

Productivity Game



PDF Package

*40+ one-page summaries of the
best books on personal productivity*

by Nathan Lozeron

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www.ProductivityGame.com

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Introduction

“A new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive and move toward higher levels.” – Albert Einstein

With a desire to thrive in a highly competitive marketplace, I've read dozens of books on personal productivity and distilled my insights into a series of one-page PDF summaries. Each summary contains a list of proven principles and methods that you can use to reach your career goals.

This Productivity Game PDF Package is a comprehensive guide on personal productivity that includes more than 40 one-page PDF book summaries and productivity principles.

The one-page PDFs are organized into four sections:

- Understanding Success
- Learning & Skill Development
- Getting Stuff Done
- Innovating

As you read through the various book summaries and productivity principles, you will gain a clear understanding of what it takes to thrive in today's competitive marketplace.

To aid the learning process, I've created a YouTube video playlist to match the sequence of book summaries presented in this package: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL38v62je9cXZuHv6WixrJr2zA2LJUodYu> (the YouTube playlist contains a video for each book summary, but not for each productivity principle – many productivity principles are exclusive to this package).

Section #1:

Understanding Success

Insights from *The Compound Effect* by Darren Hardy

“The Compound Effect is the principle of reaping huge rewards from a series of small, smart choices. What’s most interesting about this process to me is that, even though the results are massive, the steps, in the moment, don’t feel significant. Whether you’re using this strategy for improving your health, relationships, finances, or anything else for that matter, the changes are so subtle, they’re almost imperceptible. These small changes offer little or no immediate result, no big win, no obvious I-told-you-so payoff. So why bother?”

– Darren Hardy

Resist the urge to see immediate results and receive short-term payoffs. Instead, construct a daily habit of constant improvements to generate the compound effect in your life and produce incredible results.

3 Ways to Stay on the Compound Curve



Choice Awareness:

“Our choices can be our best friend or our worst enemy. They can deliver us to our goals or send us orbiting into a galaxy far, far away. In essence, you make your choices, and then your choices make you. Every decision, no matter how slight, alters the trajectory of your life.” – Darren Hardy

Most of us are sleepwalking through our daily choices. We make choices that align with the demands of others without realizing those choices don’t align with our ultimate goal.

“The first step toward change is awareness. If you want to get from where you are to where you want to be, you have to start by becoming aware of the choices that lead you away from your desired destination. Become very conscious of every choice you make today so you can begin to make smarter choices moving forward.” – Darren Hardy

Be conscious of your choices by keeping a pad of paper and pen nearby to write down every choice you make in a particular area of life that you want to improve.

- At the end of the day, look at the list and ask yourself: Are these choices consistent with my core values? Are they in alignment with who I want to become?
- Cross out any choice that didn’t move you closer to where you ultimately want to be. Over time, you’ll gain awareness of your moment-to-moment choices and consistently make choices that move you towards your ultimate goal.



Why Power:

Most of us wouldn’t walk a plank between two high rise buildings for \$20 dollars. But Darren says: ***“If your child was on the opposite building, and that building was on fire, would you walk the length of the plank to save him? Without question and immediately—you’d do it, twenty dollars or not.”*** – Darren Hardy

Your ‘WHY Power’ is the internal drive you need to get started and take massive action. Your WHY can take two forms: what you love and what you hate. Your why doesn’t have to be noble, it just has to move you.

- **LOVE:** I am doing this to provide a better future for _____.
- **HATE:** I am doing this to prove _____ wrong OR I am doing this to defeat _____

“America had the British. Luke had Darth Vader. Rocky had Apollo Creed. Twenty-something’s have ‘The Man.’” – Darren Hardy



Bookend Routines:

“The key to becoming world-class in your endeavors is to build your performance around world-class routines. It can be difficult, even futile, to predict or control what will show up in the middle of your workday. But you can almost always control how your day starts and ends. I have routines for both.” – Darren Hardy

The moments after we wake up and the moments before we go to bed are within our control – we must use these moments to direct our lives.

- Morning Routine: Review your vision/mission, set the top priority for the day, read something positive and instructional, and do work to advance your most important project.
- Nighttime Routine: Reflect on the choices you’ve made throughout the day, be grateful for the wins you experienced, and get curious about how you can improve tomorrow by asking yourself: How could I have made today even better?

“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.” - Albert Einstein

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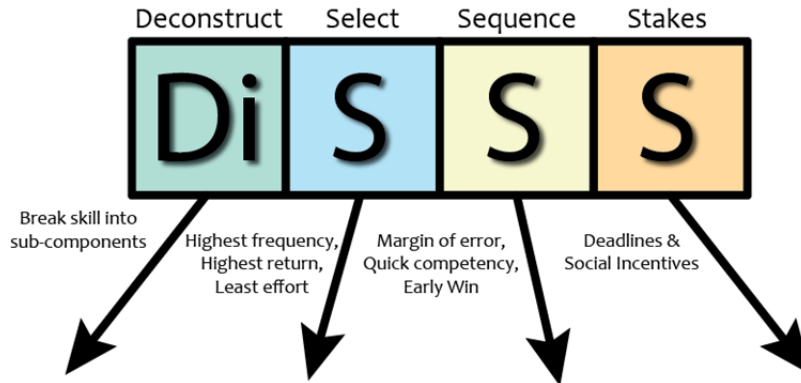
Section #2:

Learning & Skill Development

Insights from *The 4-Hour Chef* by Tim Ferriss

“It is possible to become world-class, enter the top 5% of performers in the world, in almost any subject within 6– 12 months, or even 6– 12 weeks. There is a recipe, the real recipe in this book, and that is DiSSS.”

– Tim Ferriss



<p>“Deconstruction is best thought of as exploration. This is where we throw a lot on the wall to see what sticks... it is where we answer the question: how do I break this amorphous “skill” into small, manageable pieces?” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>Break down the skill into a subset of skills. Understand each of these sub-skills by reading ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’ guides. Look for similarities between the two.</p> <p>Interview world-class performers of the skill (ex: Olympic silver medalist) and ask them:</p> <p>→ “If I needed to perform in this skill with only 20% of the ideal training time, what would you have me focus on?”</p> <p>→ “What do most novices do that you consider to be the biggest waste of time?”</p>	<p>“Choose the highest yield material and you can be an idiot and enjoy stunning success.” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>Identify the 20% of available sub-skills that you can use to produce 80% of the desired results (the sub-skills you’ll use most frequently).</p> <p><i>For Example: “Language is infinitely expansive (much like cooking) and therefore horribly overwhelming if unfiltered. Forget studying and masters long lists if you don’t plan to use them in 80% or more of the conversations that you will initially have.</i></p> <p>If you select the wrong material, the wrong textbook, the wrong group of words, it doesn’t matter how much (or how well) you study. It doesn’t matter how good your teacher is. One must find the highest-frequency material.” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>Ask yourself: → “Can I see myself using this at least 80% of time initially performing the skill?” → “Have I narrowed down my study material and practice routine to the highest frequency items?”</p>	<p>“Rank the highest frequency items based on their ability to provide early wins and feeling of competency (highest return, least amount of time).” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>Learn and practice the 20% high frequency sub-skills in a sequence that allow you to quickly experience a feeling of competency.</p> <p>“For cooking methods, the most popular (as also confirmed by my interviews) were as follows: Grilling, Sautéing & Braising. The method that is most forgiving—braising— goes first, because early wins are paramount. The order of learning then becomes: Braising, Sautéing then Grilling.” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>When learning how to swim, don’t start by learning the proper kicking technique because you’ll make minimal gains in swimming speed. Instead, practice pushing off the side of the pool and gliding through the water. This will provide you with a feeling of competency and motivate you to learn additional sub-skills.</p> <p>It’s also important to start with sub-skills that have a high margin of error. You will make several errors when starting a skill so you need to feel safe doing so. Fear and anxiety quickly erode feelings of competency. Therefore, if you’re learning how to swim, start in the shallow end.</p>	<p>“A goal without real consequences is wishful thinking. Good follow-through doesn’t depend on the right intentions. It depends on the right incentives.” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>Tim recommends using a site called stickK.com to set ‘stakes’. The site allows you to pick any goal, choose a referee (a friend to keep you honest), put money on the line, and pick an ‘anti-charity’ – an organization you so despise so much that you’d rather slam your head in a car door than donate to them.</p> <p>“Based on stickK’s goal completion percentages from 2008– 2011, we find that the success rate with no stakes (no money on the line) is 33.5%. Once we add stakes like an anti-charity, that success rate more than doubles to 72.8%!” – Tim Ferriss</p> <p>→ When learning to cook, schedule dinner parties to give you the incentive to be a better cook.</p> <p>→ When learning the guitar, tell a friend that you will learn a new song by a certain date OR give \$200 to an anti-charity.</p>
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Section #3:

Getting Stuff Done

Productivity Principle: Process vs. Product

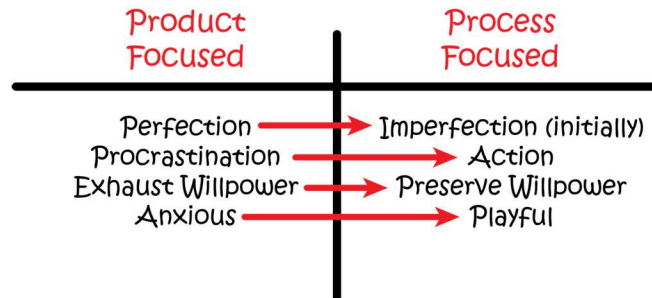
Inspired by the book *A Mind for Numbers* by Barbara Oakley

“Procrastination is the death of success.” – Barbara Oakley

↑ Time Spent Focusing on Product = ↑ Time Spent Procrastinating...

“Product is an outcome—for example, a homework assignment that you need to finish.

Process means the flow of time and the habits and actions associated with that flow of time—as in, “I’m going to spend twenty minutes working.” – Barbara Oakley



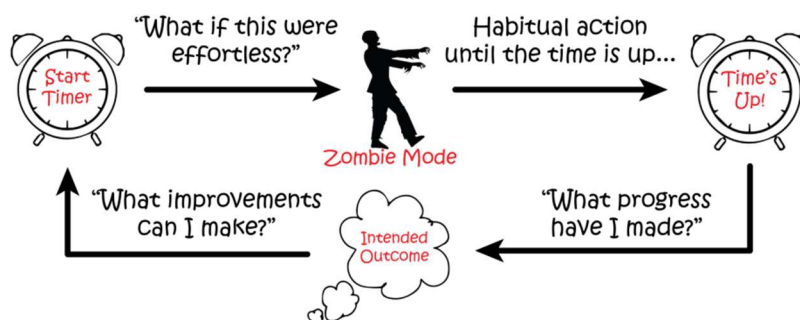
To prevent procrastination, you want to avoid concentrating on product. Instead, your attention should be on building processes—habits—that coincidentally allow you to do the unpleasant tasks that need to be done. – Barbara Oakley

When you focus on **product**, you rely on a part of the brain called the prefrontal cortex (a relatively new part of the brain in human evolution). This is the rational ‘thinking’ part of the brain you use to visualize solutions. It’s also an inefficient, energy intensive part of your brain.

When you focus on **process**, you rely on a part of the brain called the basil ganglia (a relatively old part of the brain in human evolution). This part of the brain is used to execute habits (familiar work routines) and requires very little energy to operate.

You have thousands of habits stored in your basil ganglia. By trusting the automatic execution of these habits and not obsessing over the end result, you bypass procrastination. It helps if you use a timer to cue your habits and periodically think of the product to ensure you don’t stray too far from your intended outcome.

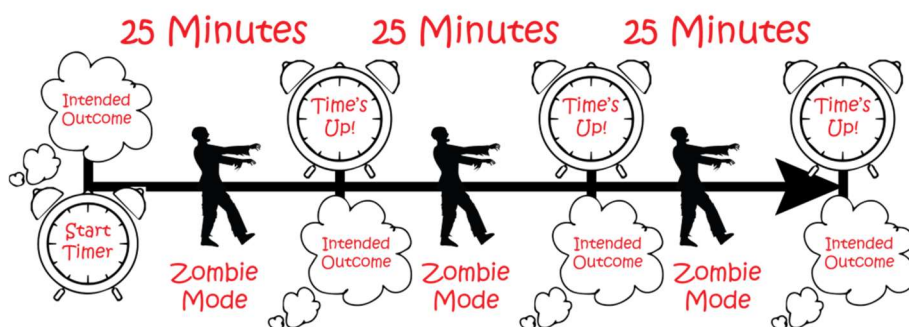
Anti-Procrastination Process Cycle:



Start by focusing on the process and let your habits take over. At set intervals turn your attention to the product (the intended outcome) for a brief period of time.

Task Completion Process:

Aim to improve the process with each subsequent interval.



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Section #4:

Innovating

Insights from *Little Bets* by Peter Sims

“Chris Rock, the Pixar filmmakers, Frank Gehry, Steve Jobs, and Colonel Casey Haskins are all perfectionists and yet they accept, even welcome, failure as they develop new ideas and strategies.” - Peter Sims

Failure = Imperfection, and that's hard to accept.

“Innate curiosity, which is the basis for so much creativity routinely gets squelched (as an adult). Perfection is rewarded, while making mistakes is often penalized. The term “failure” has taken on a deeply personal meaning, something to be avoided at nearly all costs.” - Peter Sims

A growing body of psychology research reveals that there are two forms of perfectionism: Healthy & Unhealthy.

“Healthy perfectionism is internally driven in the sense that it's motivated by strong personal values for things like quality and excellence. Conversely, unhealthy perfectionism is externally driven. External concerns show up over perceived parental pressures, needing approval, a tendency to ruminate over past performances, or an intense worry about making mistakes. Healthy perfectionists exhibit a low concern for these outside factors.” - Peter Sims

3 Questions to Combat ‘Unhealthy’ Perfectionism

Questions direct our focus and guide our actions. By routinely asking the right questions we'll find the courage to make little bets, embrace small failures, and prevent an unhealthy perfectionism from paralyzing our productivity.

What Can I/we Afford to Lose?

“Seasoned entrepreneurs will tend to determine in advance what they are willing to lose, rather than calculating expected gains. Using a little bets approach facilitates operating according to the affordable loss principle.” - Peter Sims

In 1972, Hewlett Packard determined that they could release 1000 electronic calculators (the first of their kind), despite being told by market analysts that their product wouldn't sell. "Hewlett suggested, 'Why don't we build a thousand and see what happens?' It was an affordable bet. Within five months, HP was selling one thousand calculators a day and could barely keep up with the demand." - Peter Sims

Thinking about what you're willing to lose, setting a limit on your losses, and taking action without the fear of loss is how innovation happens.

How Could I/we Fail Faster?

“My strategy has always been: be wrong as fast as we can. Which basically means, we're gonna screw up, let's just admit that. Let's not be afraid of that. But let's do it as fast as we can so we can get to the answer. You can't get to adulthood before you go through puberty. I won't get it right the first time, but I will get it wrong really soon, really quickly.” - Andrew Stanton, Pixar Director

When Chris Rock comes up with a new joke, he'll test it at a local comedy club to quickly see if it's worth developing further.

The faster you test an idea, the less emotional attachment you'll have to an idea. If you're attached to your ideas, you won't let them fail, and you won't learn a damn thing. Fail fast. Fail frequently.

What If...? (small suggestions)

“You always want to present your ideas in a constructive manner and be respectful of the other animator's feelings,” Pixar animator Victor Navone says. “I usually start my suggestions with ‘what if’ or ‘would it be clearer if’ [the character] did it this way.” As Pete Docter, director of *Monsters Inc.* and *Up*, puts it, “I think everyone [at Pixar] has gotten very good at plussing ideas or changing directions without judging.” - *Little Bets*

Personal judgment is a catalyst for unhealthy perfectionism. Asking ‘What if?’ generates a sense of playfulness and curiosity. It's hard to be defensive and paralyzed by a fear of failure when you're curious. By asking ‘What if we tried...?’, you show a willingness to experiment and improve solutions, not outright reject them.

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