

# Working as a software developer

Curious Cat Science and Engineering Blog

For most of [my career](#) [1] I have been focused on management improvement – [helping organizations improve results](#) [2]. Technology plays a big role in that and along the way I found myself becoming a programmer for a while; and then a software development program manager. This is a good post on [working as a software developer](#) [3]:

Reading code is a very important skill. Before a program can be modified, you need to understand what it does, and how it does it. Only then can new functionality be added so it fits in with the existing structure, and without breaking anything. Reading and understanding a program can be a major effort, and one sign of a well-designed program is that it is relatively straight-forward to modify it.

...

**Write for people first, computer second.** The code you write will be read many times in the future (by you, or another developer). The computer doesn't care how the code is written, so make it as easy as possible to understand for the next person that has to read it. A corollary to this is: don't be too clever. It's better to be clear than to be clever.

When there is a compelling need to write for the computer first and people second make sure to document that code well. For example, some code that is extremely dense and complex and confusing but greatly enhances the efficiency of a critical area of code.

I recently wrote a book, [Management Matters: Building Enterprise Capability](#) [4]. There are many great things about a [career in software development](#) [5]. It certainly is also challenging and not for someone looking for the easiest career but I have seen a higher percentage of happy software developers than I have seen in any other discipline.

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### Links:

[1] <http://johnhunter.com/plife.cfm>

[2] <http://curiouscat.com/guides/>

[3] <http://henrikwarne.com/2012/12/12/working-as-a-software-developer/>

[4] <http://curious-cat-media.com/management-matters/>

[5] <http://management.curiouscatblog.net/2011/04/06/finding-and-keeping-good-it-people/>