

The World is Flat  
By Thomas Friedman

This book is at the top of the New York Times bestseller list for business books and is seen as a thought provoking book about the future of the global economy, the US economy and globalization in general. It also discusses your future job opportunities, which is something that you should be thinking about as you prepare to go to college. Since it is such a timely book, this book along with the semester project, will be the framework of our semester. We will read the book in different parts throughout the semester. A large part of your grade is class participation and much of that will be based on your discussion of this book. You will need to keep up with the reading. I will be here for any questions that you might have.

The schedule of pages to be read to be prepared for discussion is:

September 13<sup>th</sup>: 3-49  
September 15<sup>th</sup>: 50-58  
October 11<sup>th</sup>: 59-126  
October 13<sup>th</sup>: 126-136  
October 19<sup>th</sup>: 136-150  
October 27<sup>th</sup>: 151-176  
October 31<sup>st</sup>: 176-200  
November 9<sup>th</sup>: 201-258  
November 13<sup>th</sup>: 261-275  
November 17<sup>th</sup>: 276-322  
November 29<sup>th</sup>: 323-390  
December 5<sup>th</sup>: 393-422  
December 7<sup>th</sup>: 425-453  
December 19<sup>th</sup>: 457-514  
December 21<sup>st</sup>: 515-539  
January 4<sup>th</sup>: 543-571



Is America ready for the flat world?



You have recently been asked by the President of the United States to prepare and execute a presentation to him regarding America's readiness for the flat world. You will work in a group of 3-4 people to prepare your presentation. The President is very busy so the presentation can only be 3-5 minutes.

In your presentation you must include:

- Skills needed in the flat world
- Explanation of the six "Dirty Little Secrets" and how they impact our readiness for the flat world.
- Definition of compassionate flatism
- Explanation of the five things that need to happen in our country to prepare us for the flat world.
- Prediction of America's role in the flat world.

Good Luck!



### **Saving GM**

Congratulations! You have recently been hired as a consultant for KPMG in their automotive practice. They know that you are an expert in globalization and KPMG needs your expertise. GM is a large client of KPMG's and they are struggling with losing market share in the world. They know that they need to rebuild their business, but they are not sure how to be successful in the flat world. Create a success plan for GM. You can use your Friedman book, the newspaper articles, and your imagination. You must include elements from at least four of Friedman's rules for companies in a flat world in your plan. You will present your plan to the class. Good luck!



### **Succeeding in a Flat World**

Congratulations!!! You have recently been hired by the government of Schwartzland. Schwartzland is a developing nation and its president recently heard that the world is becoming flat. The president also heard that your consulting firm is considered to be an expert on helping countries succeed in a flat world. With a group of 2-3 other people, create a presentation for the President of Schwartzland. The presentation should tell the president exactly what his country needs to do to be successful in the flat world. Your presentation should include concepts such as reform retail, glocalization, and "intangible things." Good luck! You will be presenting this today.

Aim: How can you succeed in the flat world? (FR 276-322)

Activity 1: Create a cover letter as an untouchable for the flat world.

Part of applying for any job is to sell yourself to your future employer. You know that the criteria have changed now that the world is becoming flat. Based on what you learned in Friedman, write a cover letter that highlights the skills you will need to be successful in the flat world. In addition, discuss the education that you will have that will help you be successful in the flat world. You may turn in one letter for the group, but ensure that everyone's name is on the letter.

Activity 2: Recently Thomas Friedman answered New York Times readers' questions in an article that he wrote. I would like you to write the answer to one question that he received as if you were Friedman. Use what you learned from the section that you just read to answer the question. I can show you the answer he wrote when I return, but I am guessing that you can predict his answer.

Question:

**Competitiveness and Outsourcing**

*Q. Middle-aged American engineers, like me, have been tremendously negatively impacted by outsourcing of our jobs to India and China and now Russia and Eastern Europe. How will the U.S. remain technically competitive if our experienced engineers are shunted out of the job market by what is essentially cheap overseas labor?*

*-- Ross Lunsford, St. Louis, MO*



Dear Prime Minister....

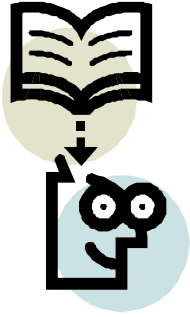
You are the CEO of a company responsible for outsourcing software and hardware support for many large clients in America. Your company is in India and India and Pakistan are at the brink of nuclear war. You already have your clients asking a lot of questions about what will happen if the war starts. You know the only way that you can save your company is if war is avoided. You have recently read Thomas Friedman's work about the Dell Theory of Conflict Prevention. You want to tell the Prime Minister about it and about the impact of war on your country and on India's place in the global economy.

With one or two of your closest advisors, write a letter to the Prime Minister of India that:

- Defines the Dell Theory of Conflict Prevention
- Explain how war will impact India's place in the global economy
- Explain how war will impact the success of your company and all other companies like it.

You will present your letter to the class and then turn in your letter at the end of the period.

Good luck in your endeavor in preventing nuclear war.



The next chapter...

Assume that you are Thomas Friedman in 20 years. Use what you have learned in the book in order to write the next chapter in the book. Use your imagination and your knowledge of Friedman to predict what the flat world will look like in twenty years. Your final chapter will be presented to the class. You may work in groups of 3-4 people.

Writing exercise: Students will have the chance to wander around the room looking at different quotes from the book and write their responses on chart paper. Once the students have finished writing responses, they will write responses to their classmates' comments. Then the students will discuss the different quotes as a class.

- a. "When I set sail, so to speak, I too assumed that the world was round, but what I encountered in the real India profoundly shook my faith in that notion. Columbus accidentally ran into America but thought he had discovered part of India. I actually found India and thought many of the people I met there were Americans." Page 5
  - b. "'Tom the playing field is being leveled.' He meant that countries like India are now able to compete for global knowledge work as never before-and that America had better get ready for this. America was going to be challenged, but, he insisted, the challenge would be good for America because we are always at our best when we are being challenged." Page 7
  - c. "The global competitive playing field was being leveled. The world was being flattened. As I came to this realization, I was filled with both excitement and dread...My personal dread derived from the obvious fact that it's not only the software writers and computer geeks who get empowered to collaborate on work in a flat world. It's also al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks." Page 8
  - d. "As a result, every person now must, and can, ask: Where do I as an individual fit into the global competition and opportunities of the day, and how can I, on my own, collaborate with others globally?" Page 11
  - e. In 2003, some 25,000 U.S. tax returns were done in India. In 2004, the number was 100,000. In 2005, it was roughly 400,000. In a decade, you will assume that your accountant has outsourced the basic preparation of your tax returns – if not more." Page 13
  - f. "Goods are traded, but services are consumed and produced in the same place. And you cannot export a haircut. But we are coming close to exporting a haircut, the appointment part." Page 15
  - g. "So even with the outsourcing of some service jobs from the United States to India, India's growing economy is creating a demand for many more American goods and services. What goes around, comes around." Page 29
  - h. "The Chinese may never forgive Japan for what it did to China in the last century, but the Chinese are so focused on leading the world in the next century that they are ready to brush up on their Japanese and take all the work Japan can outsource." Page 33
- "But there is something about the flattening of the world that is going to be qualitatively different from the great changes of previous eras: the speed and breadth with which it is taking hold."