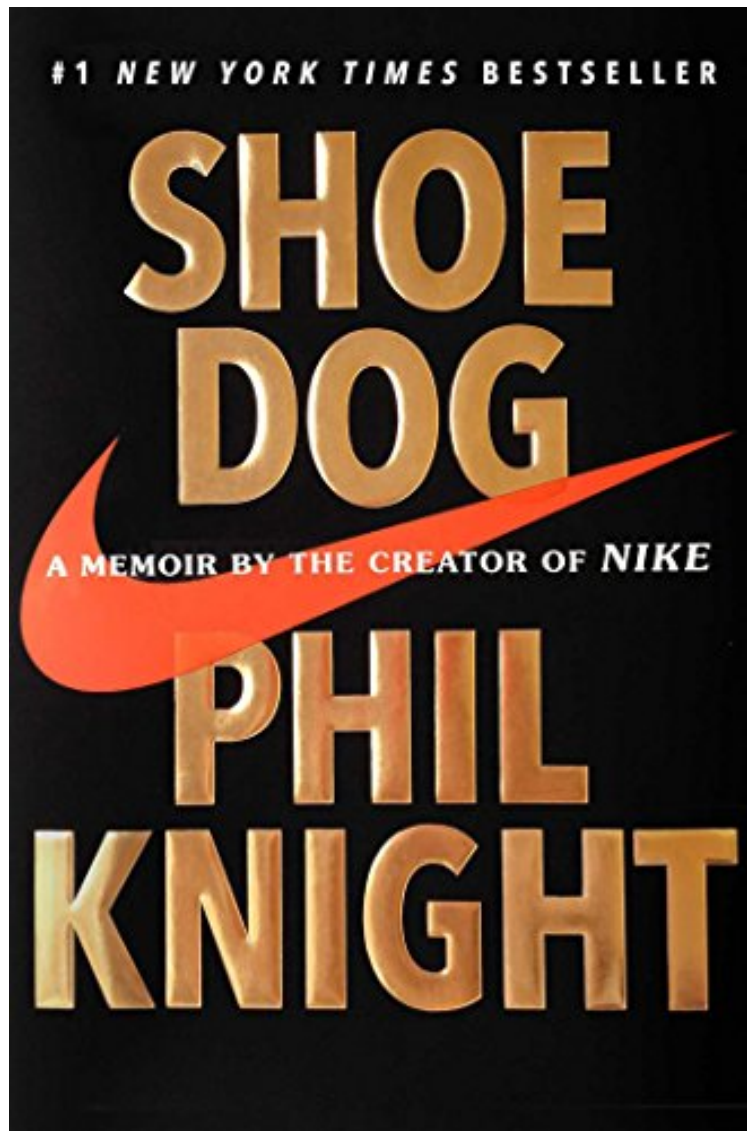


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Shoe Dog: A Memoir by the Creator of Nike

Phil Knight

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Phil Knight : Shoe Dog: A Memoir by the Creator of Nike before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shoe Dog: A Memoir by the Creator of Nike:

103 of 107 people found the following review helpful. One of the Best Books about What It's Like to Run a Fast-Growing, Innovative Business By Wally Bock Most business memoirs are self-serving, boring, and poorly written. To put it bluntly, they are "crap between covers." There are very few business memoirs that are even good, since most of them make the person writing the memoir seem like a business savant who always knew the right answers and knew things would come out right. Great business memoirs are different. They portray a business situation as it was. Phil Knight's Shoe Dog: A Memoir by The Creator of Nike is a great business

memoir. Let's cut to the chase. This will be a great read for anybody, but if you're thinking about starting a business, especially a business that you expect to grow, this book belongs on your must-read list. You'll learn things that you won't learn anywhere else and you'll learn things that you can only learn from a story. You'll learn about the constant struggle to fund growth. Most of the books about entrepreneurship don't tell you about that. If you start a business and that business starts to grow, you are funding the process out ahead of your cash flow. The result is that you're chronically cash poor, even when you're fabulously profitable, and that is both counterintuitive and very tough to manage. You'll also learn about the pluses and minuses of going public. There's a lot here about relationships and values, and staying true to what you think is important. There are lessons about how putting people in the right job makes all the difference. And, there are lessons about balancing being a hero at work with being a parent at home. There are also important lessons about not taking yourself too seriously. Knight describes the "executive retreats" that Nike would have. They called them "Buttface sessions." The name came from one of the early employees who said that Nike was the only company their size where you could shout out "Hey, buttface!" and the entire management team would turn around. There's another important thing, too. If you think that innovation is only something that high-tech companies do, or that it requires coding, read this book. A lot of Nike's success comes from being an innovator in shoes. *Shoe Dog* is superbly written, and you'll enjoy it if you just read it as a story. But if you're in business, and especially if you're starting a business and wanting to make it grow, this book should be on your must-read list. Keep it handy, right near Ben Horowitz's *The Hard Thing About Hard Things*. Toward the end of the book, Phil Knight says this: "God, how I wish I could relive the whole thing. Short of that, I'd like to share the experience, the ups and downs, so that some young man or woman, somewhere, going through the same trials and ordeals might be inspired or comforted. Or warned. Some young entrepreneur, maybe, some athlete or painter or novelist, might press on." I think he achieved his goal. If you want some seasoned advice to help you run and grow your company, or if you just want to read a great business memoir, pick up a copy of *Shoe Dog: A Memoir by The Creator of Nike*.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. AN INSPIRATIONAL GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT FROM AN ICON By Schuyler T Wallace One can't argue with success and I can't think of a more successful person than Phil Knight. His autobiography, "Shoe Dog," reveals secrets of his accomplishments in the development of his mega firm, Nike. I know Phil Knight's secret of success. He uses people. He captures them with his acuity at perceiving dedication and a sense of responsibility. Then he ignores them as they attend to their job. If they stumble, despite his abhorrence of micromanaging, he demonstrates strong guidance because poor performance invariably brings a personal visit from him. He also has an aversion to most standard business practices. He makes bankers nervous with his edge of the chasm financial condition. He will saw the legs off a perceived competitor. He is unfazed by seeking money from any source that might have it. He gets in the face of employees, suppliers, sales reps, or anyone else who lets him down. In short, he knows which pile of crap that, when stirred, brings the sweet smell of success. If you think I'm being critical of Knight or his methods, you are wrong. I believe that he is incredibly intelligent, moral, and astute in his business practices. The people who may have been used should have no complaints. They have become immensely successful and prosperous as Nike has become the bellwether for success under Knight's leadership. There are many milestones in Knight's book. The Japanese company that originally produced his Blue Ribbon shoes gets its comeuppance for poor performance; Knight gets new, more innovative financing. The first shipment of Nike shoes, manufactured in Mexico, arrive just in time for a big show but have a crappy finish and crooked swooshes; he makes do. Bill Bowerman's innovative waffle sole, described in Patent #284,736 as "having integral polygon shaped studs... of square, rectangular or triple cross section... [and] a plurality of flat sides which... give greatly improved traction," provide a great boon for the fledgling company. The signing of Nike's first professional sports star, tennis player Ilie Nastase, is the start of lucrative endorsements by universally recognized athletes. These are a few examples of the hurdles Knight sails over. He writes about his voyage with clarity, using marvelous language, as he recounts riveting personal triumphs (along with some flops). His steely-eyed pursuit of his goals is truly inspirational. I learned a great deal about him, including his respect and inspirational relationship with his father. It's apparent that this love has much to do with his successful life's story. It carries over to the essence and success of his team. "Shoe Dog" is an entrancing read from an icon in the business world. Yet it's not another self-indulgent recital of personal greatness and achievement. It's immensely personable and readable, allowing the essence of the man to shine through. It's inspiring. Schuyler T Wallace Author of TIN LIZARD TALES 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Read this book. Just Do It. By J. Gentry I was hooked in the first few pages and spent every chance I could finishing it off in a few days. The book reads like a novel and even knowing the ending, it is thrilling to see how it got there. For any entrepreneur, this ought to be a must read of warning and encouragement. For any athlete you will find a spirit you recognize. Well written, balanced in his self-assessment and ownership of mistakes and personal faults, the book seems to be an honest attempt to tell the story. It is not an attempt to justify anything or inflate the ego of Phil Knight. I've read biographies that have left me feeling slimy and ripped off. After reading *Shoe Dog* I felt invigorated and grateful that we have such leaders in our companies. Yes, I have worn Nike shoes in the past and liked

them. I change brands often, but maybe it is time to give Nike's a try again!

In this candid and riveting memoir, for the first time ever, Nike founder and board chairman Phil Knight shares the inside story of the company's early days as an intrepid start-up and its evolution into one of the world's most iconic, game-changing, and profitable brands. Young, searching, fresh out of business school, Phil Knight borrowed fifty dollars from his father and launched a company with one simple mission: import high-quality, low-cost running shoes from Japan. Selling the shoes from the trunk of his Plymouth Valiant, Knight grossed eight thousand dollars that first year, 1963. Today, Nike's annual sales top \$30 billion. In this age of start-ups, Nike is the gold standard, and its swoosh is more than a logo. A symbol of grace and greatness, it's one of the few icons instantly recognized in every corner of the world. But Knight, the man behind the swoosh, has always been a mystery. Now, in a memoir that's surprising, humble, unfiltered, funny, and beautifully crafted, he tells his story at last. It all begins with a classic crossroads moment. Twenty-four years old, backpacking through Asia and Europe and Africa, wrestling with life's Great Questions, Knight decides the unconventional path is the only one for him. Rather than work for a big corporation, he will create something all his own, something new, dynamic, different. Knight details the many terrifying risks he encountered along the way, the crushing setbacks, the ruthless competitors, the countless doubters and haters and hostile bankers—as well as his many thrilling triumphs and narrow escapes. Above all, he recalls the foundational relationships that formed the heart and soul of Nike, with his former track coach, the irascible and charismatic Bill Bowerman, and with his first employees, a ragtag group of misfits and savants who quickly became a band of swoosh-crazed brothers. Together, harnessing the electrifying power of a bold vision and a shared belief in the redemptive, transformative power of sports, they created a brand, and a culture, that changed everything.

"A refreshingly honest reminder of what the path to business success really looks like. It's a messy, perilous, and chaotic journey riddled with mistakes, endless struggles, and sacrifice. Here Knight opens up in a way few CEOs are willing to do. I don't think Knight sets out to teach the reader anything. Instead, he accomplishes something better. He tells his story as honestly as he can. It's an amazing tale." —Bill Gates, one of his favorite books of 2016 "Shoe Dog is a great American story about luck, grit, know how, and the magic alchemy of a handful of eccentric characters who came together to build Nike. That it happened at all is a miracle, because as I learned from this book, though we are a nation that extols free enterprise, we also excel at thwarting it. This is Phil Knight, one on one, no holds barred. The lessons he imparts about entrepreneurship and the obstacles one faces in trying to create something, are priceless. The pages I folded down are too many to mention." —Abraham Verghese, author of *Cutting for Stone* "I've known Phil Knight since I was a kid, but I didn't really know him until I opened this beautiful, startling, intimate book. And the same goes for Nike. I've worn the gear, with pride, but I didn't realize the remarkable saga of innovation and survival and triumph that stood behind every swoosh. Candid, funny, suspenseful, literary—this is a memoir for people who love sport, but above all it's a memoir for people who love memoirs." —Andre Agassi, New York Times bestselling author of *Open* "Shoe Dog is an extraordinary hero's journey, an epic tale of faith, unparalleled determination, excellence, failure, triumph, hard earned wisdom, and love. It's nothing short of a miracle that Nike exists. I finished the last sentence in complete awe, inspired and grateful for the experience." —Lisa Genova, New York Times bestselling author of *Still Alice* and *Inside the O'Briens* "A touching, highly entertaining adventure odyssey, with much to teach about innovation and creativity. Phil Knight takes us back to the Big Bang of the swoosh, recalls how he first begged and borrowed from reluctant banks, how he assembled a crew of eccentric but brilliant misfits, how they all worked together to build something unique and paradigm changing. An inspiration for everyone with an unconventional dream." —Michael Spence, Nobel prize winning economist "A fresh historical perspective on one of the most profiled companies in the world...[Shoe Dog] builds characters of the people behind the brand, many of whom we've never heard of." —ESPN.com "Loaded with hard earned wisdom...Want a simple recommendation? Go get a copy." —Portland Business Journal "Shoe Dog is, at its heart, an origin story, of both a global brand and a footwear lifer...it reads like pure adventure story, boys facing steeper and steeper challenges and finding ways through, often by the skin of their teeth. As Knight collects the misfits and oddballs who become the core of his growing company, Shoe Dog is more like *The Lord of the Rings* than a typical mogul memoir." —Complex "A rare and revealing look at the notoriously media shy man behind the swoosh." —Booklist "STARRED" review "The best memoir I recall ever reading. As a business biography, it ranks with such recent works as Neal's *Disney* and Walter Isaacson's *Jobs*. But as a personal memoir Shoe Dog reaches a depth of emotional honesty that even the best biographies haven't touched." —Rich Karlgaard, *Forbes* "Ranks among the best business books and autobiographies I've ever read." —Jim Cramer, CNBC TV "A blueprint not just for success, but for motivation. Shoe Dog illustrates the unlimited amount of hurdles one might run into while trying to reach a major goal. It's Knight's account of seeing a vision through against all odds." —Mic.com "An extraordinary memoir... one of the best stories of entrepreneurship I have ever read." —Fareed Zakaria "The ultimate entrepreneur's

guide to the top of the mountain. I could not put it down." Bill Walton, Wall Street Journal
"fascinating warts and all account of the company's early years, a rascally tale of scrappiness and survival, a great read . . . Knight provides plenty of entertaining reading and laugh out loud moments." Motley Fool About the Author One of the world's most influential business executives, Phil Knight is the founder of Nike, Inc. He served as CEO of the company from 1964 to 2004, as board chairman through 2016, and he is currently Chairman Emeritus. He lives in Oregon with his wife, Penny.