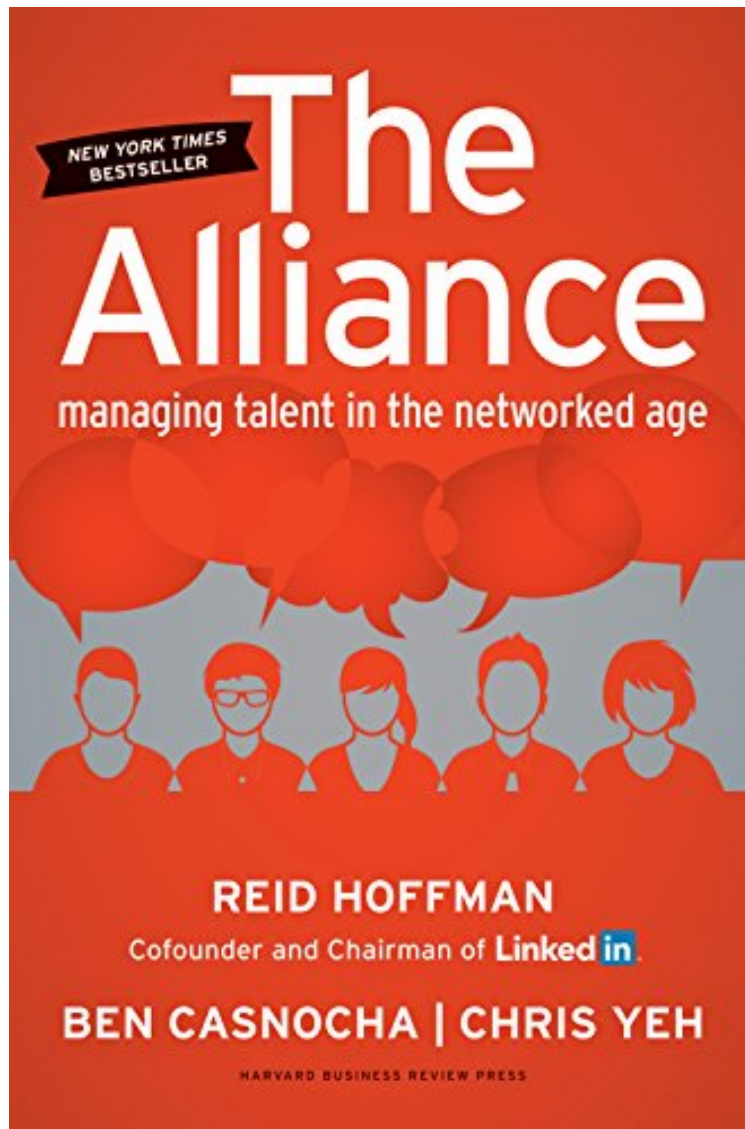


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## The Alliance: Managing Talent in the Networked Age

*Reid Hoffman, Ben Casnocha*

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**Reid Hoffman, Ben Casnocha : The Alliance: Managing Talent in the Networked Age** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Alliance: Managing Talent in the Networked Age:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. That is true in good times and in badBy Ian MannPeople with talent have more options. That is true in good times and in bad, for high-level skilled workers and for those with low-level skills. In almost every country in the world, staff can be "let go." This can be a protracted process, or a simple one. If the company does not need or want you, your employment will be terminated. The employees are expected to be loyal and committed, and to work in the best interests of the company until they retire. This is despite

the clear but rarely ever stated, understanding that your job might disappear as a result of a restructuring, or a decree from a boardroom in another country. Should you, in turn, inform you company that you have accepted an offer of better employment, you might be asked to leave immediately. This is instead of working out your notice period, because you cannot be trusted to work out your time in the best interests of the company. After all, you have left before your retirement.No thoughtful person should be unaware of this imbalance ndash; the employee must commit, but the company cannot be expected to.The days when ldquo;employers and employees committed to each other, for better or worse, through bull and bear markets, until retirement did them part,rdquo; are over. Loyalty is scarce, long-term ties are rare. The past will not, and cannot return The Alliance, Hoffmannrsquo;s latest book, addresses this problem. You cannot get a personsquo;s talent working for the good of the company if you do not have their commitment. Employees who fail to fully invest in their current positions are constantly scanning the marketplace for new opportunities.What we can expect, and what the book sets out to sketch is a framework that encourages a different employer-employee relationship.Reid Hoffman is an internet entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and author, best known as the co-founder of LinkedIn, The Alliance describes a relationship based on both employer and employee adding value to each other: ldquo;Help make our company more valuable, and we will make you more valuable.rdquo;This is a team where mutually adding value secures the bond. It is not a family were commitment is unchanging. No one asks their child to leave because she scored an ldquo;Frdquo; in biology,The Alliance has already taken root in the high-tech, start-up community of Silicon Valley. The secret of success in Silicon Valley is really about the way the companies build alliances with their people. Talent is Silicon Valleysquo;s most valuable resource, and they treat this resource accordingly, explains Hoffman. Most people will know about the geniuses of the Valley, but few about itsrsquo;s management practices. Employers use the alliance to recruit, manage, and retain incredibly talented, entrepreneurial employees.Hoffman uses the term ldquo;Tour of Dutyrdquo; to describe how employment is understood. The term comes from the military where a tour of duty refers to a single specific deployment. A soldier will see a number of tours of duty in his career, each for a predetermined time, and to accomplish a specific task. One might be to assist with the evacuation effort after the earthquake, and another to secure a hospital in a remote area.In the business context, a tour of duty is a clearly defined task to be achieve within a finite period of time. It is an ethical, reciprocal, commitment between employer and employee. The company commits to honouring its obligations to the employee during this tour of duty, and the employee commits to honouring the needs of the company for this finite period.The expectation of value from each party are made explicit, and are accepted by the other. You, the employee will be exposed and trained in the merchandising methods of the firm for the next 18 months, and will learn about our state-of-the-art systems. This, we agree is something necessary for the career you desire to pursue, here or somewhere else. You will fulfil your task thoughtfully, and will look for ways the company can improve their systems and alert us to new possibilities.There are three general tours of duty. The most basic one is the Rotational Tour. This is a fairly structured tour designed for entry-level staff, often to get acquainted with the company and to be exposed to various facets of the business they might wish to contribute to. Google, for example, puts recent college graduates through a structured, twenty-seven-month Rotational tour that exposes them to three different roles each for nine months. Both the staff member and the company benefit from this fixed term commitment.The second level tour of duty is the Transformational tour. This tour will be tailored to the specific needs of the company, and the specific aspirations of the employee. It is called ldquo;Transformationalrdquo; because it is intended to transform both the company and the career of the employee. An initial transformations tour will last between and two and five years.Violating the commitment during what is essentially a short period, would not be in the interests of any mature employee. Who would hire talent that did not honour commitments made, and who would choose to work for an organization that does not honour commitments made to employees?The third tour of duty is only offered to those employees who are a perfect cultural fit with the organization. The employee ldquo;sees working at the company as his last job, and the company wants the employee to stay until he retires.rdquo; This is called the Foundational tour of duty.Mutual respect underlies this alliance. Expectations are required of both sides, as well as the satisfaction of each othersquo;s needs. The duration of the relationship is, for the most part, relatively short, making commitment possible to honour.The book describes all aspects of the implementation, and forewarns of challenges you might encounter.Our workplaces will benefit from this re-think.Readability Light --- SeriousInsights High --- LowPractical High --- Low\*Ian Mann of Gateways consults internationally on leadership and strategy and is the author of Strategy that Works.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Thought provoking read!By J. FerneborgWant to keep both employees and companies in a trusted win-win relationship? This book offers a framework for open and respectful communication, goal setting, and an ethical obligation to keep each other accountable.The writers have done a great job encapsulating the essence of what the recruitment process should do; tightly frame a potential job opportunity and encourage an open and honest dialog with likeminded candidates; defining what the company and individual can expect to gain from each other, within a specified timeframe.The second half of the book dives into network intelligence and the power of alumni networks. This is just smart business practice and should be implemented depending on your companysquo;s size. Employees and alumni are your greatest asset.Worthy quick read that will give you something for your personal toolbox!4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great ideas stretched unnecessarily into a full length book.

Definitely worth a read. By Alexander K. Moore In the past forty years, the relationship between employers and employees has changed. Lifetime employment has become a thing of the past while talent is now expected to hop from job to job. While this state of affairs offers unprecedented labor mobility, it also reduces trust. Employers don't invest in their employees as much because they don't want to waste resources on people that won't stay. Employees aren't loyal to their companies because they feel that they are expendable. It is this lack of trust that "The Alliance" seeks to alleviate through a simple brilliant idea: employers and employees should be honest about the transitory nature of jobs and look at them as "Tours of Duty" where an employer gets something concrete accomplished for the company while the employee gets an experience that will help them develop their careers. In short, employer and employee form an alliance. Through this experience, everyone gets what they want, and on top of that, everyone is left happier. It's a brilliant idea that seems highly relevant to American society. This book is worth reading just to get a good understanding of this simple idea. Unfortunately, there isn't all that much other than this idea in the book. It feels like it could have been published as a Kindle Single. Overall, an excellent, if quick, read.

A New York Times Bestseller Introducing the new, realistic loyalty pact between employer and employee. The employer-employee relationship is broken, and managers face a seemingly impossible dilemma: the old model of guaranteed long-term employment no longer works in a business environment defined by continuous change, but neither does a system in which every employee acts like a free agent. The solution? Stop thinking of employees as either family or as free agents. Think of them instead as allies. As a manager you want your employees to help transform the company for the future. And your employees want the company to help transform their careers for the long term. But this win-win scenario will happen only if both sides trust each other enough to commit to mutual investment and mutual benefit. Sadly, trust in the business world is hovering at an all-time low. We can rebuild that lost trust with straight talk that recognizes the realities of the modern economy. So, paradoxically, the alliance begins with managers acknowledging that great employees might leave the company, and with employees being honest about their own career aspirations. By putting this new alliance at the heart of your talent management strategy, you'll not only bring back trust, you'll be able to recruit and retain the entrepreneurial individuals you need to adapt to a fast-changing world. These individuals, flexible, creative, and with a bias toward action, thrive when they're on a specific "tour of duty"—when they have a mission that's mutually beneficial to employee and company that can be completed in a realistic period of time. Coauthored by the founder of LinkedIn, this bold but practical guide for managers and executives will give you the tools you need to recruit, manage, and retain the kind of employees who will make your company thrive in today's world of constant innovation and fast-paced change.

.com Daniel Pink interviews Reid Hoffman / Ben Casnocha / Chris Yeh Daniel H. Pink is the author of *Drive*, *To Sell is Human*, *A Whole New Mind*, and other books about business and behavior. Every so often a company comes along that transforms the world of work. LinkedIn is one of those companies. Since its founding more than a decade ago, it has become the place where professionals build, maintain, and nurture their networks. For millions of people from all over the globe, LinkedIn is a source of opportunities, talent, even inspiration. But its founder, Reid Hoffman, isn't content with merely building a hugely successful company. He's also established himself as one of the most interesting thinkers in Silicon Valley. His first book, *The Start Up of You*, written with longtime collaborator Ben Casnocha, encouraged individuals to think of themselves as entrepreneurs, even if they were collecting a W-2 paycheck. Now Hoffman and Casnocha (with Chris Yeh) are back with a new book, which takes a smart, fresh, (and occasionally bracing) look at the evolving relationship between the bosses and the bossed. It's a terrific and accessible read that provides business leaders with both insights and tools to handle a world in which talent is paramount. Pink: One of the many things I like about *The Alliance* is that you take on the notion that successful companies are "families." Explain. Hoffman / Casnocha / Yeh: Some CEOs like to refer to their companies as families. The concept of family is a powerful one, and describes how the best companies treat their people: with compassion and respect. Yet we believe that using family language is a big mistake. The problem is that families are permanent—you can't fire your kids, no matter how many times they may forget to take out the trash. Companies are not permanent. The instant you lay off an underperforming employee, or someone leaves to pursue a better opportunity, the illusion of family is shattered. The only way to maintain the fiction is for people to lie to themselves and each other. This underlying dishonesty is corrosive, and prevents the kind of trust that is necessary for a close, high-performance relationship. Both sides need to be honest with each other about the fact that the employment might not be permanent. Pink: The big idea in this book is the "tour of duty." How did you come up with that concept? Hoffman / Casnocha / Yeh: We realized the employment relationship was broken. The family model was no longer affordable, but the opposite approach of treating every employee like a free agent doesn't build the high trust, collaborative relationships necessary for innovation. Many Silicon Valley companies began using the Alliance and tour of duty frameworks as a way to manage the employer-employee relationship for the modern era. One of us (Reid) deployed it successfully when founding LinkedIn. In order to attract great people, he avoided vague talk about loyalty and instead made an explicit deal with employees: if they signed up for a tour of duty of between two to four

years and made an important contribution to the business, Reid and the company would help advance their careers, preferably in the form of another tour of duty at LinkedIn, or at a different company if that's what was best for them. This approach provided a crisp focus and a mutually agreeable time frame for discussing the employment relationship. It improved retention of great employees at LinkedIn. The paradox of the tour of duty idea is that acknowledging the fact that an employee can and might leave your company in the future improves your ability to construct a tour of duty that convinces him or her to stay. Pink: How does a sense of purpose factor in to your analysis of talent and its place in modern organization? Hoffman / Casnocha / Yeh: A sense of purpose matters hugely for employee engagement and effectiveness, but you don't get that through a single, company-wide mission statement. Most corporate mission statements are little loved and have little impact on the day to day task of recruiting and retaining great people. [Click here to read the full interview](#)