

LESSON 3: ILLIQUIDITY IS A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER..

- In private company valuation, illiquidity is a constant theme. All the talk, though, seems to lead to a rule of thumb. The illiquidity discount for a private firm is between 20-30% and does not vary across private firms.
- But illiquidity should vary across:
 - Companies: Healthier and larger companies, with more liquid assets, should have smaller discounts than money-losing smaller businesses with more illiquid assets.
 - Time: Liquidity is worth more when the economy is doing badly and credit is tough to come by than when markets are booming.
 - Buyers: Liquidity is worth more to buyers who have shorter time horizons and greater cash needs than for longer term investors who don't need the cash and are willing to hold the investment.