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| Cover Image | *PG's Best Few* t27 |

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# *12 notes/highlights*

*Created by Tarang Shah*  – Last synced June 27, 2016

## *What Doesn't Seem Like Work?*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Few people know so early or so certainly what they want to work on. But talking to my father reminded me of a heuristic the rest of us can use. If something that seems like work to other people doesn't seem like work to you, that's something you're well suited for.*  April 2, 2016 | [4](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA4.w.0.0.0.3) | |

## *How You Know*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Reading and experience train your model of the world. And even if you forget the experience or what you read, its effect on your model of the world persists. Your mind is like a compiled program you've lost the source of. It works, but you don't know why.*  June 27, 2016 | [51](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA51.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Intriguingly, this implication isn't limited to books. Technology will increasingly make it possible to relive our experiences. When people do that today it's usually to enjoy them again (e.g. when looking at pictures of a trip) or to find the origin of some bug in their compiled code (e.g. when Stephen Fry succeeded in remembering the childhood trauma that prevented him from singing). But as to learn from them again as one might when rereading a book. Eventually we may be able not just to play back experiences but also to index and even edit them. So although not knowing how you know things may seem part of being human, it may not be.*  June 27, 2016 | [52](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA52.w.0.0.0.2) | |

## *Why to Start a Startup in a Bad Economy*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The economic situation is apparently so grim that some experts fear we may be in for a stretch as bad as the mid seventies. When Microsoft and Apple were founded. As those examples suggest, a recession may not be such a bad time to start a startup. I'm not claiming it's a particularly good time either. The truth is more boring: the state of the economy doesn't matter much either way. If we've learned one thing from funding so many startups, it's that success it's rounding error compared to the founders. Which means that what matters is who you are, not when you do it. If you're the right sort of person, you'll win even in a bad economy. And if you're not, a good economy won't save you. Someone who thinks "I better not start a startup now, because the economy is so bad" is making the same mistake as the people who thought during the Bubble "all I have to do is start a startup, and I'll be rich."*  April 2, 2016 | [239](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA239) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *That doesn't mean you can ignore the economy. Both customers and investors will be feeling pinched. It's not necessarily a problem if customers feel pinched: you may even be able to benefit from it, by making things that save money . Startups often make things cheaper, so in that respect they're better positioned to prosper in a recession than big companies.*  April 2, 2016 | [240](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA240.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Fortunately the way to make a startup recession-proof is to do exactly what you should do anyway: run it as cheaply as possible. For years I've been telling founders that the surest route to success is to be the cockroaches of the corporate world. The immediate cause of death in a startup is always running out of money. So the cheaper your company is to operate, the harder it is to kill. And fortunately it has gotten very cheap to run a startup. A recession will if anything make it cheaper still.*  April 2, 2016 | [241](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA241) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *What if you quit your job to start a startup that fails, and you can't hackers can always get some kind of job. It might not be your dream job, but you're not going to starve. Another advantage of bad times is that there's less competition. Technology trains leave the station at regular intervals. If everyone else is cowering in a corner, you may have a whole car to yourself.*  April 2, 2016 | [241](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA241.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *You're an investor too. As a founder, you're buying stock with work: the reason Larry and Sergey are so rich is not so much that they've done work worth tens of billions of dollars, but that they were the first investors in Google. And like any investor you should buy when times are bad.*  April 2, 2016 | [241](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA241.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Were you nodding in agreement, thinking "stupid investors" a few paragraphs ago when I was talking about how investors are reluctant to put money into startups in bad markets, even though that's the time they should rationally be most willing to buy? Well, founders aren't much better. When times get bad, hackers go to grad school. And no doubt that will happen this time too. In fact, what makes the preceding paragraph true is that most readers won't believe it—at*  April 2, 2016 | [242](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA242) | |

## *Six Principles for Making New Things*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *find (a) simple solutions (b) to overlooked problems (c) that actually need to be solved, and (d) deliver them as informally as possible, (e) starting with a very crude version 1, then (f) iterating rapidly. When I first laid out these principles explicitly, I noticed something striking: this is practically a recipe for generating a contemptuous initial reaction. Though simple solutions are better, they don't seem as impressive as complex ones. Overlooked problems are by definition problems that most people think don't matter. Delivering solutions in an informal way means that instead of judging something by the way it's presented, people have to actually understand it, which is more work. And starting with a crude version 1 means your initial effort is always small and incomplete.*  June 27, 2016 | [259](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA259.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This technique is successful (in the long term) because it gives you all the advantages other people forgo by trying to seem legit. If you work on overlooked problems, you're more likely to discover new things, because you have less competition. If you deliver solutions informally, you (a) save all the effort you would have had to expend to make them look impressive, and (b) avoid the danger of fooling yourself as well as your audience. And if you release a crude version 1 then iterate, your solution can benefit from the imagination of nature, which, as Feynman pointed out, is more powerful than your own.*  June 27, 2016 | [260](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA260) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There are always new ideas right under your nose. So look for simple things that other people have overlooked—things people will later claim were "obvious"—especially when they've been led astray by obsolete conventions, or by trying to do things that are superficially impressive. Figure out what the real problem is, and make sure you solve that. Don't worry about trying to look corporate; the product is what wins in the long term. And launch as soon as you can, so you start learning from users what you should have been making.*  June 27, 2016 | [260](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=c2YHCAAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA260.w.0.0.0.4) | |