

Flow, DeepMind Context, and Operator Picks on Open Source

Recommended Reading from Tech Founders

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A compact set of organic recommendations emerged today: Tomasz Tunguz on *Flow* as a model for AI tool design, Packy McCormick's DeepMind learning stack, Sarah Tavel's pointer to Bill Gurley on open source, and Paul Graham's endorsement of *Social Radars*.

What stood out

The clearest recommendation today was *Flow*. Tomasz Tunguz did not just name the book; he used it to explain what good AI workflows should feel like: direct connection to the work, with tools fading into the background as extensions of the user [1]. The rest of the day's authentic picks clustered around two other themes: background material on Demis Hassabis and DeepMind, and shorter-form operator media worth reading or listening to [2, 3, 4, 5].

Most compelling recommendation

Flow [1]

- **Content type:** Book [1]
- **Author/creator:** Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi [1]
- **Link/URL:** Not provided in the source material
- **Who recommended it:** Tomasz Tunguz [1]
- **Key takeaway:** Tunguz described it as a book about getting into a state where, while working, you are “directly connected,” and tied that idea to Heidegger's view that well-designed tools become extensions of the self [1]
- **Why it matters:** This was the strongest pick because Tunguz surfaced it in the context of AI workflows and tool design, giving the recommendation an immediate application for builders [1]

“there’s this great book called flow ... how do you get into a place where when you’re working you’re just directly connected” [1]

DeepMind learning stack

The Infinity Machine [2]

- **Content type:** Book [2]
- **Author/creator:** Sebastian Mallaby [2]
- **Link/URL:** <https://www.amazon.com/Infinity-Machine-Hassabis-DeepMind-Superintelligence/dp/0593831845> [2]
- **Who recommended it:** Packy McCormick [2]
- **Key takeaway:** After reading Mallaby’s book on Demis Hassabis and DeepMind, McCormick said his big takeaway was that “you don’t want to bet against Sir Demis” [2]
- **Why it matters:** McCormick framed it as a conviction-building read on Hassabis and DeepMind rather than a casual mention, making it a useful starting point for readers who want background on that story [2]

The Thinking Game [2]

- **Content type:** Documentary [2]
- **Author/creator:** Not specified in the source material
- **Link/URL:** Not provided in the source material
- **Who recommended it:** Packy McCormick [2]
- **Key takeaway:** McCormick said he had already watched it for context on DeepMind’s development of AlphaFold before reading *The Infinity Machine* [2]
- **Why it matters:** It appears in the same learning path as Mallaby’s book, giving readers a second format for understanding DeepMind’s story [2]
“you don’t want to bet against Sir Demis.” [2]

Shorter-form operator picks

Bill Gurley on sophisticated executives using open source in creative ways [3]

- **Content type:** Blog post [3]
- **Author/creator:** Bill Gurley [3]
- **Link/URL:** <https://substack.com/home/post/p-197032865?source=queue> [3]
- **Who recommended it:** Sarah Tavel [4]
- **Key takeaway:** Tavel called Gurley’s piece “worth the read”; Gurley framed it around how sophisticated executives are using open source in “super creative ways” [4, 3]
- **Why it matters:** The combination of a concrete operator topic and an independent endorsement from another investor made this a stronger

signal than author self-announcement alone [4, 3]

Social Radars [5]

- **Content type:** Podcast [5]
- **Author/creator:** Jessica and CLevy [5]
- **Link/URL:** Not provided in the source material
- **Who recommended it:** Paul Graham [5]
- **Key takeaway:** Graham described hearing the hosts as “reassuring” and “like having the proverbial voice of sanity as background music” [5]
- **Why it matters:** This was a strong quality signal from Graham for the show’s tone and judgment, even without a specific episode recommendation [5]

“It’s like having the proverbial voice of sanity as background music.”
[5]

Bottom line

If you only pick one item from today’s set, *Flow* had the clearest practical use case because Tunguz mapped it directly onto AI tool design [1]. If you want broader context on Demis Hassabis and DeepMind, Packy’s book-plus-documentary stack is the best follow-on path [2]. For shorter consumption, Sarah Tavel’s Bill Gurley link and Paul Graham’s *Social Radars* nod were the cleanest operator-media recommendations [4, 3, 5].

Sources

1. Inside the AI Sprint | Tomasz Tunguz, Theory Ventures
2. Weekly Dose of Optimism #193
3. X post by @bgurley
4. X post by @sarahtavel
5. X post by @paulg