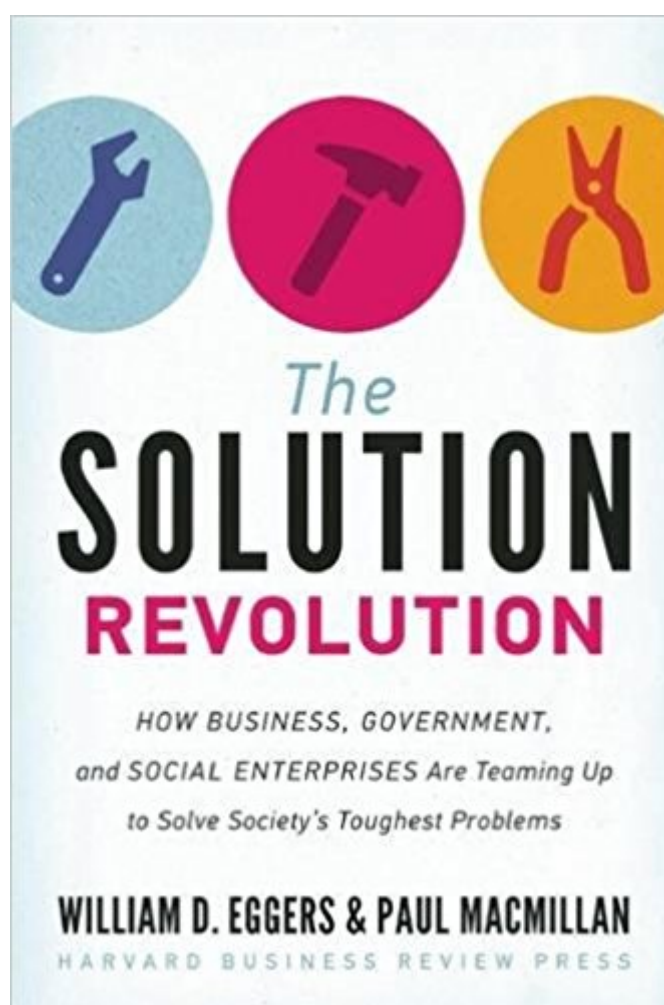


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# The Solution Revolution: How Business, Government, And Social Enterprises Are Teaming Up To Solve Society's Toughest Problems



## Synopsis

Government Alone Can't Solve Society's Biggest Problems

World hunger. Climate change. Crumbling infrastructure. It's clear that in today's era of fiscal constraints and political gridlock, we can no longer turn to government alone to tackle these and other towering social problems. What's required is a new, more collaborative and productive economic system. The Solution Revolution brings hope, revealing just such a burgeoning new economy where players from across the spectrum of business, government, philanthropy, and social enterprise converge to solve big problems and create public value. By erasing public-private sector boundaries, the solution economy is unlocking trillions of dollars in social benefit and commercial value. Where tough societal problems persist, new problem solvers are crowdfunding, ridesharing, app-developing, or impact-investing to design innovative new solutions for seemingly intractable problems. Providing low-cost health care, fighting poverty, creating renewable energy, and preventing obesity are just a few of the tough challenges that also represent tremendous opportunities for those at the vanguard of this movement. They create markets for social good and trade solutions instead of dollars to fill the gap between what government can provide and what citizens need. So what drives the solution economy? Who are these new players and how are their roles changing? How can we grow the movement? And how can we participate?

Deloitte's William D. Eggers and Paul Macmillan answer these questions and more, and they introduce us to the people and organizations driving the revolution; from edgy social enterprises growing at a clip of 15 percent a year, to megafoundations, to Fortune 500 companies delivering social good on the path to profit. Recyclebank, RelayRides, and LivingGoods are just a few of the innovative organizations you'll read about in this book. Government cannot handle alone the huge challenges facing our global society; and it shouldn't. We need a different economic paradigm that can flexibly draw on resources, combine efforts, and create value, while improving the lives of citizens. The Solution Revolution shows the way.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Executives Eggers and Macmillan set out to explain the multitrillion dollar “solution economy,” which is arising as governments partner with the private sector (citizens, businesses, entrepreneurs, and foundations) to address society’s urgent and deep-seated problems locally and worldwide. This new approach replaces the historic government-dominated model for solving entrenched problems in fields including health care, poverty, education, housing, and recycling. The public-private partnerships are possible because of technology and access to funding, collaborating tools for citizens to work together on challenging issues, and corporate awareness that enables its leaders to devote resources to addressing society’s pressing problems. The authors cite many new players in the societal problem-solving arena during the last 10 years, including Acumen, Ashoka, Kiva, and Zipcar. The authors conclude that a brighter future is ours “if we are savvy enough to grasp it.” Loaded with important information for a wide range of library patrons. --Mary Whaley

“pulsating with fresh ideas about civic and business and philanthropic engagement; the breadth of examples is impressive and global.” —The Wall Street Journal; Eggers and Macmillan’s work succeeds as a guide to new opportunities to profit from socially impactful activities once thought unprofitable. —Financial Times; Another good read, The Solution Revolution explores how business, government, philanthropy and social enterprise are converging to solve big problems and create public value...the innovations Eggers and Macmillan outline, and the possibilities they imagine, are fascinating and tantalizing. —The Washington Post; The Solution Revolution is an excellent primer for anyone interested in joining the ranks of the social sector; Very few authors and researchers have provided such a comprehensive view of the social sector; —Policy Perspectives (policy-perspectives.org); This book looks at how business, government, and social

enterprises are teaming up to solve society's toughest problems. It's the best book out there on mobilising communities to solve wicked problems," says Peter Williams from audit and consulting firm Deloitte. "Sydney Morning Herald, Summer Reading List, Tech Knowledge; a fascinating preview of our economic future, a system where choice, sustainability, and more adaptive ecosystems offer all of us the ability to collaborate towards better solutions. "USA Book News; a pick for social issues and business collections alike. Business collections will find this a specific, inspirational guide! "Midwest Book Review; For a book devoted to seemingly intractable problems, it has a very hopeful message. "BizEd magazine; A thought-provoking book on how changes have given rise to new issues and challenges and how important it is for society to think beyond self. "The Star; an energetic study and saying, "These stories along with substantive advice for individuals and governments alike present a persuasive argument that the future of global change rests squarely in the hands of ordinary citizens. "Publishers Weekly; worth reading because it is vital to comprehend how, to an astonishing extent, this convergence is already changing the world. "Vancouver Sun; If you're looking for an optimistic read, The Solution Revolution: How Business, Government, and Social Enterprises Are Teaming Up to Solve Society's Toughest Problems is a perfect choice; This is high-energy, high-level thinking being put into on-the-ground practice to see what comes of it. "Associations Now (ASAE: American Society of Association Executives); The Solution Revolution shows how entrepreneurs all over the world are stepping forward to innovate for the public good. "T+D magazine (American Society for Training & Development); The Solution Revolution provides a useful and thought-provoking method map, examples, and inspiration for this journey. "Research-Technology Management ADVANCE PRAISE for The Solution Revolution: Walter Isaacson, President and CEO, Aspen Institute; author, Steve Jobs; "Citizens and businesses are creating a solution economy that blends market forces and altruism to get good things done . . . Watch out. This book may inspire you to join the revolution! "Peter H. Diamandis, Chairman and CEO, XPRIZE Foundation; Chairman, Singularity University; coauthor, Abundance: The Future Is Better Than You Think; "Today the world's biggest problems are the world's biggest market opportunities. Want to become a billionaire? Solve a billion-person problem. The Solution Revolution shows you how. "Jennifer Pahlka, Deputy US CTO; founder and Executive Director, Code for America; The Solution Revolution explores how the intersections of

the sectors can unlock the potential we need to face the realities of the twenty-first century. John Mackey, co-CEO and cofounder, Whole Foods Market; coauthor, *Conscious Capitalism: Liberating the Heroic Spirit of Business*; The Solution Revolution is a wise reminder that global problems shouldn't be left to government alone to solve . . . Read this book and join today's solution economy. The Right Honourable Paul Martin, former Prime Minister of Canada; With a global population approaching nine billion and governments so indebted that their only answer is to beggar succeeding generations, the current path is clearly unsustainable. Eggers and Macmillan seek a better way. Geoff Mulgan, CEO, Nesta; author, *The Locust and the Bee: Predators and Creators in Capitalism's Future*; Eggers and Macmillan vividly describe creative solutions that break the boundaries between the public and private sectors and civil society. Rachel Botsman, coauthor, *What's Mine Is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption*; Read this book if you want to understand how the solution revolution will create a trillion-dollar market for social good by unlocking the value of underutilized resources in ways and on a scale never possible before.

Eggers and Macmillan have done us a big favour by collecting a compelling compendium of ideas and practical examples of an important phenomenon - what I would call, following Lisbeth Schorr, the "public purpose" sector. This is something that has been developing for some time as governments find themselves stretched in terms of money, ideas and expertise as they confront complex risks and opportunities in a world full of turbulent change. As a result we've been witnessing for a while now various experiments in new combinations of public, private and civil society assets to tackle the big problems we want to solve. What the Solution Economy suggests is that we've reached something of a tipping point in this process. That has two important consequences. One is that the scale, speed and variety of the experiments are all growing as public and private entrepreneurs and social innovators are becoming more confident as they try new ideas and engage a creative cycle that quickly tests ideas to find the ones that work and which can scale. The second consequence is that the public sector itself, as a key institution of policy and governance, is changing shape. Under the relentless pressure of wicked problems, reducing resources and big social, economic and technology changes the work and contours of the formal public sector are changing, sometimes dramatically. New cross boundary collaborations are fueling new solutions and, at the same time, creating new markets for innovation. How define 'public' problems (and opportunities), as well as the instincts and practices we draw on to deal with them,

are all changing. In that sense, what is in and out of the public sector is changing and the lines between sectors and different types of player are blurring. But perhaps the most important insight of the book is that the real significance of the solution economy is not that it is new and cool and clever or that it has become a distinct economy in its own right, but rather that its sole measure of performance is the results these new approaches achieve. In the solutions economy, what matters in the end is whether the new ideas and clever new approaches actually work. And if they don't, the instinct that drives the solutions economy follows the advice from Franklin Roosevelt, who reminded us that "it is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something." This is an important, timely and at times provocative book about the way we will need increasingly to set about the big tasks of the rapidly changing world in which we find ourselves.

I work on the Board for Not For Sale, an anti-trafficking organization that believes and acts upon a solution based approach that is found in this book. The authors show that there is a different approach to major issues in the world than the typical "Silo" approach. This book is so full of resources, ones that have worked, ones that have not worked and ones where the jury is still out. This book will show you that traditional approaches are not working and that a new collaboration, partnership and thinking outside of the box is required to address our communities, nations and global issues these days. This book is a book full of resources that I am already using over and over again. So if you are wanting to make an impact in an area or connect with new partners to focus on the common good, this is a book that will show you what that looks like.

I loved this book. With all the news of war, crime and tragedy, it's easy to forget that there are individuals and organizations out there that are innovating, creating and taking risks to make the world a better place. I was lucky to get an early copy and finished it feeling very optimistic about the future. Since reading the book, I've been thinking differently about CSR and how companies can use their assets and intellectual capital to find solutions to societal problems. I have since purchased several more copies to give as gifts to friends and colleagues.

Unbelievably ignorant of culture and history. The text was published in 2013 and already it is incredibly outdated. There is no mention of Uber. No mention of ISIS and its instrumentation of social media and new technologies to have an unprecedented foothold on the Middle East. In 2013, these innovations may have seemed to have no downside. But in 2015, we are already seeing the

rise of the very same innovations to exploit, disenfranchise, marginalize and harm whole civilizations. The growth and proliferation of the ideas in The Solution Revolution is so great and so profound, that even two years after publication, the textbook could use a serious update to include new major players in the The Solution Revolution like Uber and ISIS, players that illustrate the dark side of this way of thinking. A passage on page 91 of the text states: “Sniping, for example, has always been a mathematical task. Snipers must calculate wind speed, distance, altitude, temperature, and a number of other variables before they can take a shot. With the right app, however, and an iPhone fastened to a rifle, snipers can calculate all these variables quickly.” This is the most terrifying sentence in the whole text, and it goes to prove that some of these “innovations” are truly blind to the numerous complicated factors that lie rumbling under the surface of the global condition today. That a writer can write the above sentence, noting only passingly in the next paragraph that “the low barrier to development also puts it within reach for militant and terrorist groups” shows how little The Solution Revolution is accounting for the true state of affairs in today’s world. My question: who the heck is examining the dark side of this so-called revolution?

The book describes a lot of examples about a new way of doing business where purpose-driven entities create value to every stakeholder involved through market mechanisms

I thoroughly enjoyed reading The Solution Revolution. It opened my eyes to new ways to solve big problems! The ingenuity and resourcefulness of the "wavemakers" profiled in this book is inspiring. I would recommend this book to anyone looking to broaden their ideas about how to solve social problems, how to leverage new technologies, and how to get creative about thinking outside conventional means and constraints.

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