Herding Cats: A Primer for Programmers Who Lead Programmers

J. Hank Rainwater

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"Herding Cats: A Primer for Programmers Who Lead Programmers" is a comprehensive guide--think of it as a field manual--to the management challenges of supervising and leading programmers. J. Hank Rainwater introduces new and not-so-new managers to concepts that will encourage them and help them become a strong leaders for their teams. You?ll learn about the varieties of programmer personality traits and be able match personnel to projects for maximum productivity. You?ll also learn how to manage your strengths and weaknesses as you improve your leadership skills, which will result in dramatic improvements to your team?s success. In this ?how-to? manual that?s both practical and thought- provoking, you?ll find several chapters devoted to administrative aspects of your job, such as managing meetings, hiring and firing, and principles of organizing your job for success. Rainwater also describes task management software he built that you can use to organize project assignments. (The source code for this software is available for download once you own the book.) The chapter on technical leadership, which highlights the importance of architecture, design, and code reviews, not only illustrates practical applications of leadership, but also digs deep into concrete methods you must employ. Rainwater shows why things can go wrong for a leader and how to correct career-derailing problems as they arise. One chapter is devoted to the working relationship that you as a manager have with your boss, and it guides you into the best way to respond to the pressures of software project deadlines. Numerous other topics are discussed that are a necessity for anyone seeking to manage the ?peopleware? aspects of software development. "Herding Cats: A Primer for Programmers Who Lead Programmers" is the definitive guide to the challenges and obstacles facing anyone who manages programmers. Author Information Hank Rainwater leads programmers who build software for the insurance industry at Risk Sciences Group in Atlanta, Georgia. His career in science and engineering has spanned over three decades and has included writing Fortran programs on punch cards; teaching college mathematics; conducting research in radio astronomy, missile guidance systems, and remote sensing technologies; and managing the building of embedded digital control systems. As a software professional, Hank has served as a consultant, mentor, and teacher of programming languages and has led development teams in several industries.

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Aleksandr Beljakov says

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Alexey Shpakov says

The book appeared to be a meld of three books: on coding guidelines (Code Complete), on social side of software development (Peopleware) and on leadership (yet to name the book).
Being a combination of three, it is still a lot thinner then any of those. That means there won't be much of beating around the bush or discussions on the matter. The book provides a lot of dry facts instead. And that is both the blessing and the curse of it. On one hand, it contains lots of useful data per page and saves you reading a lot of pages in other books. On the other hand, the information density makes it difficult to read and the absence of groundings doesn't help understanding and remembering certain points either.

In overall, the book feels like a tough although useful reading.

Alex Liannoy says

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Max Savchenko says

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Mikhail Kumachev says

The author has presented an interesting classification of programmers, but in most cases he told about the
obvious things.

Andrej says

Couldn't make it to the end

Acmd etc says

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Julia Letsko says

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Vladimir Makarov says

Sometimes obvious and not well-structured, but still there are some useful ideas.

Keith Clark says

Good for understanding different personality types and quirks you might come into contact with.

Pavel Karasov says

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Katya says

Messy, no structure and central theme. The book could be much shorter: the same idea is explained 2-3 times from different angles.

There are some hidden gems though, if you don't mind digging for them.

Ivan says

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Semen Khmelev says

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