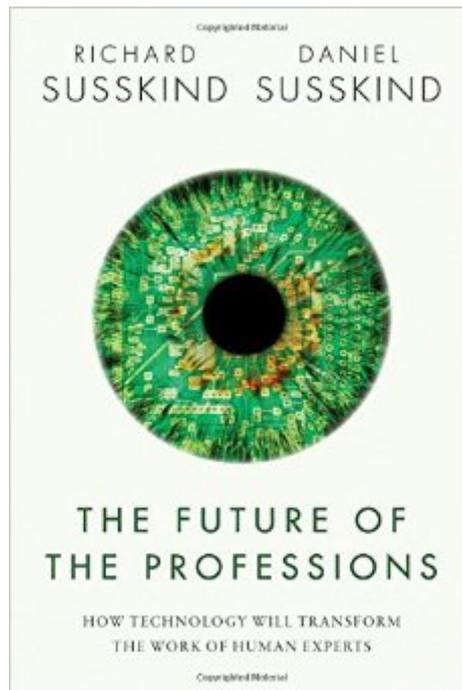


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The Future Of The Professions: How Technology Will Transform The Work Of Human Experts



Synopsis

This book predicts the decline of today's professions and describes the people and systems that will replace them. In an Internet society, according to Richard Susskind and Daniel Susskind, we will neither need nor want doctors, teachers, accountants, architects, the clergy, consultants, lawyers, and many others, to work as they did in the 20th century. *The Future of the Professions* explains how 'increasingly capable systems' -- from telepresence to artificial intelligence -- will bring fundamental change in the way that the 'practical expertise' of specialists is made available in society. The authors challenge the 'grand bargain' -- the arrangement that grants various monopolies to today's professionals. They argue that our current professions are antiquated, opaque and no longer affordable, and that the expertise of their best is enjoyed only by a few. In their place, they propose six new models for producing and distributing expertise in society. The book raises important practical and moral questions. In an era when machines can out-perform human beings at most tasks, what are the prospects for employment, who should own and control online expertise, and what tasks should be reserved exclusively for people? Based on the authors' in-depth research of more than ten professions, and illustrated by numerous examples from each, this is the first book to assess and question the relevance of the professions in the 21st century.

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Customer Reviews

No one would describe *The Future of the Professions* as a light and frothy read. I am a great fan of author Richard Susskind's previous books and his evolving thoughts about the future of the legal profession - and, in this book, all professions. His son Daniel, who is a lecturer in

economics at Oxford University, adds another illuminating perspective. It is best read (I think) in 30-45 minute segments with pauses to digest what you've read and to reflect upon your own thinking. The primary criticism of this book (and its predecessors) is that it represents "doom and gloom." In some respects, that is true. The authors do indeed believe that a radical shift is coming and that the unprepared may not fare well if they don't change how they think. The book suggests that we need to "coerce with the machines" rather than fight against them (surely a losing battle). As the book notes, machines are becoming increasingly capable. There is an extensive discussion (fascinating) of the second generation of artificial intelligence (AI) which examines the ongoing development of IBM's Watson and its deployment in a host of professions. Is it a certain amount of work to read this book, which tackles a complex subject in great depth? Assuredly. But well worth the effort. The authors take great pain to leaven their research with colorful quotes and statistics from others and to translate the complex subjects into more digestible and sometimes humorous tidbits. Any professional who is worried about the future would be well-advised to read this book thoughtfully.

A very helpful and timely book. Tendencies described for all professions is what I trace personally in the development of the legal profession and its regulation. I see one of the greatest values of the book in that it presented, at least in some of its portions, a viewpoint from the position of consumers, regarding the so-called "destructive innovations", offering services that were previously offered by high-priced professionals, as information services available online, what many professionals see as destruction of their profession that needs to be resisted. The authors present many of such trends as "socially constructive" tendencies that will help the recipients of services. It is true that what the so-called professions are doing, at prices not affordable by the majority of consumers, can be demystified, unbundled and presented in a stream of separate off-the-rack cheaper services which can be performed by non-professionals and even by the machines. And, I agree with the authors that what they predict may happen sooner than those interested in preservation of the current "status quo" of professions would like to see.

This book should be read by every marketing person for professional organizations, the world is changing as technology takes us to new places in commerce. The technology will continue to improve and expand, it will be important for professional organizations to recognize the impact on their professions, or be left with empty offices waiting for clients that never arrive.

The Future of Professions really makes you look at how social classes have been changing throughout history, and how professionals now are looked upon compared to professionals before. It also points out how where you go to school, who you know, how good you are can impact professionals, past, present and future with the elitist mentality. This is an interesting book that really takes a look at the future of a list of professions. I found this intriguing especially since there has been some changes recently impacting jobs like a cashier at McDonald's. Not long after the minimum wage increased to \$15, kiosks have been ordered and installed in some areas across the U.S. to replace the cashiers. This is not one of the top careers, but if this can happen here, what other jobs can be replaced by a machine in the future? A kiosk is still a pretty simple machine and will only improve. We are surrounded by smart technology everywhere we go, and it just keeps getting smarter. Daniel and Richard explain the concept of the grand bargain and how the common people have given over permission and authority to "professionals". The authors explain that this bargain has effectively given the keys to a number of professionals who make a lot of money from society because we are entirely dependent upon them for their knowledge, experience and expertise. They go on to discuss seven different models to make practical expertise available in society. One is the traditional model currently being used, while the others are future possibilities dependent upon technological advances. The implications in this book are a little scary to think about, especially how any changes might impact my family.

As an older professional I found this book thrilling and compelling. Perhaps a bit scary at times but overall very stimulating and thought provoking. I recommend it to all professionals and suggest they read with an open mind. Think more about the possibilities that innovation will bring and less being at the end of an age. My only beef with this book is the length. I think the overall argument could just as well be made with about 100 fewer pages.

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