

Five steps to a better career

HOW TO BE A MARKETABLE SOFTWARE DEVELOPER

Robert C. Cain, MVP
Staff Analyst, Southern Company

<http://arcancode.com>

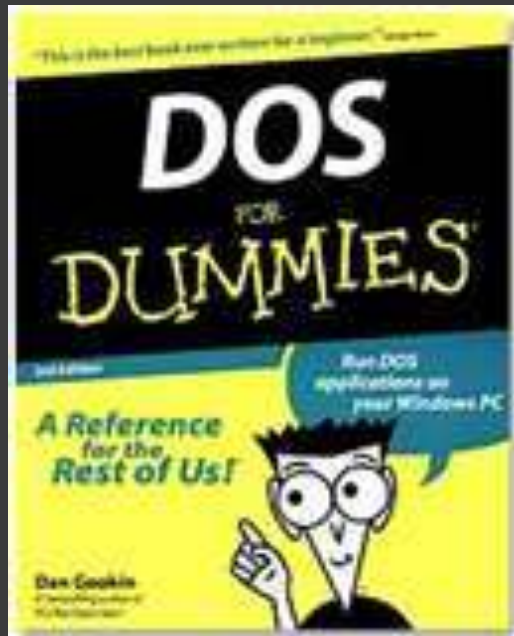
arcancode@gmail.com

[@arcancode](#)



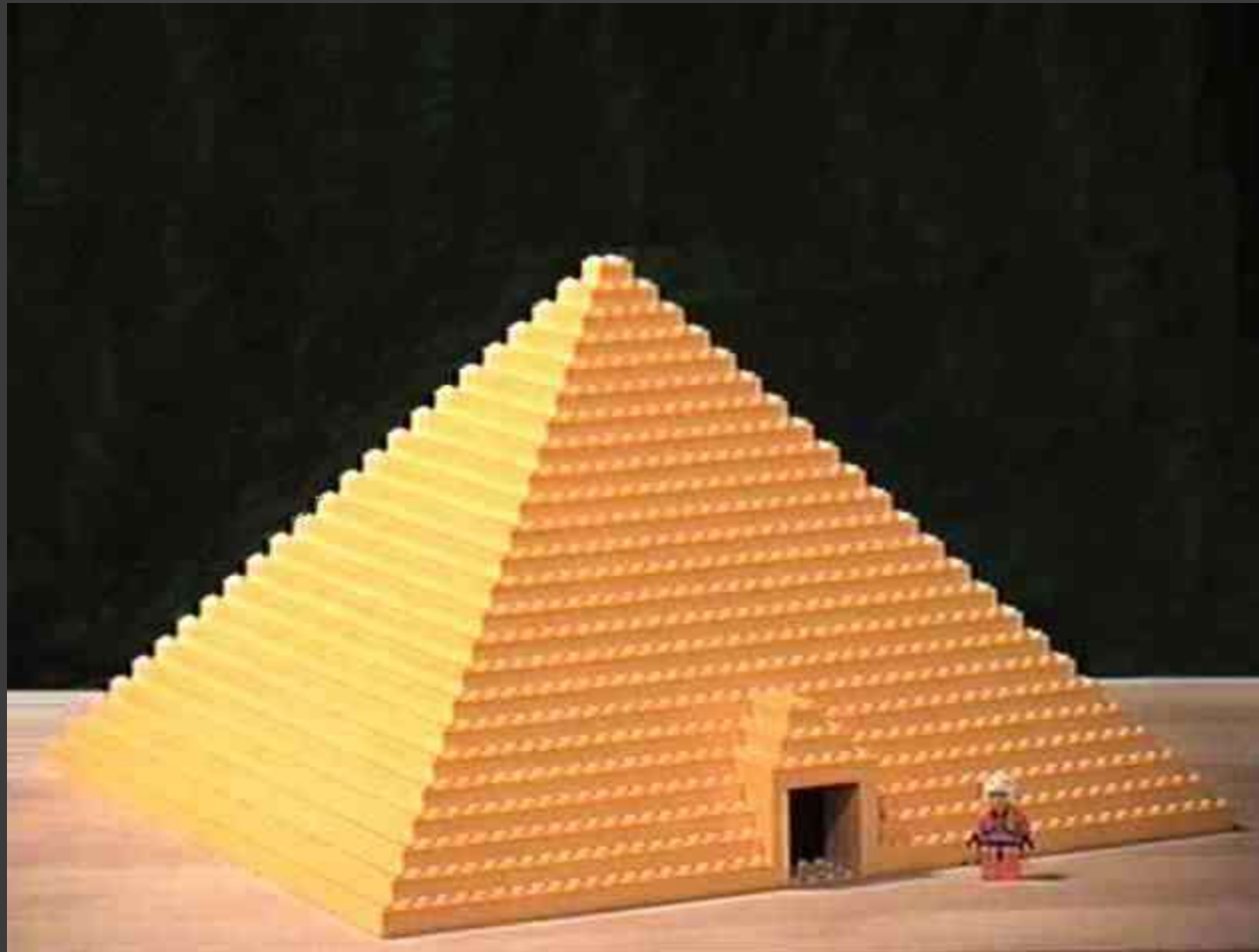
Step #1 – Become an expert!

A.K.A. – Learn everything about a topic



Step #1 – Become an expert!

Don't forget about the basics



Step #2 – Learn iteratively

A.K.A. – Learn something new every day

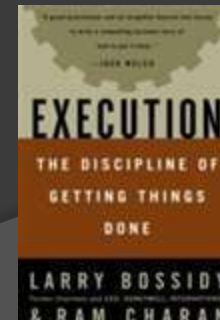
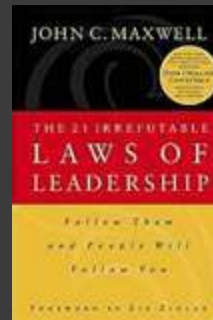
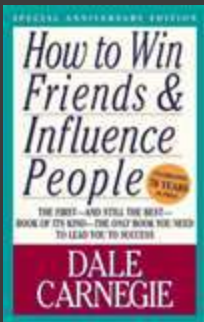
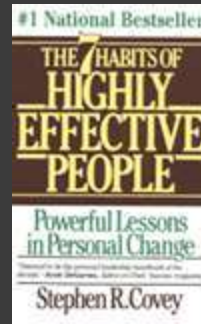
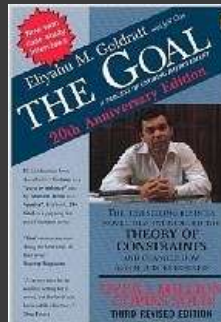
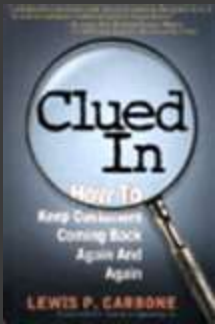
- ⦿ Avoid Cramming
- ⦿ Create a plan
 - ⦿ Decide your goal
 - ⦿ Get a book/article/manual
 - ⦿ Study 20 minutes a day
 - ⦿ Read/Listen to something, then try it out
- ⦿ Find the patterns and practices

Step #2 – Learn iteratively

- ◎ How people learn
 - Attend a presentation/live webcast
 - More for interest and overview
 - Not a source of deep learning
 - On-demand webcast/video
 - Chance to pause/repeat content
 - Chance to try it out
 - Online reading
 - Targeted single-subject learning
 - Following some guru's blog
 - Books
 - Topical mastery

Step #3 – Understand the business

A.K.A. – The buck stops here



Step #3 – Understand the business

- Career-building additions
 - Coding perspective AND System perspective
 - Technical value AND Business value
 - Understood AND Understanding others
- Learn a business strategy each quarter
 - Read a leadership/business/strategy book
 - Attend a seminar/presentation
 - <http://www.getabstract.com>
- Surround yourself with the right people

Step #4 – Show up in the community

A.K.A. – Speak or write what you know



Step #4 – Show up in the community

⦿ Speaking

- Learn something, and then show people how to do it
- Code camps, conferences, webcasts, geekSpeaks
- Don't show features. Tell the story
- If you're nervous, do it as a group

⦿ Attending a user group

- Learning and networking

Step #4 – Show up in the community

- ⦿ Blogging
 - Consumable technical blurbs
 - Regular intervals
- ⦿ Forum answers
 - Find a question online, research it, and post a solution
- ⦿ Articles
 - Complete story around one topic
- ⦿ Books
 - Complete technology story
- ⦿ Samples
 - Build something and put it out there

Step #5 – Guard your credibility

A.K.A: Maintain control



Step #5 – Guard your credibility

- ⦿ Not every thought needs to be uttered
 - Venting is risky
- ⦿ Blogging your rant is even riskier
 - Unlimited audience
- ⦿ One bad outburst in public is all it takes
- ⦿ Don't be *that guy*
- ⦿ Don't embellish your resume
- ⦿ Learn how to interview
- ⦿ Learn how to take a verbal punch
 - Don't sacrifice the war to win a battle

What happens on the web
doesn't always stay on the web



Summary

- Five practical steps can help you be successful
 - 1) Find an appropriate topic
 - 2) Learn it the right way, for long term retention
 - 3) Develop business skills
 - 4) Form community relationships that will allow people to discover your technical & business skills
 - 5) Protect your credibility