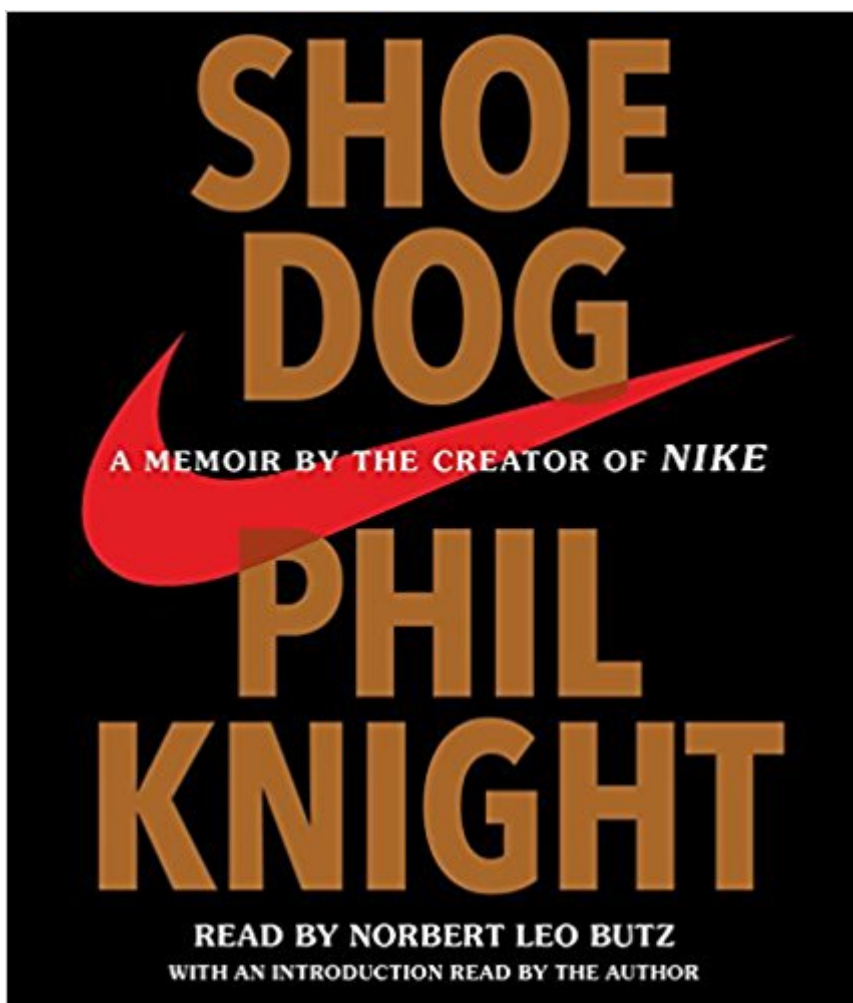


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# Shoe Dog



## Synopsis

In this candid and riveting memoir, for the first time ever, Nike founder and CEO 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. In 1962, fresh out of business school, Phil Knight borrowed \$50 from his father and created a company with a simple mission: import high-quality, low-cost athletic shoes from Japan. Selling the shoes from the trunk of his lime green Plymouth Valiant, Knight grossed \$8,000 his first year. Today, Nike's annual sales top \$30 billion. In an age of startups, Nike is the ne plus ultra of all startups, and the swoosh has become a revolutionary, globe-spanning icon, one of the most ubiquitous and recognizable symbols in the world today. But Knight, the man behind the swoosh, has always remained a mystery. Now, for the first time, in a memoir that is candid, humble, gutsy, and wry, he tells his story, beginning with his crossroads moment. At twenty-four, after backpacking around the world, he decided to take the unconventional path, to start his own business—a business that would be dynamic, different. Knight details the many risks and daunting setbacks that stood between him and his dream—along with his early triumphs. Above all, he recalls the formative relationships with his first partners and employees, a ragtag group of misfits and seekers who became a tight-knit band of brothers. Together, harnessing the transcendent power of a shared mission, and a deep belief in the spirit of sport, they built a brand that changed everything.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'The best book I read last year was Shoe Dog, by Nike's Phil Knight. Phil is a very wise, intelligent

and competitive fellow who is also a gifted storyteller' -- Warren Buffett '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' '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 '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 '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... In the pages of Shoe Dog, however, Knight opens up in a way few CEOs are willing to do. He's incredibly tough on himself and his failings... Knight is amazingly honest about the accidental nature of his company's success... It's an amazing tale. It's real.' -- Bill Gates --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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.

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*.

I love biographies, but this is one of my favorite biographies ever. I respect the Nike Company even

more. I will only buy Nike from now on. I grew up in Oregon and always felt a sense of pride that Nike came from Oregon. I drove by the Nike campus everyday on my way to work in Hillsboro. I wished I could work there. Never got the chance. I respect Phil Knight because he followed his passion, built relationships and wasn't focused on only making money. He seems real and approachable and honest. The only thing I disagree with is what Oregon school was better.....I graduated from Oregon State in 1993. I can assure you of one thing...you will always find the swoosh on my feet for the rest of my life. Kellie

In total, a pleasant, funny and insightful account from a legend. The book ends supersede the middle content - as the beginning third provides great insight into the tiny origins of the now behemoth. The final third is poignant, emotional and fully engaging. The middle third is good, but lacks emotional connectivity, as it focuses most of its energy on vendors, suppliers, rubber, nylon, bankers and accountants. Sure, all things needed to create Nike, but not overly interesting for a non shoe dog like myself. A worthy read, with the best parts saved for the final pages.

On a time when running was not for everyone, literally a sport of professionals or bums such as Forrest Gump, a gentlemen called Phil Knight, a promising track and field college runner, decided to join forces with his running coach to create a running shoes company because he believed if everyone ran a few miles per day the world would be a better place. With nothing but a dream, Phil built an incredible team, incredible company, incredible culture but ran out of cash and on the verge of losing the contract with his only shoe supplier and going bankrupt reinvented his business model, leveraged the company through creative new financial partnerships and decided to start making his own shoes. He never gave up. He believed in quality. He believed in running shoes that delivered on the promise, he believed that running should be a sport for everyone. Fast forward 50 years this company is the largest and one of the most recognized sports apparel brands in the world. The name of this company is Nike. This is an amazing story of courage, persistence, adversities, failures and victories in business and life. Very inspiring for crazy people like us.

I savored this book. The passion they all had at Nike was remarkable, and their motivations so authentic. It made me love and hate the business community. You have to be so resilient to hang in there, to flow with the ups and downs and not get eaten up when others deceive you. Anyone who thinks making money in our free economy is easy, or that money is just handed out, should read this book. It should also be required reading for all students of business and companies applying for

ISO ratings.

If you're looking for a great business book you don't need to look any further. Phil Knight's story about his journey to build Nike is also a great dramas. If you didn't know it was a true story you'd think he was making it up. His story of going from selling shoes out of the back of his car to building a multi-million dollar sports apparel business will keep you enthralled. Thank you Phil Knight for writing this book. It should be a requirement for all business owners.

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