

Christmas gift ideas: Top five books for the executive who has everything

Every year it becomes tougher to find a gift for someone who has everything. Electronic gadgets are expensive and often the executive who has everything, likely has already bought it.

The following is a suggested list of five great Christmas gift ideas and books for stocking stuffers and “How to Books” that surely will be unique presents this holiday season.

“The Year Without Pants – WORDPRESS.com and the future of work,” is not only has a catchy title, but is a book that is a fascinating read and one that’s hard to put down. Powerful Speaker, Author and former Microsoft Manager Scott Berkun chronicles his challenging year working at WordPress.com as the leader of one of the most critical teams. It’s a great illustration of what happens when an old-school management guru leaves the books and lectures behind to head a young team at a revolutionary company.

The book is entertaining about the future of work and how employees work remotely, from wherever they want in the world; no one uses email, preferring to customize blogs and online chat; there are no schedules, few meetings and fewer rules, where workers launch new ideas and features dozens of times daily.

Automattic, Inc., runs WordPress.com. It’s the 15th most popular website on the planet and it’s the leading organization behind WordPress. Their software powers 20 percent of the entire web - 60 million sites and counting.

“The Joy of Financial Security by Authority,” by Donna Skeels Cygan, CFP, MGA will help you create a New Year’s resolution with her “Art and Science of Becoming Happier, Managing Your Money Wisely and Creating a Secure Financial Future.” The financial planner’s groundbreaking book encourages you to understand what personally make you happy and why and how finances fit into the picture.

Skeels mixes psychology research, neuroscience and economics with her personal stories and practical strategies to help you define your personal values. Bonus: The book helps readers learn that childhood experiences and the way their brain is wired impacts the quality of their financial decisions today. Skeels helps you improve your decisions going forward.

Achieving Success in America by Sid Baron. One of the most unusual businessmen and a family man I’ve personally known for more than three decades. (Disclaimer - Baron actually gave this

author his first job in broadcast news at KLYN-FM, a 100,000 watt, beautiful music station he owned and managed in the back of his Baron TV & Stereo store, Lynden, WA.)

As a boss, Baron inspired and taught how your “family is first and everything else falls into place.” In his book, Author Sid Baron shows you how to “take charge of your life, follow your passion, learn from your mistakes and don’t expect a free lunch.” More importantly, Baron tells his readers how important it is to “partner with customers, vendors and workers.”

And finally, Baron said, “Know Your Risks,” and “live a balanced life, because handling stress is key to your happiness and well-being.”

Baron should know, it wasn’t until many years after this writer left the radio station that we learned Baron had suffered the incurable disease of Multiple Sclerosis and he even wrote a book about it, “How I Survived Multiple Sclerosis: Thriving for 40 Years.” The subtitle of his book, “If an 18 Year Old Penniless Immigrant Could Dream Big, You Can, Too.” Baron is a survivor of the Nazi Occupation and came to America after the World War II. He resides in Washington State with his family.

“Tap Dancing to Work – Warren Buffet on Practically Everything, 1966-2012 by Carol J. Loomis. This 345 page book outlines the high and lows of Buffett’s business life and goes way back to 1966, with the behind the scenes and inside story of Warren Buffet. News junkies are going to love it. It covers everything about Buffett from his second profession, business management to his old one of investor and how he made Berkshire Hathaway a major force in Corporate America.

Loomis a Fortune magazine senior editor-at-large and a long time (40+ years) close friend of Warren Buffett said, “For me, compiling this book has been a trek through my own career at Fortune (1954-still happening) and through endless warnings as well to put two ‘t’s” on Buffett. More significant, it has been an extended and rewarding reminder of Buffett’s investment and business genius, creativeness, and-not the least of these-consistency of thought”

Loomis collected and updated the best Buffett articles Fortune published between 1966 and 2012. It included 13 cover stories and dozen pieces authored by Buffett himself.

The New Elevator Pitch – The Definitive guide to Persuasive Communication in the Digital Age” – by Chris Westfall, national elevator pitch champion. This book will knock your socks off when it comes to the secret of an elevator pitch.

Westfall walks you through the process of making a great elevator pitch by being “authentic, compelling and building quality” so people say, “tell me more.”

The rest of the quick-and-easy-read book focuses on two sections: the first part, a “Pitch Perfect”, guiding you on a seven-step technique for creating your new elevator pitch and the second half of the book dives into “Speed Networking”, how to pitch a TV show, angel investors, asking for a raise to why someone should hire me?”

Westfall also reveals that, “The best elevator pitch really focuses on the listener and on the outcomes you want to create. So instead of focusing on your story and how long you can make it, you

work on a message that creates action,” he said.

All of these gift ideas can be found on Amazon.com and you don't have to fight the crowds of last minute Christmas shoppers to obtain any of these books. We would love to hear which book you chose and your feedback. Good luck and Merry Christmas!

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