

SMARTER FASTER BETTER

The Secrets of Being Productive in Life and Business

CHARLES DUHIGG

CHARLES DUHIGG is an award-winning investigative reporter for the *New York Times* and the author of the bestselling book *The Power of Habit*. He is a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Business School. In addition to winning a Pulitzer prize for articles published in the *New York Times*, Charles Duhigg has also appeared on several TV shows including *This American Life*, *The Newshour with Jim Lehr* and *Frontline*. Before becoming a journalist, he worked in a private equity firm and founded an education management business.

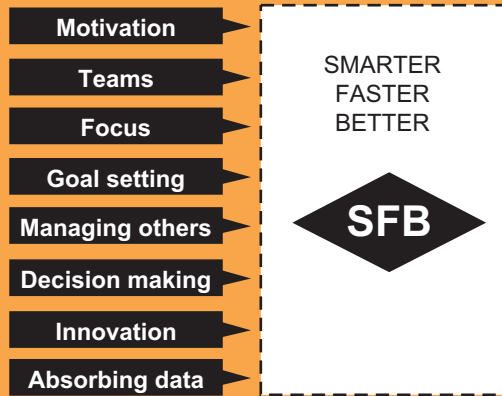
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MAIN IDEA



The key to being smarter, faster and better at everything you do is to manage how you think rather than what you think about. Specifically, there are eight ideas which will expand your productivity:



It's choices that fuel true productivity, not tools, technology or anything else. To become smarter, faster, and better at everything you do, concentrate on making better choices about how you think.

"Connecting these eight ideas is a powerful underlying principle: Productivity isn't about working more or sweating harder. It's not simply a product of spending longer hours at your desk or making bigger sacrifices. Rather, productivity is about making certain choices in certain ways. The way we choose to see ourselves and frame daily decisions; the stories we tell ourselves, and the easy goals we ignore; the sense of community we build among teammates; the creative cultures we establish as leaders: These are the things that separate the merely busy from the genuinely productive."

– Charles Duhigg

EIGHT KEY IDEAS FOR EXPANDING PRODUCTIVITY

- MOTIVATION**
 Give a sense of control
 Chores into choices

1

The best way to increase your motivation for anything is to make a choice which puts you in control. If you can figure out how any task connects to something you care about – why this matters – you'll find it easier to start. . . . Page 2
- TEAMS**
 Manage the how of
 teams, not the who

2

To make teams more productive, make it safe for everyone to speak their mind. Encourage equality in speaking and be sensitive to the underlying dynamics. Manage how your team operates, not who is in it. . . . Page 3
- FOCUS**
 Build mental models
 which put you in charge

3

The best way to aid and enhance focus is to build mental models about what you expect to see. If you can tell yourself a story and envision what will happen, it will be easier to decide where your focus really should go. Pages 3 - 4
- GOAL SETTING**
 Combine SMART goals
 with STRETCH goals

4

SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timeline) goals are good but they only work for short-term objectives. You really should set stretch goals which you then break down into SMART goals. Pages 4 - 5
- MANAGING OTHERS**
 Push decision making
 to the closest person

5

Employees always work better when they believe they have decision making authority and when they believe colleagues are committed to their success. Push decision making to the person closest to a problem. Pages 5 - 6
- DECISION MAKING**
 See multiple outcomes
 Figure the most likely

6

The key to making better decisions is to learn to think about probabilities. Envision various futures and then figure out which is most likely to come true. Develop your intuition by being exposed to successes and failures. . . . Page 6
- INNOVATION**
 Combine old ideas
 in new and better ways

7

Most creativity tends to be combining old and proven ideas in new settings. To make that happen, become an idea broker. Pay attention to your own feelings. Harness creative desperation. Look for alternatives. . . . Page 7
- ABSORBING DATA**
 Force yourself to do
 something with new data

8

The best way to absorb new information is to force yourself to do something with what you've learned. Write yourself a note, run an experiment or explain it to a friend. Do that and you turn information into knowledge. . . . Page 8

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