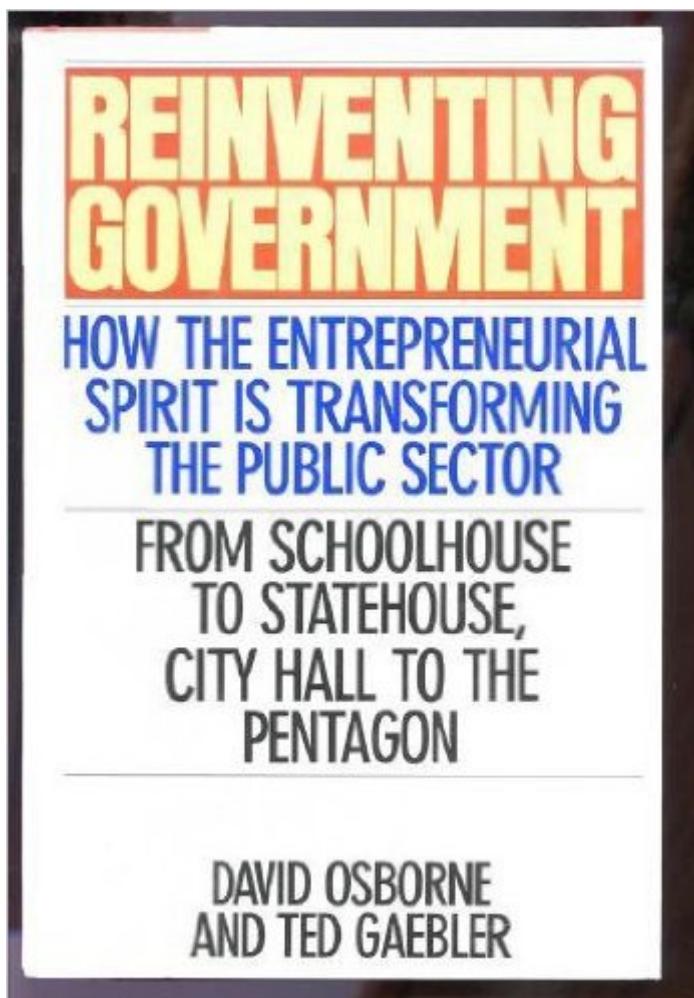


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# Reinventing Government: How The Entrepreneurial Spirit Is Transforming The Public Sector



## Synopsis

A revolution is stirring in America. People are angry at governments that spend more but deliver less, frustrated with bureaucracies that give them no control, and tired of politicians who raise taxes and cut services but fail to solve the problems we face. Reinventing Government is both a call to arms in the revolt against bureaucratic malaise and a guide to those who want to build something better. It shows that there is a third way: that the options are not simply liberal or conservative, but that our systems of governance can be fundamentally reframed; that a caring government can still function as efficiently and productively as the best-run businesses. Authors Osborne and Gaebler describe school districts that have used choice, empowerment, and competition to quadruple their students' performance; sanitation departments that have cut their costs in half and now beat the private sector in head-to-head competition; military commands that have slashed red tape, decentralized authority, and doubled the effectiveness of their troops. They describe a fundamental reinvention of government already underway in part beneath the bright lights of Capitol Hill, but more often in the states and cities and school districts of America, where the real work of government goes on. From Phoenix to St. Paul, Washington, D.C. to Washington state, entrepreneurial public managers have discarded budget systems that encourage managers to waste money, scrapped civil service systems developed for the nineteenth century, and jettisoned bureaucracies built for the 1930s. They have replaced these industrial-age systems with more decentralized, more entrepreneurial, more responsive organizations designed for the rapidly changing, information-rich world of the 1990s. Osborne and Gaebler isolate and describe ten principles around which entrepreneurial public organizations are built. They:

- 1) steer more than they row
- 2) empower communities rather than simply deliver services
- 3) encourage competition rather than monopoly
- 4) are driven by their missions, not their rules
- 5) fund outcomes rather than inputs
- 6) meet the needs of the customer, not the bureaucracy
- 7) concentrate on earning, not just spending
- 8) invest in prevention rather than cure
- 9) decentralize authority
- 10) solve problems by leveraging the marketplace, rather than simple creating public programs.

Reinventing Government is not a partisan book. It focuses not on what government should do, but on how government should work. As such, it has been embraced by both liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When I first bought this book I was looking for something that might epitomize some sort of revolution in the formulation, establishment and delivery of public services. In fact I was so attracted to the notion that I bought several and took them back to England with me and gave them to various people in the field of public policy making and asked for their own opinions. However, after over twenty years of living and working in the United States, the goal of Reinventing government is as far removed from reality than ever. Government agencies and departments proliferate, even trying to call the police on a busy highway to report a car driving without any lights on, is fraught with difficulty as you are passed from jurisdiction to jurisdiction without any apparent care of the obvious consequences. Did I mention those poor souls who are trying to claim disability benefit and have to scrape a living until the declaration comes down from on high. What is most apparent is the gulf between private and public practices. You may blame the resources of the private versus those of the public but the state can expropriate what it wants, whereas private sector companies have to produce products that people want and respond to the people's dollar but public and agency providers clearly do not have to. This book is admirable for those few leaders who improve their services and save their citizenry money. But in comparison with the vast majority of governmental provision they are inconsequential. Yes, people will argue that service delivery is not the same as private provision and I am acutely aware of that having served an electorate in a large English City for several years and sat on Health and Police and Social Service committees among others.

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