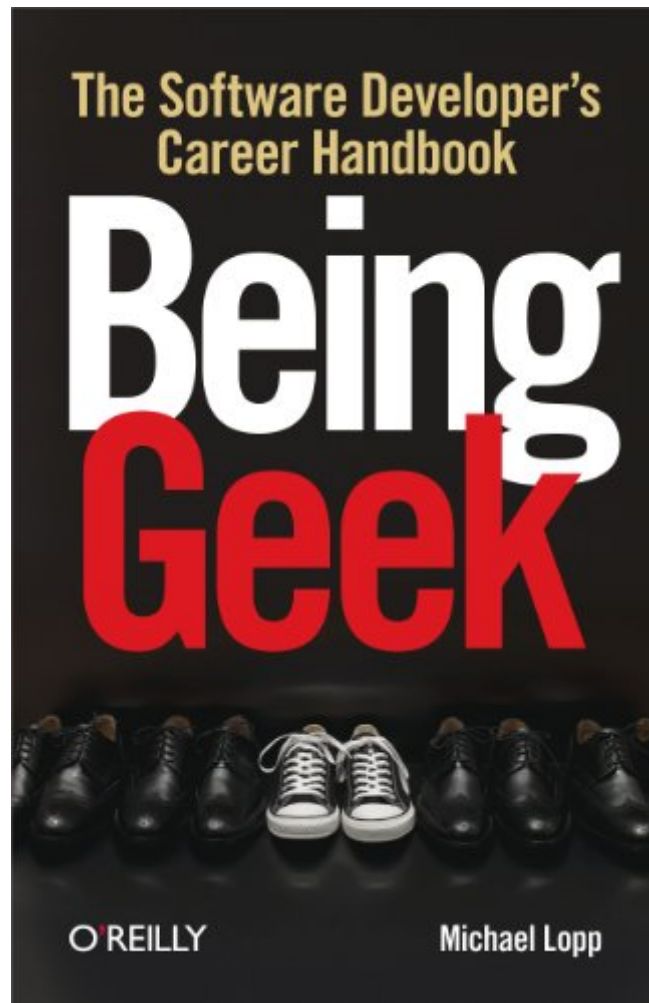# Being Geek: The Software Developer's Career Handbook

Synopsis

As a software engineer, you recognize at some point that there's much more to your career than dealing with code. Is it time to become a manager? Tell your boss heâ ™s a jerk? Join that startup? Author Michael Lopp recalls his own make-or-break moments with Silicon Valley giants such as Apple, Netscape, and Symantec in Being Geek -- an insightful and entertaining book that will help you make better career decisions.With more than 40 standalone stories, Lopp walks through a complete job life cycle, starting with the job interview and ending with the realization that it might be time to find another gig. Many books teach you how to interview for a job or how to manage a project successfully, but only this book helps you handle the baffling circumstances you may encounter throughout your career.Decide what you're worth with the chapter on "The Business"Determine the nature of the miracle your CEO wants with "The Impossible"Give effective presentations with "How Not to Throw Up"Handle liars and people with devious agendas with "Managing Werewolves"Realize when you should be looking for a new gig with "The Itch"

Book Information

File Size: 889 KB

Print Length: 338 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: O'Reilly Media; 1 edition (July 21, 2010)

Publication Date: July 21, 2010

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B003XDUCEU

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #259,536 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #59 inÂ Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Computers & Internet #213 inÂ Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Business & Professional #251 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Computers & Technology > Programming > Software Design > Software Development

Customer Reviews

I've been reading Lopp's blog, Rands in Repose, for some time. Lopp has a pretty good geek resume, with experience at Symantec, Borland, Netscape, and Apple. His blog is one that I always read, since he's got a great gift for distilling lessons out of his experiences. This book is mostly a compilation of his blog posts, with some new essays added to help define the overall arc of a geek's career as defined by starting at a new job to deciding to move on to the next one.Looking on my own experience in tech companies, I think that his advice is often spot-on. There have been times when I've read one of his blog posts after a difficult situation and found myself understanding it better. He's got a keen eye for detail and for understanding the nuances of geek behaviour, as well as all of the interacting forces that come into play when you're working for a big geek company. I've gone back to read half-remembered posts that I felt were pertinent to a given situation.I found it amusing that Lopp says in his introduction that he's not writing a book that gives you ten steps for anything, or that will define the five characteristics of a top leader, but most of his essays are structured in just that form: distill a situation into some archetypes, identified by Capital Letters. For an occasional blog post, I don't mind this style; as a book, this structure got rather repetitive. While I love the blog, I found that I couldn't read the book for more than a half-hour without losing interest because the style just didn't work for an actual book.Honestly, I was hoping for more. The blog is excellent. I hoped that a book would use the blog as a starting point and give more consideration, more depth. But it's not there.

I had the pleasure of reviewing the manuscript of Being Geek: The Software Developer's Career Handbook by Michael Lopp when it was still in the development stage. To put it simply, I was really impressed. I'm not a regular reader of Rands In Repose, so I hadn't seen most of the material before. It didn't take long before I saw the value in what he wrote, and started thinking of names of people who needed to read this when it was published.Contents:Section 1 - A Career Playbook: How To Win; A List of Three; The Itch; The Sanity Check; The Nerves; The Button; The BusinessSection 2 - Deconstructing Management: The Culture Chart; Managing Managers; The Issue with the Doof; The Leaper; The Enemy; The Impossible; Knee Jerks; A Deep Breath; Gaming the System; Managing Werewolves; BAB; Your People; Wanted; The Toxic Paradox; The PondSection 3 - Your Daily Toolkit: The Nerd Handbook; The Taste of the Day; The Trickle List; The Crisis and the Creative; The Foamy Rules for Rabid Tools; Up to Nothing; How to Not Throw Up; Out Loud; Bits, Features, and Truth; The RevealSection 4 - Your Next Gig: The Screw-Me Scenario; No Surprises; A Deliberate Career; The Curse of the Silicon Valley; A Disclosure; Mind the Gap; The Exodus; Bad News About Your Bright Future; Hurry; The Rules of Back Alley BridgeIndexThe

author sets out to help the technologist, one who wonders why the world of people doesn't run with the same rules and precision as computers, navigate through the real world of how life works in an organization. Rather than approach the subject with a slick methodology meant to be understood by business people, he cuts to the core of the topics using language and stories that any geek would understand. And that's the value here...

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