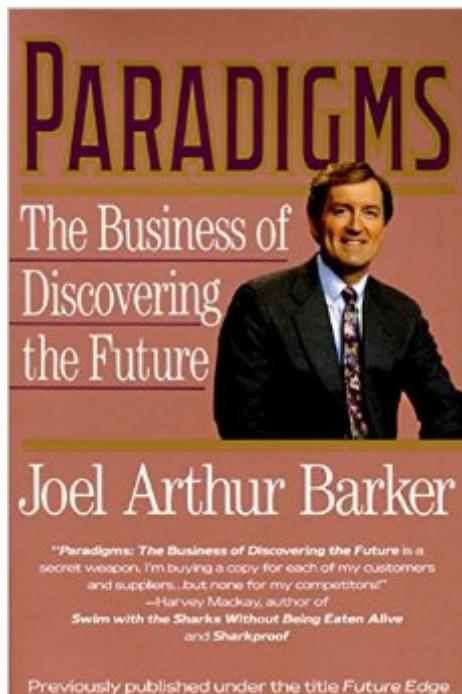


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Paradigms: The Business Of Discovering The Future



Synopsis

How would like to spot future trends before the competition? We all know the rules for success in our business or professions, yet we also know that these rules--paradigms--can change at any time. What Joel Barker does in *Paradigms: The Business of Discovering the Future* is explain how to spot paradigm shifts, how they unfold, and how to profit from them. Through the power of this method--paradigm spotting--you can: find the people in your organization most likely to spot a new trend; help your key people adept when a massive change is occurring; learn to effectively grapple with your "intractable problems" and improve your results incalculably. In addition, *Paradigms* is full of concrete examples of paradigm shifts and predictions for the future, and contains a new introduction detailing recent developments and pointing out areas to watch for paradigm shifts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Since it was first published, this book has become a "must read" for those who are struggling to understand what is happening and, more to the point, what will probably be happening in the global marketplace. Drucker has suggested that one of the greatest challenges for any organization is to manage the consequences and implications of a future which has already occurred. I agree.

However, I also agree with Barker that it is possible to recognize what he calls a "paradigm shift": a major change of the rules and regulations that establish or define boundaries, a change which suggests that new behavior will be required within those redefined boundaries. One of the most important concepts in the book is what Barker calls "paradigm pliancy": "the purposeful seeking out

of new ways of doing things. It is an active behavior in which you challenge your paradigms [ie the status quo, assumptions and premises] by asking the Paradigm Shift Question: What do I believe is impossible to do in my field, but if it could be done, would fundamentally change my business?" Have you asked this question? Do you realize that one or more of your competitors may have already asked that question? Although the book's subtitle is "The Business of Discovering the Future", the fact remains that (back to Drucker) the challenge is to identify and then measure the degree of probability of various contingencies...many of which may have already occurred or are now in process. Barker asserts that every organization must anticipate and then innovate to achieve excellence in an age during which change is the only constant.

This is actually the paperback version of "Future Edge: Discovering the New Paradigms of Success," by the same author. In fact, both books are sort of brief updates of the author's earlier book, entitled "Discovering the Business of Paradigms," written in the mid-80s. Drawing essentially from the pioneering work of Thomas Kuhn, who wrote the classic, The Theory of Scientific Revolutions, in the 70's, this author has very artfully expounded the concept of paradigm shifting in the world of business, in contrast to the world of science. From a strategic exploration viewpoint, this is an excellent guide book. Understanding - and mastering - your paradigms is one important thing for making progress in life and in business, but I personally feel that the real essence of this book is succinctly captured by the author in the five strategic exploration tools outlined in the book. The five tools are intended to help you to enhance your anticipation skills. They are the real gems of the book. [Bear in mind that the author is a process futurist, unlike most other futurists who write books & who are primarily content futurists. The five specific tools mentioned in the book are the exact process tools to aid & enhance your strategic exploration. Do not get carried away by the content part of the book pertaining to some perceived trends illustrated by the author.] In addition, the author defines the concept of paradigm very well & also elaborates at length on its key characteristics & effects, with illuminating examples. He highlights the importance of paradigm shift & anticipation.

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