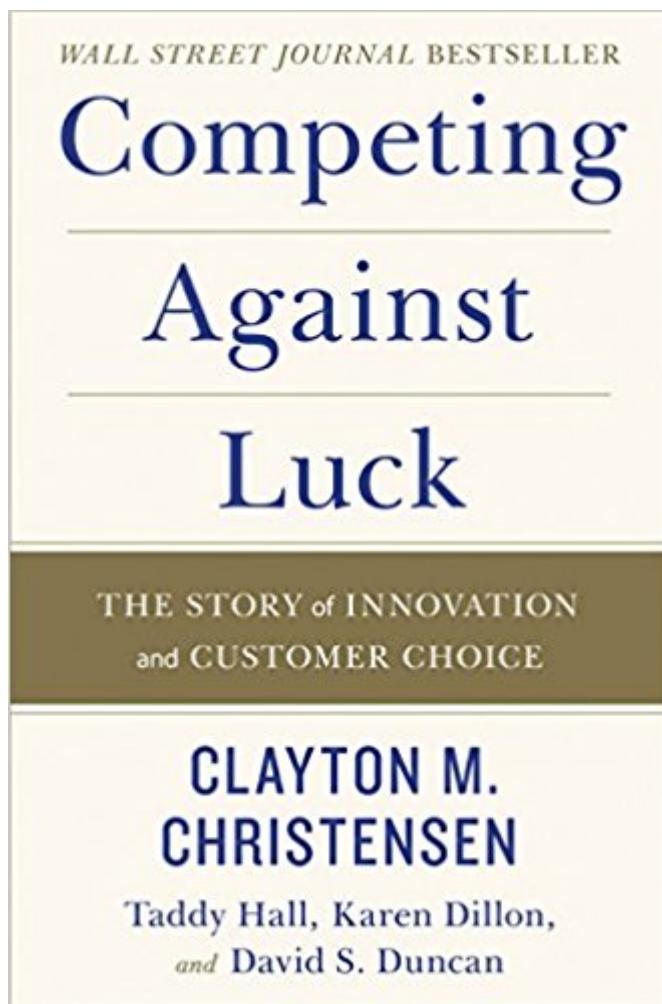


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# Competing Against Luck: The Story Of Innovation And Customer Choice



## Synopsis

The foremost authority on innovation and growth presents a path-breaking book every company needs to transform innovation from a game of chance to one in which they develop products and services customers not only want to buy, but are willing to pay premium prices for. How do companies know how to grow? How can they create products that they are sure customers want to buy? Can innovation be more than a game of hit and miss? Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen has the answer. A generation ago, Christensen revolutionized business with his groundbreaking theory of disruptive innovation. Now, he goes further, offering powerful new insights. After years of research, Christensen and his co-authors have come to one critical conclusion: our long held maxim--that understanding the customer is the crux of innovation--is wrong. Customers don't buy products or services; they "hire" them to do a job. Understanding customers does not drive innovation success, he argues. Understanding customer jobs does. The "Jobs to Be Done" approach can be seen in some of the world's most respected companies and fast-growing startups, including , Intuit, Uber, Airbnb, and Chobani yogurt, to name just a few. But this book is not about celebrating these successes--it's about predicting new ones. Christensen, Hall, Dillon, and Duncan contend that by understanding what causes customers to "hire" a product or service, any business can improve its innovation track record, creating products that customers not only want to hire, but that they'll pay premium prices to bring into their lives. Jobs theory offers new hope for growth to companies frustrated by their hit and miss efforts. This book carefully lays down the authors' provocative framework, providing a comprehensive explanation of the theory and why it is predictive, how to use it in the real world--and, most importantly, how not to squander the insights it provides.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This game-changing book is filled with compelling real world examples, including from inside Intuit. Jobs Theory has had --and will continue to have ---a profound influence on Intuitâ™s approach to innovation. It just might change yours, too. (Scott Cook, Co-founder & Chairman of Intuit)Clayton Christensenâ™s books on innovation are mandatory reading at Netflix. (Reed Hastings, Co-founder and CEO of Netflix)Competing Against Luck offers fresh thinking on how to get innovation right. Clayton Christensen and his coauthors offer a compelling take on how to truly understand customers by the progress theyâ™re seeking to make in their lives. Bravo! (Muhtar Kent, CEO of The Coca-Cola Company)Clay Christensen and his co-authors have presented critical business thinkers and doers with a breakthrough theory that will change how leaders approach innovation by reverse engineering from a high value and focused customer job to be done. I have read it cover to cover--and will ask my top team to do the same. (Ron Frank, IBM)[Competing Against Luck] will likely become part of the thoughtful founderâ™s strategy arsenal. True to its unpretentious name, jobs theory is disarmingly simpleâ•œWhat job is our customer trying to accomplish?â•• stands as one of those great business questions that companies deploy to stimulate creative juices at the start of meetings. But Competing Against Luck doesnâ™t just introduce a tool, it also lays out a program. (Inc. Magazine)The Theory of Jobs to Be Done has the essential trait of any good management theory: Once explained, it seems glaringly obvious. (Philip Delves Broughton, Wall Street Journal)In an age of big data and hyper segmentation, Christensenâ™s thinking is refreshing and clarifying. This book will relieve you of tired marketing conversations and invite you into worlds of new and ultimately, defining possibilities. Competing Against Luck is a must read for anyone working on developing or sustaining a distinctive brand. (Maureen Chiquet, former CEO of Chanel and author of forthcoming Beyond the Label)As a long-time fan of Clay Christensen, I was eager to read Competing Against Luck -- and it didnâ™t disappoint. This book has the potential to change the way you view innovation. Engaging and well-written, Christensen and his co-authors caused me to stop and really think about how Khan Academy is growing. I highly recommend it. (Sal Khan, Founder & CEO, Khan Academy)

How do leaders know how to grow? How can they create products that they are sure customers want to buy? Can innovation be more than a game of chance? The foremost authority on innovation

and growth, Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen and his coauthors Taddy Hall, Karen Dillon, and David S. Duncan have the answer. A generation ago, Christensen revolutionized business with his groundbreaking theory of disruption—“a way to predict how competitors will respond to different types of innovation. In this book he examines the other side of the puzzle: what causes growth, and how to create it. After years of research, Christensen, Hall, Dillon, and Duncan have come to one critical conclusion: our long-held maxim—“that the crux of innovation is knowing more and more about the customer—is wrong. Customers don’t simply buy products or services; they hire them to do a job. Understanding customers does not drive innovation success, the authors argue. Understanding customer jobs does. The “Jobs to Be Done” approach can be seen in some of the world’s most respected companies and fast-growing startups, including , Intuit, Uber, and Airbnb to name just a few. But this book is not about celebrating these successes—it’s about predicting new ones. Christensen and his coauthors contend that by understanding what causes customers to hire a product or service, any manager can improve their innovation track record, creating products that customers not only want to hire, but that they’ll pay premium prices to bring into their lives. Jobs theory offers new hope for growth to companies frustrated by their hit-or-miss efforts. This book carefully lays down the authors’ provocative framework, providing a comprehensive explanation of the theory, why it’s predictive, and, most important, how to use it to improve innovation in the real world.

Clay Christensen once again demonstrates why he is the preeminent authority on innovation. His Jobs Theory is applicable as a method to critically think about why consumers buy (“hire”) products and services, and why they switch (“fire”). Jobs Theory forces the providers of products and services to get into the mind of the customer.

This is a book that all business people should read. Owners, founders, managers, and those who aspire to start a business of any type. If you don’t just read this book, but think through how its concepts apply, you can see how to improve any business. I am in healthcare; it is fascinating to think about what someone hires a doctor to do. If you are looking for a book to tell you “what” to think, this is not it. It is a book about “how” to think about business. I enjoyed this book so much, I bought ten additional copies to give to friends and colleagues.

Very applicable principles that leaders in any field should apply. This book is exactly what I’ve been looking for since I read “How will you measure your life.” I especially appreciate the final chapter

that explains how the theory can be used and when it shouldn't be used. Particularly the clarification on what a job is and what it isn't. Reading this book will be well worth your time.

Christensen's thoughts are almost always worth the time. This is a key concept that, while more vague than many theories (which he acknowledges), is critical to understanding how to serve customers whether consumers or businesses. It is especially critical as more and more friction (i.e. profit margin) is competed out of value chains to understand your relationship with your buyer and what drives/destroys that relationship.

A McKinsey study shows that 84% of global executives believe that innovation is critical to corporate growth, yet 94% are dissatisfied with their company's innovation. But spending on innovation is reaching a whopping \$680 billion. Customer surveys, marketing data and focus groups find correlations around what people buy but don't often get to the deeper causality/reasons why people buy. To discover such deeper "why" truths, the authors ask: What job did you hire this product to do? Based on what the authors call the "Jobs-to-be-Done Theory," innovation-focused questions should hone in on the customer's struggle for progress. Good researched theory helps us understand and predict innovation process. And the Jobs-to-be-done theory is one powerful predictor of future, repeatable luck.

Another great book and must read from Clay Christensen. I'm the first to admit that I'm extremely biased as I am a big admirer of his theories and books. They not only provide a framework on how to view and think about the world but also a way of predicting likely outcomes. His previous works, *The Innovator's Prescription: A Disruptive Solution for Health Care* and *How Will You Measure Your Life?*, have fundamentally made me rethink the opportunities for improvement both in health care and oneself. His latest book convincingly creates a robust framework on his simple elegant and insightful queries of: What Is the Job to be Done? What Job Did Someone Hire a Product or Service to do? He begins by reiterating his famous milkshake story. Why do people hire a milkshake? What job is it that they need to make progress on? Why can't a donut, fruit or other products be hired? Why is it IKEA is so successful? How is it that the OnStar feature was popular with both Chevrolet and Cadillac consumers? What Job are people hiring Airbnb or Khan Academy to do? The answer is that they solve the customer's struggle for progress towards a specific goal. IKEA - I need to furnish a living space easily, cheaply, quickly with a stress-free experience. OnStar

- I want peace of mind or help when I'm driving and something happens. Airbnb - I need a place to stay that isn't a hotel experience. Khan Academy - I need to learn in a way that is easy and convenient for me. Discovering these future jobs to be done that people wish to hire can be as simple as stepping back and asking yourself - isn't there a better way to do this? Creating a solution takes more work, more listening, and more questions to customers and observing them in the Jobs to Be Done framework. The robust framework of Jobs to Be Done is deliberate by Christensen and team. Jobs to Be Done and Jobs to Hire or Fire conceptually is easy to grasp. As a result, it also has the potential to be overused incorrectly like his previous theory on Disruption which is overused and often erroneously to describe any innovation or change. Specifically for Jobs to Be Done, successful innovators and problem solvers need to consider the specific circumstance the job would be hired as well as the functional, social, and emotional aspects of the job. Each of these elements could enable adoption or create barriers to getting the solution hired. (Example- a Detroit real estate developer just couldn't seem to get deals closed. The a-ha moment was when the developer truly understood the obstacle to selling the home was that potential home buyers didn't know what to do with their dining room tables. These dining room tables symbolized a lifetime of memories. Once the real estate developers realized that they were not in the building new home construction business but in the business of moving lives, they provided services and products that met the emotional needs of their clients. Result? The number of sold homes increased). Fabulous and detailed stories from Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), American Girl, Intuit (makers of TurboTax and Quickbooks), OnStar, bring to life the challenges, and opportunities to bring a solution to Jobs to Be Done. Traps and obstacles await for those trying to build novel solutions inside an existing organizations and for others who rely too quickly on traditional data metrics once the solution to the job to be done has proven to be successful. Christensen concludes "I've spent twenty years gathering evidence so that you can put your time, energy, and resources into creating products and services that you can predict, in advance, customers will be eager to hire. Leaving relying on luck to the other guys." It is his finest book yet. A must have on the shelf of any business leader or entrepreneur. Like his previous works, destined to be a classic and reference for years to come.

Great overview of jobs to be done theory. A bunch of specific examples of JTBD in action. Excellent introduction to the concept, but would highly recommend listening to a JTBD interview to "get it".  
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Jobs theory has given me a new perspective on innovation. More than that, Christensen and

coauthors have created a framework, of sorts, that enables individuals and organizations to understand their customers' real needs and struggles. "Competing Against Luck" is one of those books that may change your way of managing and doing business.

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