

## **BOOK**

*Build: An Unorthodox Guide to Making Things Worth Making*

## **AUTHOR**

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Harper Collins

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## **SYNOPSIS [From the publisher]**

“For every career crisis, every fork in the road, you need someone to talk to. Someone who’s been there before, who knows exactly how wobbly and conflicted you feel, who can give it to you straight:

Here’s how to think about choosing a job. Here’s how to be a better manager. Here’s how to approach design. Here’s how to start a company. Here’s how to run it.

Tony Fadell learned all these lessons the hard way. He spent the first 10 years of his career in Silicon Valley failing spectacularly, and the next 20 building some of the most impactful devices in history – the iPod, iPhone, and Nest Learning Thermostat. He has enough stories and advice about leadership, design, startups, mentorship, decision making, devastating screwups, and unbelievable success to fill an encyclopedia.

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“Many of my experienced, trusted mentors have died. I looked around a few years ago and the wise, (mostly) patient souls who I had peppered with a million questions, who dealt with my late-night phone calls, who helped me start companies and build products and run board meetings or just be a better person – they were gone. Some much too early. Now I was the one getting peppered with questions.”

“Certain things you can’t blow up. Human nature doesn’t change, regardless of what you’re building, where you live, how old you are, how wealthy or not.”

“Everybody trying to do something meaningful needs and deserves to have a mentor and coach – someone who’s seen it and done it and can hopefully help you through the toughest moments in your career. A good mentor won’t hand you the answers, but they will try to help you see your problem from a new perspective.”

“There’s often an assumption that if you find the right job when you’re young, you can guarantee some level of success. That your first job out of college connects in a straight line to your second and your third, that at each stage of your career you’ll use your inevitable wins to propel yourself upward. That’s what I thought too.”

“Adulthood is commonly thought of as the time when learning is over and living begins. Yes! I’ve graduated! I’m done! But learning never ends. School has not prepared you to be successful for the rest of your life. Adulthood is your opportunity to screw up continually until you learn how to screw up a little bit less.”

“It felt more like treading water. And treading water felt like drowning. Either you’re growing or you’re done. There is no stasis.”

“The only failure in your twenties is inaction. The rest is trial and error.” – ANONYMOUS

“You should never kill yourself for your job, and no job should ever expect that of you. But if you want to prove yourself, to learn as much as you can and do as much as you can, you need to put in the time.”

“If you’re going to throw your time, energy, and youth at a company, try to join one that’s not just making a better mousetrap. Find a business that’s starting a revolution.”

“If you make it, they will come” doesn’t always work. If the technology isn’t ready, they won’t come for sure. But even if you’ve got the tech, then you still have to time it right. The world has to be ready to want it.”

“Magic Link solved problems that regular people wouldn’t recognize for more than a decade. And because nobody else was building technology for nonexistent problems, the networks, processors, and input mechanisms our products depended on weren’t good enough. We had to make everything ourselves.”

“Don’t worry too much about the title – focus on the work. If you get a foot in the door at a growing company, you’ll find opportunities to grow, too.”

“What you do matters. Where you work matters. Most importantly, who you work with and learn from matters. Too many people see work as a means to an end, as a way to make enough money to stop working. But getting a job is your opportunity to make a dent in the world.”

“Students seek out the best professors on the best projects when getting their master’s or PhD, but when they look for jobs, they focus on money, perks, and titles. However, the only thing that can make a job truly amazing or a complete waste of time is the people. Focus on understanding your field and use that knowledge to create connections with the best of the best, people you truly respect. Your heroes. Those (typically humble) rock stars will lead you to the career you want.”

“That’s the great thing about heroes. You can use their inspiration to drive you. If you do it right, and listen carefully, they’ll share decades of learning. And then, one day, you might return the favor.”

“The job of an individual contributor (IC) – a person who doesn’t manage others – is usually to craft something that needs to be completed that day or in the next week or two. Their responsibility is to sweat the details, so most individual contributors depend on their managers and executive team to set a destination and lay out a path for them so they can keep their focus on the work.”

“The CEO and executive team are mostly staring way out on the horizon – 50 percent of their time is spent planning for a fuzzy, distant future months or years away, 25 percent is focused on upcoming milestones in the next month or two, and the last 25 percent is spent putting out fires happening right now at their feet.”

“Your job isn’t just doing your job. It’s also to think like your manager or CEO. You need to understand the ultimate goal, even if it’s so far away that you’re not really sure what it’ll look like when you get there. That’s helpful in your day-to-day – knowing your destination lets you self-prioritize and make decisions about what you’re doing and how you’re doing it. But it’s also bigger than that. You want to make sure the direction you’re headed in still feels right – that you still believe in it.”