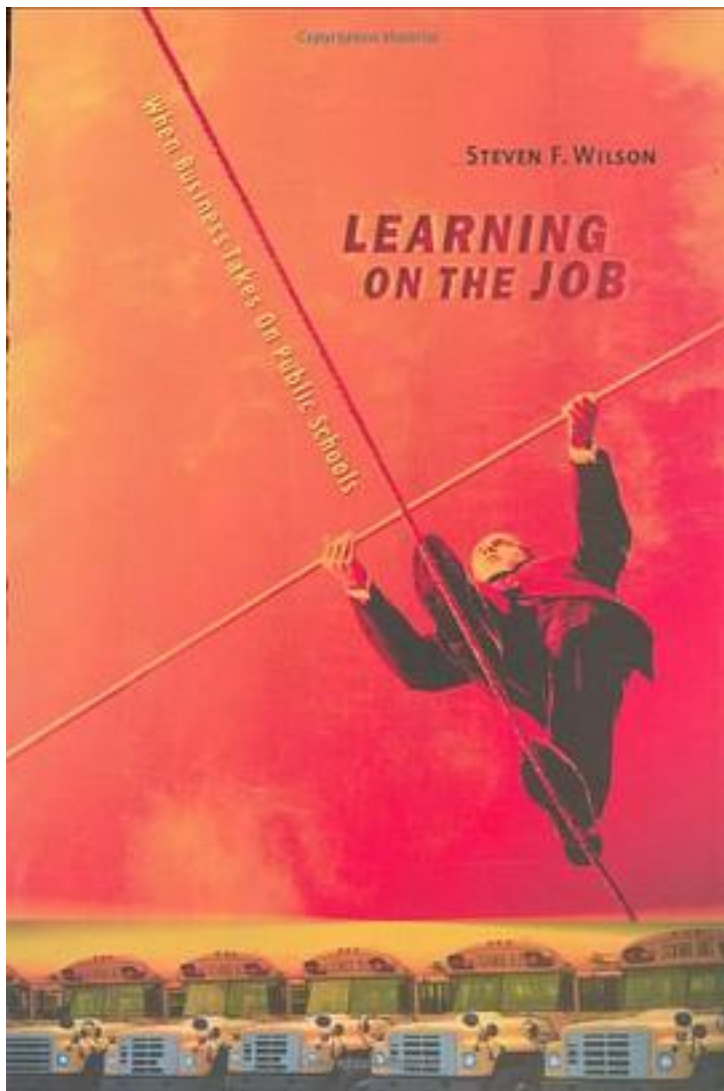


Learning on the Job



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Entrepreneurial creativity, private investment, and competition have been among America's great strengths. Can they be harnessed to improve troubled public schools? Or is private management of public schools at best a gimmick, and at worst an undemocratic sell-out? In the 1990s, some failing school systems turned to private education management organisations to manage their schools. The EMOs promised academic improvement to families and profits to their investors. Wall Street and foundations lavished hundreds of millions of dollars on for-profit and non-profit start-ups and thousands of students' education began to be directed not by school officials, but by private companies. In *Learning on the Job*, industry insider Steven Wilson, the founder and CEO of Advantage Schools, looks back on the first tumultuous decade of this social experiment. Digging deep into the academic, financial, logistic and political records of seven leading EMOs, including his own, he reveals the potential and pitfalls of their business and educational models, and their actual successes in the classrooms and the boardrooms. Have they given their students a better education? Can they succeed as businesses? Can businesses in fact run better public schools than school districts? With remarkable honesty and fairness on an ideologically charged topic, Wilson describes the follies and wisdom, overreaching and real accomplishment, of the first education entrepreneurs. Acknowledging that they had much to learn about the real-world challenges of running schools, he passionately defends the promise of private involvement in public schooling.

作者介绍:

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