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Free Agent Nation: How America's New Independent Workers Are Transforming The Way We Live



Synopsis

With the astute social analysis of Faith Popcorn's *The Popcorn Report*, this book boldly predicts the death of the conventional job. At the dawning of the new millennium, people everywhere are waking up to the fact that commitment to a traditional corporate structure does not guarantee personal validation or financial security. In what is one of the fastest growing movements today, people are rejecting the idea of corporate loyalty to explore more creative ways of making a living. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 3 hours

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Abridged

Publisher: Hachette Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 10, 2001

Language: English

ASIN: B00005J6VI

Best Sellers Rank: #223 in [Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Economics](#)
#332 in [Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Careers](#) #350 in [Books > Business & Money > Small Business & Entrepreneurship > Consulting](#)

Customer Reviews

Daniel Pink reports the results of his background research and a large number of interviews with "free agents" who work for themselves as consultants, contractors, and small businesses of one. He claims that this is a growing trend in the American workforce and explores the lifestyles, business plans, and satisfaction of these independent workers. We are no longer in the "new economy" of 2002 and the playing field has changed a bit. Is this book still worth reading? In the reviewer's opinion, it remains relevant for three reasons. First, even in a challenging, then recovering economy, there are many opportunities for "nanocorps" that can offer quick, flexible service to corporations that don't want to bring those services inside. Second, the recent economic pressures have spurred many to pursue after-hours work in a second job that supplements their daytime paycheck. Much of the author's advice is relevant to members of this second-shift workforce who don't have to entirely support themselves as free agents. The third and best reason to read this book applies to those working for large companies as well as free agents, second-shifters, and other independents. Even

if you are in a seemingly secure job, you should take a large measure of responsibility for your own career, thinking like a free agent or as someone who may become one with very little notice. This includes taking initiative to develop new skills, even funding training out of your own pocket. It may include purchasing your own computer equipment, reference materials and business cards when your employer will not. This book encourages all of us to prepare for portability to another organization--or to no organization. We are more occupationally and financially secure if we listen to this advice. A final thought. As we move into an era of increased government regulation, what will happen to free agents? It is unlikely all will be absorbed into large organizations, even if the regulatory environment becomes unfriendly to small businesses. Some, perhaps many, will go underground to become economic partisans, fighting their own low-profile war for survival. I wonder if a new version of the book will be released as "Black Market Nation?" This book is recommended. The author's latest thinking about the workforce can be found on the "Fast Company" web site and in his latest book, *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*.

This fellow beat me to the punch, so to speak, because he all but took all the conclusions and musings I have been ruminating about the way our workforce has been heading, and put them down much better than I could have expressed them, I'm sure! He even went several better, and included interviews with various types of free agents, their own personal stories. I, personally, find this trend wonderfully encouraging and the best thing to happen to the US since Kennedy was elected. It means we are getting our gumption back, and we still have hope in ourselves and our nation. Best of all, it proves we are believing in ourselves again, as our eyes are opened to the true duplicity and ineffectual posturing of the greedy rabble that has infested Washington.

GREAT!

Early on in this book, Dan Pink notes that he is not only reporting on, but lives as a citizen of his "Free Agent Nation." He has managed to map the landscape and boundaries of this new internal nation state. Personally, I found reading this book often resembled looking into a mirror of the life I plan to enter shortly. To be sure, Dan doesn't just show you the mountain tops of Free Agent Nation, you get to see both the valleys and slums. Yet, there is an overall hopeful tone to this geography of the new nation state. There is a life outside of Corporate America and that place isn't the desert nor the slums that we often equate with going solo. Just visit your local Starbucks, Kinkos, or Mail Boxes, etc on any given day and you will meet the varied citizens of Free Agent Nation. This is their

infrastructure and this is where they are to be seen and observed (in their natural habitat). These folks are not universally anything other than independent people making a living by blending their family and work lives. (Nope, it isn't a balancing act, it is a process of blending the two.) If you've ever given a thought to becoming a Free Agent this is the first map of the territory. You will read about the heights and depths of this emerging nation state. Note: In reading this, I found more than a few holes in The Free Agent Nation that could be filled by an enterprising Free Agent. For starters, somebody who knows the intricacies of health insurance who would setup a cooperative where free agents could purchase health insurance at group rates. There are even more, but I'll leave those to the enterprising readers.

"Daniel Pink examines the world of work and how many of us still think about what a "Job" is... find a decent company; get health and pension benefits, move up the ladder; retire with a pension/retiree Health benefits and a gold watch. However, Pink points out that those types of employers are shrinking and we must now approach the world of work as a series of "Free Lance" consulting gigs in which we may work for 6 months, 1 year, or more. Pink also explores the rationale to redesign health care and pension benefits so they are attached to individuals - NOT employers because we are now in a more fluid economy where we move from employer to employer and many times, with a break between work so we need health plans that stay with us and don't lapse between assignments... Read this book if you are still in the job market, or buy it for a student just graduating... It will help them prep for our new economic model..."

Even though it's been over a decade since this book came out, it's still and probably even more relevant today. It's well written, researched and gives good insights on the freelancer / independent contractor economy.

Daniel Pink has written some of my favorite books. This one is okay only because the subject wasn't of great interest to me. Some of it was plowing through what I already knew. For those who finds themselves considering a new career either by choice or circumstance it will provide some insight into becoming a free agent.

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