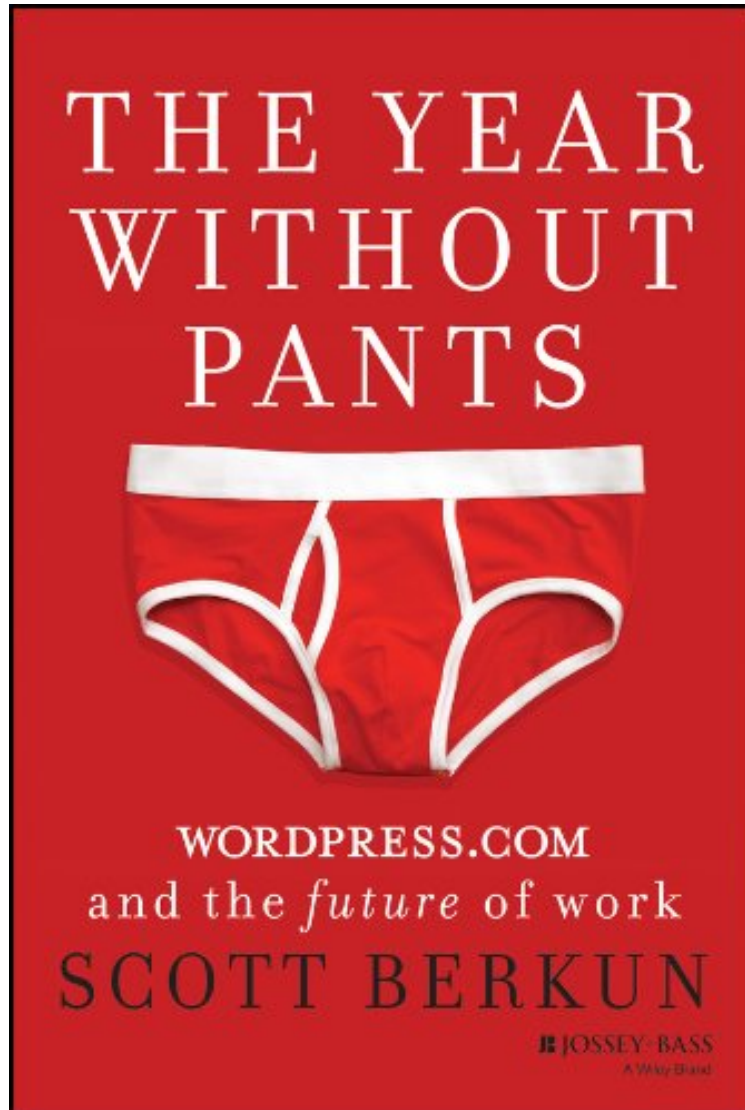


(Download) The Year Without Pants: WordPress.com and the Future of Work

The Year Without Pants: WordPress.com and the Future of Work

Scott Berkun

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Scott Berkun : The Year Without Pants: WordPress.com and the Future of Work before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Year Without Pants: WordPress.com and the Future of Work:

49 of 50 people found the following review helpful. Ignore the title, but read the book By Tim Kastle If you want to understand how management really works, then this is an important book to read. Scott Berkun ditched his consultant/writer hat and went back on to the management frontline for a little over a year with WordPress.com, and this book reports on what he learned. Berkun is a terrific writer, and I find him worth reading even on topics that I find inherently less interesting. However, there is nothing uninteresting about this - he goes right to the heart of what makes

good managers. For me, there are three big ideas in this book: 1. You can only evaluate management in the context of culture. Here is a quote from the book that outlines this issue: "I'm certain that to learn from a place, you have to study how its culture functions. A great fallacy born from the failure to study culture is the assumption that you can take a practice from one culture and simply jam it into another and expect similar results. Much of what bad managers do is assume their job is simply to find new things to jam and new places to jam them into, without ever believing they need to understand how the system--the system of people known as culture--works." This explains the title of the book - it references an inside joke within his team. I can see why he would use this as a title, but I'm not sure it reflects the content or quality of the book. However, within the WordPress.com culture, it makes perfect sense... 2.

Experimentation is an essential management skill. Berkun experiments throughout his time at WordPress.com. This is a central skill for innovating, and it is not practiced widely enough. He has great insights into the roles that data and judgement play in managing, and how experimenting and learning can contribute to both. 3. How do you manage if everyone is a volunteer? One of the interesting features of WordPress.com is that it originated in an open source programming project. Everyone that works on such a project is a volunteer, and this requires a much different management style than the more traditional command and control approach. Berkun's time at WordPress.com was part of a big experiment - introducing work teams and hierarchy into an open source style culture. The outcomes tell us a lot about how to manage effectively. Scott Berkun has a great business mind, and he is a very engaging writer. This is an important piece of work, and if you are interested in what good management looks like and how it might be changing, you should read this book. 15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Time travel guide into the 21st Century workplace By Birgit Pauli Haack Berkun's new book not only takes readers behind the scenes at Automattic, the company that champions WordPress.com and its open-source software WordPress, he also hands readers examples what's wrong with your life and how to get out of the bureaucratic software release cycle and endless department heads meetings that are more about turf wars and arbitrary key performance indicators - and almost never about the customers whose problems you are supposed to solve. Berkun starts out where Daniel Pink left us with his book, "Drive". Pink boiled productivity and motivation down to three things: Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose. If you, as a team leader, are able to provide and sustain those three things for your employees, you increase your chances to reach high productivity and excellence. What Pink couldn't tell you is how that actually works. This is the point at which Berkun's book picks you up. With great data, anecdotes and structured knowledge, Berkun takes readers on his journey from a 90s software development company to a 21st Century software company. He describes philosophy and methods in precise examples to help readers understand what works and what doesn't work. In a software company, management/leadership's purpose is, among other things, to keep the knuckle headed stuff off the programmers' desks and out of their minds so they can create, test and release brilliant work. Of course, that kind of approach takes self-motivated, autonomous, passionate people who keep an eye on what's good in the world. Sounds like heaven, right? Well, almost. Consider this: WordPress has over 150 employees, 50 teams in 80 countries and no central office. Let me repeat: no central office. Working in a distributed environment where all communication is public about the product, including decisions about the product, bug reports and customer service tickets, not only keeps low the personality wars in emails but also keeps everyone in the loop. The distributed, autonomous, self-motivated and most of the time insulated programmer, or designer, who often in the past has failed while learning new technologies, is given time to learn and adapt to new team members. Berkun looks at each part of the WordPress organization and analyzes, in precise language, the up and downside of a process - or the lack thereof. He lets you in on the struggle to bring team members together when they are used to working alone. He takes you on his journey from corporate management junkie to leader of a team of mature members. The broad experience of a 90s software developer at Microsoft and other Fortune 500 companies made Scott Berkun the best time travel guide into the 21st Century workplace, if you're bold enough to take that journey. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Nice stories about what it's like to work in a remote company By Kelly Schuknecht In May 2017 I celebrated my 10 year anniversary of working remotely! When I first started working from home, people typically called that type of work arrangement "virtual" or "work at home" (WAH). In 2013 Jason Fried published the book Remote, which really popularized that term ("remote") and brought it to the forefront of communication among companies where people work from home (or are "distributed"). As a remote worker, I am often very interested in other distributed companies and how they do things, so when I heard about "The Year Without Pants," a book about how Automattic runs an entire company with 120 employees completely distributed all over the world, it piqued my interest. My book club selected this book for the month of June and I thought it might be fun to share some of the discussion we had (as a group of remote workers) about the book. We met recently and I asked some questions to get the conversation going. We had a great discussion! Below are a few of the questions I asked and our responses: * What do you think was the purpose of this book? - Sharing insight into a world that's different from the norm - Comparing remote work to traditional work - Sharing unorthodox management - Discussing team (and project) management in a remote environment * Was there a specific passage or quote that left an impression on you? - "This is one big problem with working remotely: no one believes you have a job at all." (pg. 11) - "No technique, no matter how good, can turn stupid coworkers into smart ones. And no method can magically make employees trust each other or their boss if they have good reason not to. The

best approach, perhaps the only approach, is an honest examination of culture." (pg. 29)* After reading this book, what did it make you want to learn more about?- Job postings at Automattic! * What did the book leave unanswered for you?- How Automattic handles things like finance and paperwork. We also got into a side-discussion about what makes someone good at working remotely and here were some of the thoughts folks shared about the type of person who would be a good fit:* doesn't need face-to-face interaction* open to technology* willing to learn from others* good communication skills* used to doing work (and not just being somewhere during specific hours)* has clear goals* takes ownership/responsibility Everyone seemed to have really enjoyed the book. One person specifically said she liked the "storytelling" aspect of it. The author, Scott Berkun, provides insight into remote work (good and bad) through his own personal experiences working at Automattic for about a year. We all did joke, though, that Berkun sure did seem to travel to a lot of work retreats in that time period! Personally, I thought "The Year Without Pants" was cute. If you're interested in, or curious about, remote work and/or want to learn more about Automattic (or WordPress), I recommend it!

A behind-the-scenes look at the firm behind WordPress.com and the unique work culture that contributes to its phenomenal success 50 million websites, or twenty percent of the entire web, use WordPress software. The force behind WordPress.com is a convention-defying company called Automattic, Inc., whose 120 employees work from anywhere in the world they wish, barely use email, and launch improvements to their products dozens of times a day. With a fraction of the resources of Google, Amazon, or Facebook, they have a similar impact on the future of the Internet. How is this possible? What's different about how they work, and what can other companies learn from their methods? To find out, former Microsoft veteran Scott Berkun worked as a manager at WordPress.com, leading a team of young programmers developing new ideas. The Year Without Pants shares the secrets of WordPress.com's phenomenal success from the inside. Berkun's story reveals insights on creativity, productivity, and leadership from the kind of workplace that might be in everyone's future. Offers a fast-paced and entertaining insider's account of how an amazing, powerful organization achieves impressive results Includes vital lessons about work culture and managing creativity Written by author and popular blogger Scott Berkun (scottberkun.com) The Year Without Pants shares what every organization can learn from the world-changing ideas for the future of work at the heart of Automattic's success.

.com QA with Scott Berkun, author of The Year Without Pants Scott Berkun