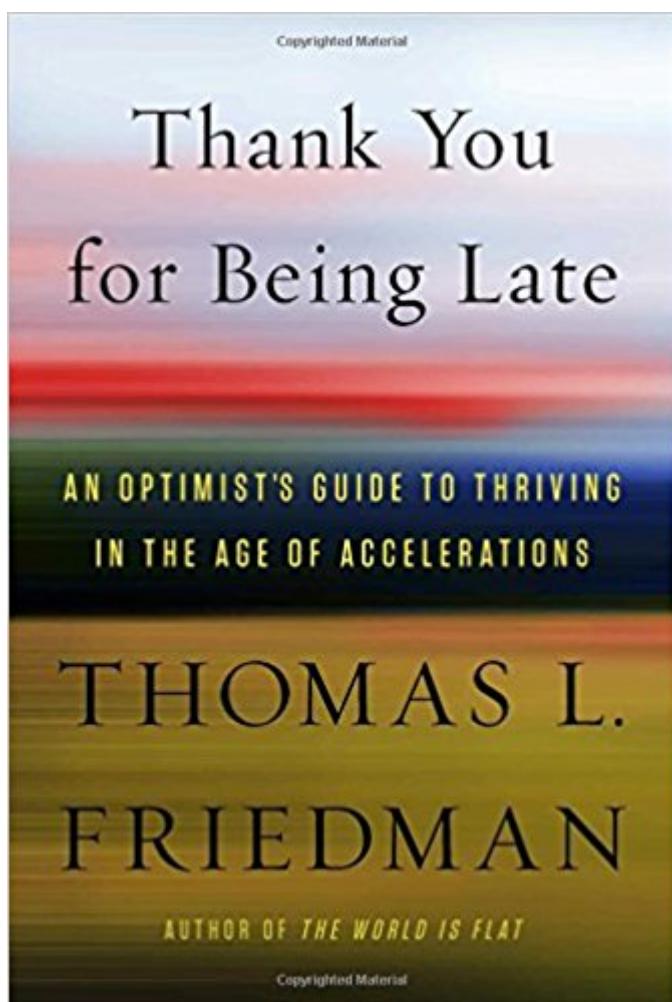


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# Thank You For Being Late: An Optimist's Guide To Thriving In The Age Of Accelerations



## Synopsis

A New York Times Bestseller A field guide to the twenty-first century, written by one of its most celebrated observers We all sense itâ •something big is going on. You feel it in your workplace. You feel it when you talk to your kids. You canâ ™t miss it when you read the newspapers or watch the news. Our lives are being transformed in so many realms all at onceâ •and it is dizzying. In *Thank You for Being Late*, a work unlike anything he has attempted before, Thomas L. Friedman exposes the tectonic movements that are reshaping the world today and explains how to get the most out of them and cushion their worst impacts. You will never look at the world the same way again after you read this book: how you understand the news, the work you do, the education your kids need, the investments your employer has to make, and the moral and geopolitical choices our country has to navigate will all be refashioned by Friedmanâ ™s original analysis. Friedman begins by taking us into his own way of looking at the worldâ •how he writes a column. After a quick tutorial, he proceeds to write what could only be called a giant column about the twenty-first century. His thesis: to understand the twenty-first century, you need to understand that the planetâ ™s three largest forcesâ •Mooreâ ™s law (technology), the Market (globalization), and Mother Nature (climate change and biodiversity loss)â •are accelerating all at once. These accelerations are transforming five key realms: the workplace, politics, geopolitics, ethics, and community. Why is this happening? As Friedman shows, the exponential increase in computing power defined by Mooreâ ™s law has a lot to do with it. The year 2007 was a major inflection point: the release of the iPhone, together with advances in silicon chips, software, storage, sensors, and networking, created a new technology platform. Friedman calls this platform â œthe supernovaâ •â •for it is an extraordinary release of energy that is reshaping everything from how we hail a taxi to the fate of nations to our most intimate relationships. It is creating vast new opportunities for individuals and small groups to save the worldâ •or to destroy it. *Thank You for Being Late* is a work of contemporary history that serves as a field manual for how to write and think about this era of accelerations. Itâ ™s also an argument for â œbeing lateâ •â •for pausing to appreciate this amazing historical epoch weâ ™re passing through and to reflect on its possibilities and dangers. To amplify this point, Friedman revisits his Minnesota hometown in his moving concluding chapters; there, he explores how communities can create a â œtopsoil of trustâ • to anchor their increasingly diverse and digital populations. With his trademark vitality, wit, and optimism, Friedman shows that we can overcome the multiple stresses of an age of accelerationsâ •if we slow down, if we dare to be late and use the time to reimagine work, politics, and community. *Thank You for Being Late* is Friedmanâ ™s most ambitious bookâ •and an essential guide to the present and the future.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

One of The Wall Street Journal's "10 Books to Read Now" One of the Best Nonfiction Books of 2016, Kirkus Reviews One of the Most Anticipated Books of Fall 2016, Publishers Weekly Long-listed for the 2017 Financial Times and McKinsey Business Book of the Year Award "Thomas L. Friedman is a self-confessed 'explanatory journalist' whose goal is to be a 'translator from English to English.' And he is extremely good at it . . . it is hard to think of any other journalist who has explained as many complicated subjects to so many people . . . Now he has written his most ambitious book—a part personal odyssey, part commonsense manifesto . . . As a guide for perplexed Westerners, this book is very hard to beat . . . Thank You for Being Late is a master class in explaining . . . As usual with Friedman, it is all backed up by pages of serious reporting from around the world . . . After your session with Dr. Friedman, you have a much better idea of the forces that are upending your world, how they work together—and what people, companies and governments can do to prosper. You do have a coherent narrative—an honest, cohesive explanation for why the world is the way it is, without miracle cures or scapegoats. And that is why everybody should hope this book does very well indeed." —John Micklethwait, The New York Times Book Review "[An] ambitious book . . . In a country torn by a divisive election, technological change and globalization, reconstructing social ties so that people feel respected and welcomed is more important than ever . . . Rather than build walls, [healthy communities] face their problems and solve them. In [Friedman's] telling, this is the way to make America great." —Laura Vanderkam, The Wall Street

Journal"Engaging . . . in some senses Thank You For Being Late is an extension of [Friedman's] previous works, woven in with wonderful personal stories (including admirably honest discussions about the nature of being a columnist). What gives Friedmanâ™s book a new twist is his belief that upheaval in 2016 is actually far more dramatic than earlier phases . . . Friedman also argues that Americans need to discover their sense of 'community,' and uses his home town of Minneapolis to demonstrate this. In two of the most engaging chapters, the author returns to the town and explains how it has created a relatively inclusive, harmonious and pragmatic style of government . . . It is a wonderful sentiment. And it injects a badly needed dose of optimism into the modern debate."

â•Gillian Tett, Financial Times "The globe-trotting New York Times columnistâ™s most famous book was about the world being flat. This one is all about the world being fast . . . His main piece of advice for individuals, corporations, and countries is clear: Take a deep breath and adapt. This world isnâ™t going to wait for you." â•Fortune"[A] humane and empathetic book." â•David Henkin, The Washington Post"[Friedman's] latest engrossingly descriptive analysis of epic trends and their consequences . . . Friedman offers tonic suggestions for fostering 'moral innovation' and a commitment to the common good in this detailed and clarion inquiry, which, like washing dirty windows, allows us to see far more clearly what weâ™ve been looking at all along . . . his latest must-read." â•Booklist (starred review)"The three-time Pulitzer winner puts his familiar methodologyâ•extensive travel, thorough reporting, interviews with the high-placed movers and shakers, conversations with the lowly moved and shakenâ•to especially good use here . . . He prescribes nothing less than a redesign of our workplaces, politics, geopolitics, ethics, and communities . . . Required reading for a generation that's 'going to be asked to dance in a hurricane.'" â•Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

Thomas L. Friedman is a three-time recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for his work with The New York Times and the author of six bestselling books, including *The World Is Flat*.

Friedman offers a compelling, well-researched paradigm for understanding how the US arrived at its current level of dysfunctional politics. His hypothesis, restated throughout the book is that the US, as well as the rest of the planet, is being subjected to three relentless, ineluctable forces: the exponential development of technology, the forces of globalization and concomitant interdependence, and severe climate change, all of which have altered forever the complacent stability to which we had become accustomed. He argues further that the pace of change (speed) as well as the rate of change (exponential) are exceeding in many cases, the capacity of individuals

and societies to adapt to change, while politicians--glued to their own narrow ideologies and even narrower political bases--provide only simplistic, quixotic and ultimately futile responses. Though I could have done without the plethora of folksy interjections, as a whole the argument made is compelling, well documented and (for me) fairly frightening. In the closing chapters of the book, Friedman offers several common sense, pragmatic solutions and manages to convey a sense of optimism that eventually, the world will be capable of adapting in a manner that improves global civilization. Given the facts and strong arguments made in preceding chapters however, the optimism seems unfounded;; particularly given the lack of political will for the heterodox approach that the author justifiably feels that circumstances require.I've given this work five stars because it has helped me, more than any other source I've read, to develop a reasonably clear understanding of how we got to where we are. I do not share the author's optimism, but I appreciate the clarity of thought, the ability to synthesize what appear to be disparate trends, and finally, the insightful, cogent analyses.

Where is the country headed and how can we all adapt? Tom Friedman has always been a reliable reporter of global trends and this book reiterates some of the points made in *That Use To Be Us*.*Average* is no longer sufficient, there are a million people on the earth that can do your job and, therefore, success will depend on engaging in e a lifelong learning process. In this book Mr. Friedman carefully details the acceleration in technology that has not only caused disruption (when a new method makes an old method obsolete) but also dislocation (when things change so quickly society is unable to adapt).People sense the dislocation occurring in this country and the reaction has caused the rise of Bernie Sanders on the left and Donald Trump on the right. According to Mr. Friedman, the wrong response is to try to keep things as they were. This is analogous to keeping your paddle in the water to try to slow down when whitewater kayaking. What you should do is paddle as fast or faster than the current to keep stability. How does one *paddle faster?* Turn AI into IA. Huh? Turn Artificial Intelligence into Intelligent Assistance. Internet tools will help people identify their interests and train them to be proficient in them e.g. the Khan Academy. Companies can also assist their employees in this process, identify employees with desired interests and skills and guide them into future jobs. AT&T is already doing this. Of course, not everyone will be able to succeed this way. Too many people will be dislocated and our current government is woefully unprepared to help people adjust to the new economy. Mr. Friedman suggests an 18 point plan that is a combination of right and left ideas e.g., eliminate the corporate tax which will eliminate corporate tax loopholes and allow corporations to repatriate

offshore holdings, revisit Dodd-Frank and Sarbanes-Oxley to facilitate rational risk taking, establish a Regulatory Review Commission to eliminate regulations that are strangling business development- but also, institute a single-payer health care system, expand the Earned Income Tax Credit and expand free trade while providing wage insurance for those people affected by the loss of their jobs. Mr. Friedman is optimistic but, as other reviewers have pointed out, his optimism doesn't seem to follow from his narrative. Ultimately, he does not solve the problem posed by John Maynard Keynes in 1928 and reiterated by many recent authors- in a consumer driven economy what do we do when artificial intelligence and robots eliminate so many jobs that people can't afford to purchase the goods and services produced? That is the most important question for today and tomorrow.

I chose to read this book having enjoyed Friedman's previous works 'The World is Flat' and 'Hot, Flat, and Crowded'. I found the exposition on Moore's law and the rapidly accelerating capabilities of technology to be adequately researched, thoughtfully explained, and tied nicely into some thoughts on how the role of education in American lives must evolve. Friedman does not wander overly far in to the topic of climate change and really doesn't offer any new ideas here. The book's greatest strength was Friedman's powerfully informative assessment of the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape and his defense of both far-right and far-left policies to confront our current 'age of accelerations'. With about 100 pages to go, I felt the book was a bit disjointed, but gaining momentum and waiting for a masterful section to tie together the wandering narratives and deliver on the promise of the title to serve as an optimist's guide. What followed instead was an approximately 100 page nostalgic rambling about how awesome his hometown in Minnesota is - it was painful to trudge through, I much preferred John Galt's 70 page speech. The passion Friedman has for this topic of community and his hometown jumps off the page, but he really does a disservice to his readers in the way he finishes this book. To be fair the book does stay faithful to the model Friedman lays out in the first chapter (though not to the title): "What is my value set and where did it come from? How do I think the Machine works today? And what have I learned about how different people and cultures are being impacted by the Machine and responding to it? "But honestly, it feels like the first chapter was written after the fact in a weak attempt to offer some framework to Friedman's disjointed and self-satisfying musings.

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