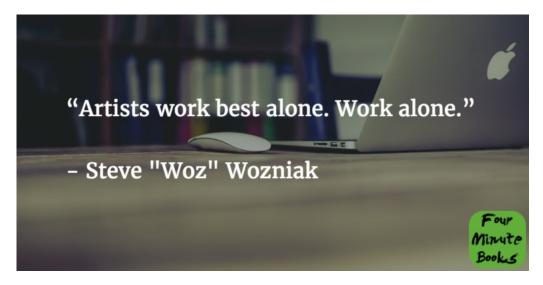# iWoz Summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *iWoz is Steve Wozniak's autobiography, detailing his story in his own words, from early tinkering with electronics in his home, to college and his first job, all the way to singlehandedly creating the world's first desktop computer, the Apple I and founding what would become the most valuable company in the world.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:

Steve Wozniak doesn't need an introduction. Nicknamed Woz, he's the world's number one icon of engineering and the epitome of the computer age. Whatever thing you're reading these words on right now, whether it's a desktop computer, a laptop, a tablet or a smartphone, **only exists because of Woz's work and inventions.**

Think about that for a second and you'll realize it's impossible to overestimate the service he's done mankind. Woz has always been the good soul at Apple, the guy who just wants to do work he loves, help his friends and have fun. Some might think this has put him at a disadvantage in business, and that he's missed out on a lot of money because of it.

I'm sure that's true, but what's more important is that it doesn't matter, because Woz has never been all that interested in it. Above all, he wants to be happy, and having found that means more to him than all the business success in the world.

There sure is more than one thing to learn from *iWoz*, here are my favorite 3:

1. How and where you grow up matters a lot more than you might think.
2. When the outside world can't teach you what you want to know, teach yourself.
3. Stay true to your own values, no matter what the consequences are.

Ready to illuminate your life by letting your own light shine? Then let's learn 3 magical lessons from the Wizard of "Woz!"

Lesson 1: Your home shapes who you are – more than you think.

When Stephen Gary Wozniak was born (1950), computers already existed, but not nearly the way you know them today. Back then, a single computer would fill an entire room, cost millions of dollars and in general wasn't available to the public.

To be passionate about computers meant to be passionate first and foremost about electronics – and Steve grew up in the exact right environment for that.

His father Francis worked at an electronics company, Electronic Data Systems in Los Angeles, at the time, and would sometimes take him to work, where he could play with various electronic parts. Because of his father's job, the Wozniak home was also packed with resistors, cables and all kinds of gadgets, making it the perfect space to tinker around. Of course Francis didn't just let Wozniak find it all out himself, explaining the basics of physics to him in a way children could understand, including kid-friendly diagrams and stories of inventors like Thomas Edison.

Woz also adopted most of the values that would shape his later way in life during this time, such as honesty, fairness, kindness and a sense of humor.

If I had to guess (and I'm totally making this up) I'd say 80% of who we are is shaped in our childhood home. **Your childhood matters, whether you like it or not, so it's best to embrace it and make the best of what you've got**.

Lesson 2: If the world doesn't teach you well, teach yourself.

Winning science competition after science competition in high school, pursuing a degree in engineering in college was only the next logical step for him. He enrolled at the Colorado University in 1968, where the computer science program taught only FORTRAN, one of the first basic programming languages. Because that wasn't enough for him, **Woz started teaching himself and experimenting with six other programming languages**.

However, thanks to his knack for pranks, his activities cost the computer science department a lot of money (five times their budget, to be exact) and they also weren't too fond of him for hacking the university computer system – so he was put on probation.

He transferred in 1969, but without the funds to build his own computer, he kept teaching himself by re-designing existing computers to be more efficient on paper, until he finally had enough money and parts while taking a gap year, working at Tenet, a small computer company.

Eventually, he managed to build his first computing machine, the Cream Soda Computer, which was really just a circuit board, but an actual, usable computer nonetheless.

If the world doesn't teach you what you want to know, teach yourself. And if you don't have the money, find a workaround. I can't buy and read a book a day, but I can spare 2-3 hours and the price of a Blinkist subscription. **Where there's a will, there's a way**.

Lesson 3: One thing you'll never regret is staying true to your own values, no matter what the consequences are.

It's easy to trade passion for payment once you've gotten really good. People often wanted Woz to move into Apple management, but he always refused. He was an engineer at heart, and that meant he wanted to keep engineering things. That's why he waited a long time to leave his job at HP, even while working at Apple, and retained a low-level engineering position there throughout his career.

He stayed honest along the way, even offering his bosses at HP rights to the first Apple prototype, and only moving on with Apple once they rejected them – a move that saved Apple millions of dollars in potential lawsuits later on.

Plus, he never got greedy, even when Apple was worth billions of dollars, and instead gave $10 million worth of his shares to fellow, early Apple employees for just $5 a piece, enabling everyone who participated to buy a whole house!

No matter what they are, **staying true to your own values is something you'll never regret in hindsight**, even if the consequences aren't always pretty.

iWoz Review

You don't see them often and some people doubt they even exist, but they do. The people who build empires on being good. Woz is one of those people. He always has and always will be, the good soul of Apple. If you're a genuinely nice, honest and kindhearted person and sometimes feel like you get left behind and whether it's all worth it, *iWoz* is for you.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What Woz's first cool invention was
- How Steve developed his dream of having a personal computer in every home
- Why Woz and Steve Jobs hit it off and became such good friends
- How he learned to accept Steve Jobs as he was, in spite of his quirks
- What the two Steves did to make a computer an affordable product for almost everyone

Who would I recommend the iWoz summary to?

The 15 year old computer club member, who loves to tinker with electronics in his spare time, the 44 year old accountant, who's not satisfied with her education, and anyone who sometimes feel they compromise their own values, just to comply with the expectations of the world.