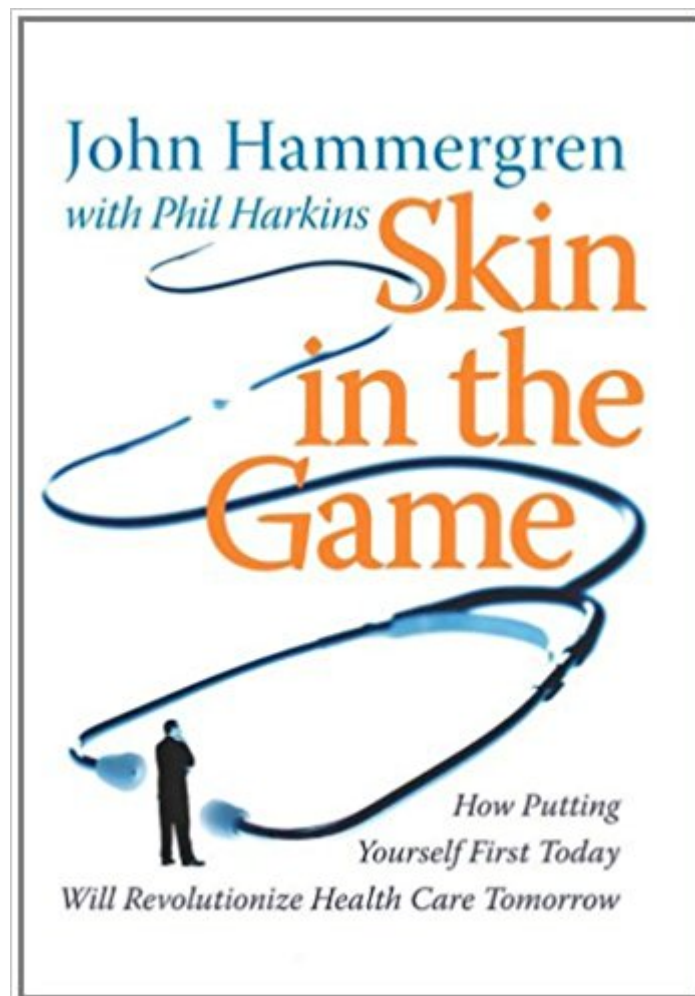




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Skin In The Game: How Putting Yourself First Today Will Revolutionize Health Care Tomorrow



Synopsis

While the American health care system has consistently been criticized for its noticeable detriments, few have taken the time to recognize the significant benefits and potential of this system. But with *Skin in the Game*, authors John Hammergren and Phil Harkins provide a comprehensive overview of the history of our health care system, an explanation of its current state, and a picture of the great strides that they see being made in the near future.

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Customer Reviews

Did you ever notice that you always seem to come last in our health care system, with its mega-billion-dollar insurance providers, and multi-layered government bureaucracy? Well, You're not alone-policy makers and citizens groups are constantly criticizing the state of American health care, and the statistics often confirm their suspicions. the good news is things are about to change, and this book will show you how to put yourself first in the health care system and ensure that you and your family know how to access the best care possible. With *Skin in the Game*, authors John Hammergren- Chairman and CEO of McKesson Corporation, America's oldest and largest health care in America; an explanation of how we arrived at our current crisis; and a preview of the revolutionary leap in care that's coming as high-tech productivity and quality transform health care in America. In the not too distant future, you will have ready access to information about doctors, hospitals, and treatment centers so you can make fact-based choices about where and when to seek care. All of your medical records will be digitized, available to you and your doctor anywhere,

anytime. Test results will be instantaneous and performed in a doctor's office, which may be located in a mall or at your local pharmacy. Page by page, *Skin in the game* explains all of this and more, helping you:

- Understand today's "big picture" health care issues in a historical context
- Recognize how a streamlined health care system will free your doctor to provide the personalized care you desire and your doctor prefers
- Gain new insights into the process of health care delivery and the innovations that will change the way you receive care and manage your health
- Obtain practical advice about how you can get around today's health care roadblocks and locate the best doctors with the best practice techniques and best treatment results
- And much more

A must-read for anyone who cares about the future of our health care system, *Skin in the game* offers information and answers that even industry insiders will find revealing. And it might just save your life.

"John Hammergren is one of America's best CEOs, and his new book, *Skin in the game*, makes a strong statement about the serious issue of health care reform. Moreover, he does so with clear thinking, contagious optimism, and a refreshing, pragmatic approach that can be readily understood." - Mark Hurd, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Hewlett-Packard Company

"I have believed for a long time that American health care is not in crisis-rather it is a call to action for leadership. This is a book with just that message-well done!" - Warren Bennis, Distinguished Professor of Business Administration, University of Southern California; coauthor of *Judgment*

"John Hammergren's prescription for addressing America's health care crisis is a clear, well thought-out mandate founded on pragmatism: leverage existing technology and the free market to cut costs, improve quality, and put the patient back in charge. Brilliant and achievable!" - Paul Otellini, Chief Executive Officer, Intel Corporation

"Our nation's health care is everybody's business. John Hammergren and Phil Harkins showcase the future of the health care industry through candid interviews, compelling research, and an unwavering commitment to uncover the truth about what lies ahead." - Michael Treacy, coauthor of *The Discipline of Market Leaders*

"As the leader of the nation's largest health care company with ties to all parts of the complex U.S. health care system. John Hammergren is in a unique position to describe the challenges we face and what we can do about them. His book is insightful, challenging, and persuasive, and a valuable addition to the debate about the future of the critically important sector that represents one sixth of the U.S. economy." - David M. Lawrence, MD, MPH Chairman and CEO (retired), Kaiser Foundation Health Plan and Hospitals

Great read. John if you read these, you've got a couple fans over at emids and should give us a

call.

As CEO of a large health care services firm, John Hammergren offers his perspective on the problems facing the US health care system. *Skin in the Game* lays out the case for improving our health care system by empowering the consumer (aka the patient) while leveraging technology and the market dynamics that have driven higher quality and lower costs throughout most other sectors of the American economy. Very few will dispute that the American health care system faces major challenges today: a large population segment without health insurance, quality issues that injure and kill patients, vast inefficiencies in funding and reimbursement, declining ratios of clinicians to patients, etc. The debate over how to address those issues tends to break down into two camps: those who wish to move towards a nationalized system vs those who emphasize the free markets. *Skin in the Game* lays out a common-sense blueprint for implementing positive changes via technology, the power of free enterprise, and appropriate government engagement. Hammergren starts with a brief history of how health care has evolved in the United States which helps to explain the "why" behind where we are today. Our health system is essentially a grouping of loosely coupled cottage industries that have failed to mature into a modern integrated system. Several explanations are offered for this outcome including government market intervention and the common belief that health care is a "unique" industry which should be sheltered from the free market dynamics driving quality and efficiency across the rest of our economy. Most revealing are comparisons made between typical consumer transactions, buying a car for example, and an encounter in the health care system. With a car purchase, the consumer has ready access to product reviews, safety information, pricing data, and dealer information from a home computer. Prior to taking the first test drive, the would-be buyer can be armed with knowledge to make an educated purchasing decision. What if the same individual finds out that she needs heart bypass surgery? Questions arise. What's the best plan of treatment based on outcomes data? What are the viable alternatives? Which hospitals and physicians perform the most bypasses and have the best outcomes? What will everything cost? Try getting answers to those questions on your home PC and you begin to understand how little transparency and customer-focus the health care system has. Despite the issues, there are aspects of the American health care system that are unsurpassed - our capabilities in medical research and treatment innovation, for example. Hammergren points out that any proposed solutions should not hamper or destroy what is already working well. And that, unfortunately, is the probable result of moving to a nationalized health system. Politically, health care reform is garnering even more focus now with each presidential contender putting forth their vision.

It is critical that we educate ourselves and become engaged in the dialogue. Regardless of your personal or political views, I recommend this book. *Skin in the Game* takes a complex topic and presents it in a straight-forward manner accessible to anyone with a vested interest - which, clearly, is ALL of us. (Full disclosure: I am employed at McKesson Corp where John Hammergren is the CEO. Some of the views expressed in this book are manifest in the company's mission and business strategy. That being said, I did not find that the book offered a self-serving vision, and Hammergren, for the most part, avoids turning the book into a promotional vehicle.)

As Chairman, President and CEO of McKesson Corp., the largest provider of health care supply and information management services in the U.S. and the "largest company that you've never heard of," John Hammergren is uniquely qualified in his understanding of the front and back office workings of the health care industry. In "*Skin in the Game*," Hammergren talks about what works, what doesn't, and what opportunities exist to make the health care system work like it should. Hammergren's angle is that health care is a marketplace and as such should be driven by demand. However, as the book details, the health care industry does not work effectively as a marketplace for several reasons. Customers don't always have choice of providers or treatments. Pricing, which is often hidden from the customer altogether, is usually driven by things totally outside of the customers' control. Information management is behind the times; this makes errors more likely and industry-standard care difficult to deliver on a consistent basis. And, of course, many of us have a hard time getting the health care that we need at all due to the way that insurance has become so integrated into employee benefits packages and prohibitively priced elsewhere. All of these elements combine to make health care inefficient and to drive up costs all around the industry. Hammergren's solution to this, his vision for giving a streamlined and effective health care market to the consumers, is for private industry -- not the government -- to nationalize the system with shared information, leading-edge technology, algorithmic best-practice standardization, process improvement, emphasis on preventive care, and standardized individual coverage being offered independent of workplace benefits. Under this new paradigm, says Hammergren, all of us will have choice and opportunity within the system. While Hammergren does not downplay the current problems with health care in the U.S, he also paints an optimistic and empowering view of the future if private industry does the right things as he describes them and if the individual consumer steps up to put his or her own "skin in the game" with regards to controlling their own health care future. In describing the present state of health care and its possible future, Hammergren also gives a great deal of historical information about hospitals, doctors, pharmaceuticals, and distributors in the U.S.,

and he describes in detail some of the nascent technologies and initiatives that he says will revolutionize health care. All of this information is presented in a user-friendly manner and contributes directly to the vision that the book generates. Since McKesson Corp. is a 175 year-old company whose history has mirrored that of health care in the United States, the company is frequently mentioned in context throughout the book but it is not the primary subject. Obviously, health care is a hot-button issue in the United States and many people won't agree with all of this material. Still, Hammergren and co-author Phil Harkin have done a good job in making this book an informational, surprisingly easy, and non-polemic read. No matter what your political or personal opinion, this book will probably teach you something new and help you to better understand all the options that individuals, industry leaders and the government have to make this system work for all of us. In addition, the Appendix contains resources that you can use to understand and navigate the here-and-now world of personal health care in the United States, and that alone is worth the price of this book. Highly recommended.

John Hammergren's "Skin in the Game" is the most realistic approach to healthcare. It is straight forward and easy for anyone to understand regardless of previous healthcare knowledge. I am business undergraduate student and I had limited, previous knowledge on healthcare.

Hammergren's book was entertaining and had limited industry jargon. With the upcoming election I believe that it is critical that our future leaders read Hammergren's book. His solution to the healthcare crisis is much more practical and better for the American society than a government regulated nationalized healthcare system that political leaders are proposing. I encourage everyone to read Hammergren's book, he has been in healthcare since his childhood and fully grasps the healthcare industry and truly understands what needs to be done to escape the looming crisis. Anyone who cares about the kind of care they will receive and that of loved ones, I encourage to read the book. It's your health and care that will be affected either way in the coming years and it's important that the right decision is made and by the consumer being fully aware is critical to the decisions that will be made. John Hammergren's book has the solutions that America has been looking for. If you read one book this year, I suggest you read this one, you won't be disappointed!

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