

Eat that Frog! – Brian Tracy

Your “frog” is your biggest, most important task. **Rules of frog-eating:**

1. If you have to eat two frogs, eat the ugliest one first.
2. If you have to eat a live frog at all, it doesn't pay to sit and look at it for very long. (2)

Many people confuse activity with accomplishment. Instead: habits, setting priorities, overcoming procrastination, and getting on with your most important task. (3)

New habit formation: decision, discipline, and determination. (5)

Clarity is perhaps the most important concept in personal productivity. A major reason for procrastination and lack of motivation is vagueness, confusion, and fuzzy-mindedness about what you are trying to do and in what order for what reason. (7)

Think on paper: Clear written goals, decide exactly what you want, set a deadline on your goal with set sub-deadlines, make a list of everything you can think of that you are going to have to do to achieve your goal, organize your list into a plan by priority and sequence, lay out your plan visually in the form of a series of boxes and circles on a sheet of paper, with lines and arrows showing the relationship of each task to every other task, take action on your plan immediately, resolve to do something every single day that moves you toward your major goal. (10)

Use the present tense, positive voice, and first person singular so that they are immediately accepted by your subconscious mind. (11)

Your ability to make good plans before you act is a measure of your overall competence. (12)

Every minute spent in planning saves as many as ten minutes in execution. It takes only 10-12 minutes for you to plan your day, but this small investment of time will you save you 2 hours in wasted time and diffuse effort throughout the day. (13)

Always work from a list. When something new comes up, add it to the list before you do it. Make your list the night before the workday ahead. Move everything that you have not yet accomplished onto your list for the coming day. (14)

Types of lists to use:

Master list: Everything you can think of that you want to do sometime in the future.

Monthly list: Make at the end of the month for the month ahead.

Weekly list: Where you plan you plan your entire week in advance. This is a list that is under construction as you go through the current week.

Daily list: Specific activities you are going to accomplish the following day. (15)

Mapping: Major Goals – Projects – Tasks. Start with the end in mind and work backward. (17)

80/20 Rules: Success comes from the 20%. Resist the temptation to clear up small things first. (20)

A “long time perspective” is the most accurate single predictor of upward mobility. (22)

Before starting, ask: “What are the potential consequences of doing or not doing this task?” (23)

Motivation requires motive. Thinking continually about potential consequences of choices, decisions, and behaviors is one of the best ways to determine your true priorities. (25)

There is never enough time to do everything you have to do. People say they work better under pressure of deadlines, but research indicates this is seldom true. (26)

How much time you think a task will take, add on another 20 percent or more for insurance. (27)

Productivity Questions:

1. What are my highest-value activities?
2. What can I and only I do, that if done well, will make a real difference?
3. What is the most valuable use of my time right now, at this moment? (29)

To set proper priorities, set posteriorsities as well. Priority = do more of and sooner. Posteriority = do less of or never. You can get your time and life under control only to the degree to which you discontinue lower-value activities. (31)

For you to do something new, you must complete or stop doing something old. Creative procrastination is the act of thoughtfully and deliberately deciding upon the exact thing you are not going to do right now, if ever. (31)

“Zero-based thinking” – If I were not doing this already knowing what I now know, would I start doing it again today? (33)

Use a number or alphabetical system to prioritize each item on lists. (34)

Management: Planning, Organization, Staffing, Delegating, Supervising, Measuring, Reporting. (39)

Grade yourself from 1-10 on your key result areas. Your weakest key result area sets the height at which you can use all your other skills and abilities. (41)

The Great Question: What one skill, if I developed and did it in an excellent fashion, would have the greatest positive impact on my career? (42)

Most common goals center around: financial/career, family/personal, health/fitness. (48)

Have everything you need at hand before you begin. (52)

Between where you are today and any goal that you want to accomplish, there is one major constraint that must be overcome before you can achieve that major goal. Identify it clearly. (63)

Optimism is the most important quality you can develop for personal/professional success: Look for the good in every situation, seek the valuable lesson in every setback or difficulty, look for the solution to every problem, think and talk continually about goals. This creates confidence, creativity, and control. (74)

Multitasking is not possible. People can focus on only one thing at a time. What they are really doing is called “tasked shifting.” It is important to create space/time to work nonstop without distractions. (88)

Develop an “urge to completion” and “compulsion to closure.” (91)

The tendency to start and stop a task can increase the time necessary to complete the task by as much as 500 percent. (102)