

# EAT THAT FROG!

**21 Great Ways to  
Stop Procrastinating and Get  
More Done in Less Time**



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Laws of Business Success**

Thank you for picking up this book. I hope these ideas help you as much as have helped me and thousands of others. In fact, I hope that this book changes your life forever.

There is never enough time to do everything you have to do. You are literally swamped with work and personal responsibilities, projects, stacks of magazines to read and piles of books you intend to get to one of these days as soon as you get caught up.

But the fact is that you are never going to get caught up. You will never get on top of your tasks. You will never get far enough ahead to be able to get to all those books, magazines and leisure time activities that you dream of doing.

And forget about solving your time management problems by becoming more productive. No matter how many personal productivity techniques you master, there will always be more to do than you can ever accomplish in the time you have available to you, no matter how much it is.

You can only get control of your time and your life by changing the way you think, work and deal with the never ending river of responsibilities that flows over you each day. You can only get control of your tasks and activities to the degree that you stop doing some things and start spending more time on the few things that can really make a difference in your life.

I have studied time management for more than thirty years. I have immersed myself in the works of Peter Drucker, Alex Mackenzie, Alan Lakein, Stephen Covey and many, many others. I have read hundreds of books and thousands of articles on personal efficiency and effectiveness. This book is the result.

Each time I came across a good idea, I tried it out in my own work and personal life. If it worked, I incorporated it into my talks and seminars and taught it to others.

Galileo once wrote, “You cannot teach a person something he does not already know; you can only bring what he does know to his awareness.”

Depending upon your level of knowledge and experience, these ideas will sound familiar. This book will bring them to a higher level of awareness. When you learn and apply these methods and techniques over and over until they become habits, you will alter the course of you life in a very positive way.

## My Own Story

Let me tell you a little about myself the origins of this little book. I started off in life with few advantages, aside from a curious mind. I did poorly in school and left without graduating. I worked at laboring jobs for several years. My future did not appear promising.

As a young man, I got a job on a tramp freighter and went off to see the world. For eight years, I traveled and worked, and then traveled some more, eventually visiting more than eighty countries on five continents.

When I could no longer find a laboring job, I got into sales, knocking on doors, working on straight commission. I struggled from sale to sale until I began looking around me and asking, "Why is it that other people are doing better than I am?"

Then I did something that changed my life. I went and asked other successful people what they were doing. And they told me. And I did what they advised me to do, and my sales went up. Eventually, I became so successful that they made me a sales manager. As a sales manager, I used the same strategy. I found out what other successful managers were doing and then did it myself.

This process of learning and applying what I had learned changed my life. I am still amazed at how simple and obvious it is. Just find out what other successful people do and do the same things until you get the same results. Wow! What an idea.

Simply put, some people are doing better than others because they do things differently and they do the right things right. Especially, they use their time far, far better than the average person.

Coming from an unsuccessful background, I had developed deep feelings of inferiority and inadequacy. I had fallen into the mental trap of assuming that people who were doing better than me were actually better than me. What I learned was that this was not necessarily true. They were just doing things differently, and what they had learned to do, within reason, I could learn as well.

This was a revelation to me. I was both amazed and excited with this discovery. I still am. I realized that I could change my life and achieve almost any goal I could set if I just found out what others were doing in that area and then did it myself until I got the same results they were getting.

Within one year of starting in sales, I was a top salesman. A year after I was made a manager, I was a vice-president in charge of a 95 person sales force in six countries. I was twenty-five years old.

Over the years, I have worked in twenty-two different jobs, started and built several companies, earned a business degree from a major university, learned to speak French, German and Spanish and been a speaker, trainer or consultant for more than 500 companies. I currently give talks and seminars to more than 250,000 people each year, with audiences as large as 20,000 people.

Throughout my career, I have found a simple truth. The ability to concentrate single-mindedly on your most important task, to do it well and to finish it completely, is the key to great success, achievement, respect, status and happiness in life. This key insight is the heart and soul of this book.

This book is written to show you how to get ahead more rapidly in your career. These pages contain the twenty-one most powerful principles on personal effectiveness I have ever discovered.

These methods, techniques and strategies are practical, proven and fast acting. In the interests of time, I do not dwell on the various psychological or emotional explanations for procrastination or poor time management. There are no lengthy departures into theory or research. What you will learn are specific actions you can take immediately to get better, faster results in your work.

Every idea in this book is focused on increasing your overall levels of productivity, performance and output, on making you more valuable in whatever you do. You can apply many of these ideas to your personal life as well.

Each of these twenty-one methods and techniques is complete in itself. All are necessary. One strategy might be effective in one situation and another might apply to another task. All together, these twenty-one ideas represent a smorgasbord of personal effectiveness techniques that you can use at any time, in any order or sequence that makes sense to you at the moment.

The key to success is action. These principles work to bring about fast, predictable improvements in performance and results. The faster you learn and apply them, the faster you will move ahead in your career. Guaranteed.

There will be no limit to what you can accomplish when you learn how to “Eat That Frog!”

## Introduction

This is a wonderful time to be alive. There have never been more possibilities and opportunities for you to achieve more of your goals than exist today. As perhaps never before in human history, you are actually drowning in options. In fact, there are so many good things that you can do that your ability to decide among them maybe the critical determinant of what you accomplish in life.

If you are like most people today, you are overwhelmed with too much to do and too little time. As you struggle to get caught up, new tasks and responsibilities just keep rolling in, like the tides. Because of this, you will never be able to do everything you have to do. You will never be caught up. You will always be behind in some of your tasks and responsibilities, and probably in many of them.

For this reason, and perhaps more than ever before, your ability to select your most important task at each moment, and then to get started on that task and to get it done both quickly and well, will probably have more of an impact on your success than any other quality or skill you can develop.

An average person who develops the habit of setting clear priorities and getting important tasks completed quickly will run circles around a genius who talks a lot and makes wonderful plans but who gets very little done.

It has been said for many years that if the first thing you do each morning is to eat a live frog, you can go through the day with the satisfaction of knowing that that is probably the worst thing that is going to happen to you all day long.

Your "frog" is your biggest, most important task, the one you are most likely to procrastinate on if you don't do something about it. It is also the one task that can have the greatest positive impact on your life and results at the moment.

It is also been said that, "If you have to eat two frogs, eat the ugliest one first."

This is another way of saying that, if you have two important tasks before you, start with the biggest, hardest and most important task first. Discipline yourself to begin immediately and then to persist until the task is complete before you go on to something else.

Think of it as a “test.” Treat it like a personal challenge. Resist the temptation to start with the easier task. Continually remind yourself that one of the most important decisions you make each day is your choice of what you will do immediately and what you will do later, if you do it at all.

There is one final observation. "If you have to eat a live frog, it doesn't pay to sit and look at it for very long."

The key to reaching high levels of performance and productivity is for you to develop the lifelong habit of tackling your major task first thing each morning. You must develop the routine of "Eating your frog" before you do anything else, and without taking too much time to think about it.

In study after study of men and women who get paid more and promoted faster, the quality of "action orientation," stands out as the most observable and consistent behavior they demonstrate in everything they do. Successful, effective people are those who launch directly into their major tasks and then discipline themselves to work steadily and single mindedly until those tasks are complete.

In our world, and especially in our business world, you are paid and promoted for getting specific, measurable results. You are paid for making a valuable contribution and especially, for making the contribution that is expected of you.

"Failure to execute" is one of the biggest problems in organizations today. Many people confuse activity with accomplishment. They talk continually, hold endless meetings and make wonderful plans, but, in the final analysis, no one does the job and gets the results required.

Fully 95% of your success in life and work will be determined by the kind of habits that you develop over time. The habit of setting priorities, overcoming procrastination and getting on with your most important task is a mental and physical skill. As such, this habit is learnable through practice and repetition, over and over again, until it locks into your subconscious mind and becomes a permanent part of your behavior. Once it becomes a habit, it becomes both automatic and easy to do.

You are designed mentally and emotionally in such a way that task completion gives you a positive feeling. It makes you happy. It makes you feel like a winner.

Whenever you complete a task, of any size or importance, you feel a surge of energy, enthusiasm and self-esteem. The more important the completed task, the happier, more confident and powerful you feel about yourself and your world. Important task completion triggers the release of endorphins in your brain. These endorphins give you a natural “high.” The endorphin rush that follows successful completion of any task makes you feel more creative and confident.

Here is one of the most important of the so-called “secrets of success.” It is that you can actually develop a "positive addiction" to endorphins and to the feeling of enhanced clarity, confidence and competence that they trigger. When you develop this “addiction,” almost without thinking you begin to organize your life in such a way that you are continually starting and completing ever more important tasks and projects. You actually become addicted, in a very positive sense, to success and contribution.

One of the keys to your living a wonderful life, having a successful career and feeling terrific about yourself is for you to develop the habit of starting and finishing important jobs. At that point, this behavior takes on a power of its own and you find it easier to complete important tasks than not to complete them. You remember the story of the man who stops the musician on the street of New York and asks how he can get to Carnegie Hall. The musician replies, "Practice, man, practice."

Practice is the key to mastering any skill. Fortunately, your mind is like a muscle. It grows stronger and more capable with use. With practice, you can learn any behavior or develop any habit that you consider either desirable or necessary. You need three key qualities to develop the habits of focus and concentration. They are all learnable. They are decision, discipline and determination.

First, make a decision to develop the habit of task completion. Second, discipline yourself to practice the principles you are about to learn over and over until you master them. And finally, back everything you do with determination until the habit is locked in and becomes a permanent part of your personality.

There is a special way that you can accelerate your progress toward becoming the highly productive, effective, efficient person that you want to be. It consists of your thinking continually about the rewards and benefits of being an action oriented, fast moving, focused person. See yourself as the kind of person who gets important jobs done quickly and well on a consistent basis.

Your mental picture of yourself has a powerful effect on your behavior. Visualize yourself as the person you intend to be in the future. Your self-image, the way you see yourself on the inside, largely determines your performance on the outside. As professional speaker Jim Cathcart says, “The person you see is the person you will be.”

You have a virtually unlimited ability to learn and develop new skills, habits and abilities. When you train yourself, through repetition and practice, to overcome procrastination and get your most important tasks completed quickly, you will move yourself onto the fast track in your life and career and step on the accelerator.

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**This was the first chapter of  
Brian Tracy's, "Eat That Frog."**

**[To get the rest of the book go here.](#)**