

# Unit 1 Companies

## Reading: A matter of choice

### 选择的考量

That reliable workhorse of capitalism – the joint stock company looks surprisingly durable. But pressure on it is increasing.

资本主义的可靠主力——股份公司，展现出令人惊讶的持久生命力。然而，它所面临的压力却在与日俱增。

[1] In 1967, John Kenneth Galbraith's *The New Industrial State* argued that the US was run by a handful of big companies who planned the economy in the name of stability.

1967年，约翰·肯尼斯·加尔布雷思在其著作《新工业国家》中提出了一个观点：美国实际上是由少数几家大型企业所掌控，这些企业以维护经济稳定为名，实际上在主导着整个国家的经济规划。

[2] These were hierarchical and bureaucratic organizations making long runs of standardised products. They introduced "new and improved" varieties with predictable regularity; they provided their workers with lifetime employment and enjoyed fairly good industrial relations with the giant trade unions.

这些公司是等级分明、管理严密的大型组织，专注于大规模生产标准化产品。它们以可预测的周期推出“全新改良”版本的产品；为员工提供终身雇佣保障，并与规模庞大的工会保持着相当融洽的劳资关系。

[3] That world is now dead. The US's giant corporations have either disappeared or been transformed by global competition. Most have shifted their production systems from high-volume to high-value, from standardised to customised. And they have flattened their management hierarchies. Few people these days expect to spend their lives moving up the ladder of a single organisation. Dramatic changes are taking place. But where exactly are they taking us? Where is a modern company heading?

那个时代如今已成为历史。美国的大型企业要么消失不见，要么在全球竞争的浪潮中彻底转型。绝大多数公司已将生产模式从追

#### [Lead-in 导语]

**Workhorse** n. 埋头苦干的人，主力军  
**capitalism** n. 资本主义  
- capital 资本 - capitalist 资本家

**Be run by** 由……经营、掌控  
**A handful of** 一小撮，少量的  
**In the name of** 以……的名字/名义  
**Stability** (n.) 稳定  
-stable (adj.) 稳定的/(n.) 马厩  
-stabilize (v.) 使稳定

**Hierarchical** (adj.) 阶级组织的；阶层的  
a conservative, ~ society 保守而有阶级制度的社会  
**Hierarchy** (n.) 等级制度  
**Bureaucratic** (adj.) 官僚的  
bureaucracy (n.) 官僚制度  
**Standardised** (adj.) 标准化的 ~d goods  
-standardise (v.) 使...符合标准  
**Make long runs of** 大批量生产  
**Variety** (n.) 种类 - various 多样的  
- variety show 综艺节目  
**Predictable** (adj.) 可预料的, ((轻蔑))<人>无创意的，平庸的  
**Regularity** (n.) (有)规则, (有)规律 with ~  
**Lifetime** (adj.) 毕生的, 终生的 ~ employment (n.) 一生 during one's ~  
**fairly good** 相当好的  
fairly (adv.) 完全地 He was ~ exhausted.

**Shift** (v.) 移动，变换，转嫁 ~ jobs  
- (n.) 轮班 an eight-hour ~  
**Customised** (adj.) 定制的  
- customize (v.) - customization (n.)  
**Flatten** the hierarchy 扁平化管理结构  
**Move up the ladder** 晋升  
**Head** (v.) 朝……方向前进  
- a. 站在...的前头 His name ~s the list.  
- b. 居于...之首 ~ a new government 成为新政府的首长  
- c. 给...冠以<...的>标题 [信的地址与日期] He ~ed the article "Politics".

求高产量转向追求高附加值，从标准化生产转向个性化定制。与此同时，它们也大幅度削平了管理层级。如今，几乎无人再期望终其一生都在同一组织内攀爬晋升的阶梯。巨大的变革正在发生，但这些变革究竟将我们引向何方？现代企业的发展方向又在哪里？

[4] There are three standard answers to this question. The first is that a handful of giant companies are engaged in a “silent takeover” of the world. The past couple of decades have seen a record number of mergers. The survivors, it is maintained, are far more powerful than nation states.

对这个问题，存在三种典型的解答。第一种观点认为，一小撮巨型企业在进行一场“无声的全球接管”。过去几十年间，企业并购的数量屡创新高。持这种观点的人士坚称，那些在并购浪潮中存活下来的企业，其影响力已远超许多国家。

[5] The second school of thought argues almost the opposite: it says that big companies are a thing of the past. For a glimpse of the future, look at the Monorail Corporation, which sells computers. Monorail owns no factories, warehouses or any other tangible assets. It operates from a single floor that it leases in an office building in Atlanta. Freelance workers are designing the computers while demand is still low.

第二种观点几乎相反：它认为大公司已经是明日黄花。如果想要一窥未来企业的模样，不妨看看销售电脑的 Monorail 公司。这家公司不拥有任何工厂、仓库或其他有形资产。它的全部运营仅仅依托于在亚特兰大一栋办公楼内租用的单层办公空间。在市场需求尚未旺盛之时，公司便通过聘请自由职业者来设计电脑。

[6] The third school of thought says that companies are being replaced by “networks”. Groups of entrepreneurs form such a network to market an idea. They then sell it to the highest bidder and move on to produce another idea and to create another firm, with the money being supplied all the time by venture capitalists.

第三种观点认为，传统公司正在被“网络化组织”所取代。在这种模式下，一群企业家会组建网络来推广一个创意。一旦创意成熟，他们就将其出售给出价最高的买家。随后，这些企业家会利用所得资金继续开发新的创意，并建立新的公司。在这个过程中，风险投资家则扮演着持续提供资金支持的角色。

[7] Another way to look at the future of the company is to focus on the environment that will determine it. That environment is dominated by one thing: choice. Technology and globalisation open up ever more

**Answers to the question** 反应，回答，对策

Her ~ to my greeting was a smile.

她以微笑回答我的问候

**Be engaged** 忙于，着手于

He was busily ~ (in) writing letters.

He is ~ on a study of population.

**Takeover** (n.) 收购，占据，接管

Friendly ~s generally go smoothly because both companies consider it a positive situation.

**Record** (adj.) 记录的，破记录的 a ~ crop(破记录的) 大丰收

**It is maintained** 主张...

He ~ed that people were not always equal.  
他坚持认为人未必平等

**School of thought** 有相同思想[意见]的人，学派

**Glimpse** (n.) 一瞥，看一眼[of]

I only caught [got] a ~ of the speeding car.  
(vt.) I thought I ~d him in the crowd.

**Freelance** (adj.) 无契约约束的

a ~ reporter [photographer, writer]  
(adv.) He works ~.

**Tangible** (adj.) 可触到的，实体的 ~assets 有形资产

**Lease** (v.) 出租，租用<土地，房屋>

(n.) take the land on ~ 租用土地

**Demand** (n.) 需求 supply and ~ ~ and supply

供应与需求[供需] in demand 有需要，销路好  
on demand 来取即付

**Entrepreneur** 企业家

**Market** (v.) 贩卖，销售 ~ pop music 营销流行音乐

**Bidder** (n.) 出价人，竞标人

the highest [best] ~ 出[叫]价最高者

**Venture capitalists** 风险资本家

[Investopedia Says]: Venture capitalists usually expect higher returns for the additional risks taken.

**Open up** 开拓，开发，开辟

The area hasn't been ~ed up to trade yet.  
该地区尚未开发通商。

**Mass production** (n.) 大量生产

opportunities for individuals and firms to collect information and conduct economic activity outside traditional structures. While the age of mass production lowered the costs of products at the expense of limiting choices, modern “flexible” production systems both lower costs and increase choice. Consumers have more choice over what they spend their money. Producers have more choice over which suppliers to use. Shareholders have more choice over where to put their money. With all that choice around, future companies will have to be very flexible in order to quickly adapt to the changing environments if they are to survive.

另一种展望公司未来的方式是聚焦于塑造其命运的环境。在这个环境中，有一个因素占据主导地位：选择。科技进步和全球化为个人和企业开辟了更多机会，使他们能够在传统框架之外获取信息和开展经济活动。尽管大规模生产时代以牺牲选择多样性为代价来降低产品成本，现代“灵活”生产系统却能够在降低成本的同时增加选择。如今，消费者在支配资金时拥有更多选择；生产者在选择供应商时有更多选项；投资者在投资决策时也享有更广泛的选择。在这样一个充满选择的环境中，未来的公司必须保持高度灵活性，才能在瞬息万变的环境中迅速调整，从而确保生存和发展。

**Lower** (v.) 降低 ~ the blood pressure 降低血压  
~ the costs 降低成本  
**At the expense of** 牺牲...,以...为代价  
at the ~ of one's health  
以牺牲自己的健康  
**Choice (over)** 在...上的选择 have more ~ over  
where to invest 有更多投资选择  
**Adapt to** (v.) 适应，改编  
adapt 指适应新状况而做不勉强的轻微改变;  
adjust 指藉技术或计算、判断而调节两者之间较小之差异

## Glossary

### Words and phrases

Durable

Hierarchical

Bureaucratic

Standardize

Predictable

Shift

Customize

Flatten

Maintain

School of thought

Glimpse

Freelance

At the expense of

### Business terms

Takeover

Merger

Tangible asset

Bidder

Venture capitalist

# Business knowledge: Company types 公司类型

## 1. Multinational 跨国公司

A multinational corporation (MNC) is usually a large corporation incorporated in one country which produces or sells goods or services in various countries. The two main characteristics of MNCs are their large size and the fact that their worldwide activities are centrally controlled by the parent companies.

跨国公司通常是注册于一个国家的大型公司，在多个国家生产或销售商品或服务。跨国公司的两个主要特征是其规模庞大和其全球活动由母公司集中控制。

**Incorporate** (v.) 把...变为 (有限) 公司 [股份有限公司]

[with] 合并 ~ one firm with another

**Parent companies** 母公司, 控股公司

## 2. Partnership 合伙企业

Partnership is a type of unincorporated business organisation in which multiple individuals, called general partners, manage the business and are equally liable for its debts. Other individuals called limited partners may invest but not be directly involved in management and are liable only to the extent of their investments. In a partnership, each partner shares equal responsibility for the company's profits and losses, and its debts and liabilities.

合伙企业是一种非公司制企业组织形式，其中多个个人称为普通合伙人共同管理业务，并对其债务负有同等责任。其他称为有限合伙人的个人可以投资但不直接参与管理，并且其责任仅限于其投资额。在合伙企业中，每个合伙人平等分享公司的利润和亏损，以及债务和负债。

**Unincorporated** (adj.)

未组成股份有限公司的

**Liable** (adj.)

Profits and losses

Debts and liabilities

## 3. Sole proprietorship 独资企业

Sole proprietorship, also known as the sole trader or simply a proprietorship, is a type of enterprise that is owned and run by one natural person and in which there is no legal distinction between the owner and the business entity. The owner is in direct control of all elements and is legally accountable for the finances of such business and this may include debt, loans, loss, etc.

独资企业也称为个体经营者或简简单单的业主企业，是由一个自然人拥有和经营的企业类型，其中业主和企业实体之间没有法律区分。业主直接控制所有要素，并对企业的财务状况承担法律责任，其中可能包括负债、贷款、损失等。

**Natural person** 自然人

**Legal person** 法人

**Business entity** 企业实体

**Be accountable for** (adj.) 对……负责