

**Read Closing Case Three: The World is Flat – Thomas Friedman on page 28. Watch the video of Thomas Friedman's lecture at MIT which can be found at <http://mitworld.mit.edu/video/266/>. Discuss the following questions:**

- 1. Do you agree or disagree with Friedman's assessment that the world is flat? Be sure to justify your answer.**
- 2. What are the potential impacts of a flat world for a student performing a job search?**
- 3. What can students do to prepare themselves for competing in a flat world?**

**As always, you are encouraged to respond to other's postings.**

While Friedman is correct that we are well into the process of integrating the entire world into global competition, I disagree with him on the degree to which he believes Americans are failing to rise to the challenge. His perspective is that of a Baby Boomer to whom all of this change has come as a surprise. To a Generation Xer like myself, these were new and exciting developments to engage and learn about. To the Millennials and generations that follow them, this is all part of how the way the natural world works. Children today are growing up in a Globalization 3.0 world, and they will take it for granted. This is why, despite my years of employment in IT, 12-year-olds are able to give me tips and tricks for using a computer.

Eight years ago, I discovered the impact a global workforce had on my employment opportunities. Being regularly, severely underbid on projects by students in India and China, I was forced to abandon my efforts to work as an independent contractor. Over the last decade, I have watched IT professionals in India begin to demand better wages, Ireland become a hotspot for high-paying IT jobs, and Raleigh North Carolina become the science capital of the world.

Students today must remember that change is the only constant, and they must pursue a life of learning to stay competitive in the workforce. They must watch trends and realize that those trends can change at any moment. China may offer cheap labor now, but when the Chinese experience the effects of a strong middle class, business models will change. Globalization 3.0 introduces volatility into the world marketplace, no one can predict where it's going, and students need to be aware of that.

I really appreciate your answer to #2 for noting the positive effects of globalization on students looking for jobs. We tend to get focused on the issue of increased competition as solely a bad thing; however, this misses the incredible expansion of opportunity it presents. Yes, students will be competing with other students from all around the world, but they also have an entire world full of employment opportunities ahead of them.

I agree with you that technology has had a "leveling of global issues." But, as far as equality in pay goes, it does not seem feasible, especially, since money is just one way to motivate and reward people. It would be difficult to determine a pay scale that would suffice for people from different cultural, religious, etc., value systems. And a lot has to do with a country's political and legal systems, and supporting infrastructure to meet and protect its people's needs.

Whether or not equality in pay is unfeasible is a very complicated issue. Technically, yes, different countries will have different exchange rates and different work ethics, such as the Chinese industrious nature versus the European emphasis on life experiences over income; however, with the global economy in a perpetual state of flux, China will not always be able to undersell the rest of the world on manufacturing and Europeans will not always be able to take the month of August off.. Wages will never be equal, but economic pendulums will swing, putting different countries into different positions over one another.