



Shoe Dog: Memoir by the Creator of Nike

By [Phil Knight](#)

Reviewed by Patty Scotten

One might ask what a shoe company, much less a sport shoe company, has to do with sales and marketing of senior living. Actually, I think this riveting and sometimes humorous history of the development of Nike speaks to success, whether within a shoe company, a senior living organization or any of life's endeavors.

Phil Knight began Nike, at first called Blue Ribbon Sports in recognition of his track ribbons, to fulfill his passion to create something of his own — something about which he felt passionate. Knight began selling shoes out of the trunk of his Valiant in the early '60s, long before running was popular. He had a passion — for running and for elevating running as a legitimate sport and pastime. The first year, Blue Ribbon sales barely topped \$8,000; today Nike sales top \$3 BILLION.

So how did he do it? Here are some takeaways that are applicable to life and success:

- FOCUS — “We wanted Nike to be the world's best sports and fitness company. Once you say that, you have a focus. You don't end up making wing tips or sponsoring the next Rolling Stones world tour.”
- TAKE CHANCES — “The trouble with America is not that we are making too many mistakes, but that we are making too few.”
- HAVE A QUALITY PRODUCT — “Now we understand that the most important thing we do is market the product. We've come around to saying that Nike is a marketing-oriented company, and the product is our most important marketing tool.”
- PLAN FOR THE FUTURE — “You've got to worry about what's coming up to stay ahead of the curve...”

In any of our endeavors, if we use Knight's advice, coupled with his tenacity and passion, we will ultimately thrive. **Shoe Dog** is a light, entertaining read with many life lessons to guide success.



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