

# SUMMARY

## PROCRASTINATE ON PURPOSE

RORY VADEN



# **Summary of «Procrastinate on Purpose» by Rory Vaden**

Written by Lea Schullery

The revolutionary guide on how to maximize your time and stop wasting it on tasks that won't earn you money.



# QuickRead

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# Introduction

In today's fast-paced world we find ourselves bombarded with emails, phone calls, and meetings that take up hours of our day. Tack on our personal duties like cooking, eating, cleaning, and running errands and you'll find that most of your day's hours are occupied with time-wasting tasks that don't help you earn money at all. At the end of the day, we find ourselves tired, overworked and stressed. So what can we do? Luckily, there's a simple solution. Rory Vaden introduces a revolutionary approach on how to handle your time and tasks and provides insight into how successful people perceive time and money. By recognizing that your time is valuable, you can eliminate, automate, and delegate tasks so you can maximize your time in ways that earn you money. Now, you can learn the secrets of success by procrastinating on purpose.

# Stop Complaining About How Busy You Are

If you have a demanding job, or any job at all, you may find yourself questioning where all your time goes. How is it that we have 168 hours in a week and we still can't get everything done? How is it that successful people have the time to *be* successful? Rory Vaden suggests it's because successful people think differently, and not because they wanted to, but because they *had* to. Vaden calls successful people "Multipliers" and they realize that creating next-level results requires next-level thinking.

Take a look at any given day. You wake up, get ready, run errands, complete household chores, pay bills, cook, eat, and get ready for bed. These tasks alone can take up to five hours a day. A study by Newsweek revealed that people spend upwards to one hour a day simply looking for stuff! These six hours don't even account for the hours in the day you spend completing daily work tasks. How much time do you spend sending emails? Sitting in meetings? A recent study found the average executive gets an average of 116 emails in a single day. But emails are hardly the preferred method of communication in today's society. There's now text messages, voicemails, conference calls, meetings, and social media that take up hours of our time a day.

It's commonplace for working professionals to spend more than three hours a day keeping up with basic routine activities before getting any real work done. The result? A new form of procrastination that engulfs the workplace like a swarm of killer bees. This procrastination creates a host of problems including stifled innovation, employee turnover, burn-out, perpetuating miscommunication, failed projects and missed deadlines, disengaged and underutilized employees, wasted potential, and an increasing culture of overwhelming speed, stress, and anxiety. These problems cost companies millions of dollars each year. So how can you become more productive?

Well, the first step is to stop complaining about how busy you are. For instance, Rory Vaden used to pride himself on how busy he was, he constantly answered questions about his well-being with the typical answer of how overwhelmed he was. He equated busyness with success, but one day, he realized he had it all wrong. He recognized that the successful people around him never complained about all the tasks they had to do. So he asked someone why she never complained, surely she had just as much on her plate. She replied, "You reach a point where you realize how futile it is to expend energy sharing or even thinking how busy you are. Once you get to that place, you shift to focusing that energy productively into getting things done rather than worrying about the fact you have to do them."

Quit telling everyone how busy you are. Your problem is not that you are too busy, but that you don't own your situation. Prioritize your commitments and take ownership of them. Once you own your commitments, you'll find that you don't overload your schedule with tasks that don't suit you. You are not a victim of your problems, instead, you are in charge and capable of deciding what you will do with your time.

# Permission to Ignore

How do you feel when crossing off a task on your to-do list? You feel accomplished, right? As humans, we love the feeling of achievement, but this feeling doesn't come without consequences. Because of this need for achievement, we find ourselves adding menial tasks to our to-do lists simply to feel the satisfaction of getting something done. But that's not how multipliers think. Instead, they adopt the mindset of elimination. This mindset is certainly easier said than done as it goes against human nature, but multipliers have mastered the art of elimination.

Multipliers don't simply focus on tasks, they focus on results. They understand that success isn't measured by the number of tasks you complete, but by how significant those tasks are. So begin multiplying your own time by approaching your daily tasks with an elimination mindset. If you aren't sure where to start eliminating, here are some time-wasters that the average person indulges in each day.

The first is watching television. Did you know the average American watches over 34 hours of television a week? That's almost as much time as a typical 9-to-5 job. Once we add those hours up, you'll see that the average person spends about nine years of their life simply wasting away in front of a television. So before you complain about being busy the next time you walk into work, try eliminating watching television to see how much time you gain back in your day.

Next, a notorious time-waster that many professionals experience is attending meetings. A survey by salary.com found that 47 percent of respondents believe meetings are their largest time-waster. See if you can eliminate some meetings from your day by asking yourself two questions when you receive an invitation: Do I really have to know what will be shared in this meeting? And will I be called on to make decisions in this meeting? If the answer to both of those questions is no, then eliminate those time-wasters from your schedule.

Some other time-wasters include reviewing decisions that you have already made, long emails, doing other people's work, gossiping, unnecessary double-checking, and over volunteering. If you find yourself receiving long emails, then that is a good indicator that you need to have a conversation in person. Similarly, you should never send emails that are negative or constructive about someone, such conversations are much more productive in person.

# Permission to Invest

You've probably heard the term "time is money," right? Well, there's a reason the phrase is so popular among the elite, and that's because it's true! Think about the following scenario: When you decide that you want to buy that Starbucks coffee on your way to work, you might only consider if you have \$5 to spare for today's coffee. You might not realize that not only are you wasting time waiting in line, but you are also missing out on future investments. For instance, multipliers might think that while \$5 for a cup of coffee is a reasonable expense, they also think about the big picture. They think that if they spend that \$5 now, then they are missing out on investing that money in the future. Multipliers, in other words, adopt an investment mindset.

Vaden suggests that "If you are investing money, you are making. If you are spending money, you are losing money." If you didn't spend that \$5 on coffee, you could invest that money at an interest rate of about 8 percent. As compound interest builds, that \$5 turns into \$30 in 30 years. A multiplier understands that the \$5 cup of coffee actually costs him \$35 after calculating in the missed opportunity to make extra money. But investing isn't the only way to think about the value of time. For instance, how you choose to spend your time can cost you money or save you money.

How many hours do you spend repeating the same task over and over again? Paying bills? Sending emails? Tasks like these can easily be automated. Vaden suggests that you look for tasks that you repeat and find ways to automate them, he states "Every moment that passes that you don't automate something that could be, you are exponentially losing future time." Some ways you can save time and money is by investing some time to create a Frequently Asked Questions page. Next is by setting up automated online bill pay. Spend a couple of hours setting up your bills to be paid automatically, you'll save time in the long run.

In today's world, there are also many options to automate your work when it comes to sending emails and social media management. To cut down on time, you should be using tools like Hootsuite or SocialOomph to schedule tweets, blog posts, Facebook updates, email updates, etc. Unfortunately, many companies believe they don't have the money to invest in automated services; however, businesses can't afford not to invest in automation. Similar to that \$5 cup of coffee, you are wasting time and missing out on future opportunities to make money. So stop losing out on making money and permit yourself to invest. At the end of the day, "Anything you create a process for today saves you time tomorrow."

# Permission to Delegate

Are you the person that believes tasks will get done faster if you just do them yourself? If you are, this type of thinking doesn't allow you to unleash the power of delegating tasks. If you find that you can't eliminate or automate, there is another option you can use to save time. Think about all the tasks you get done in a day, which ones could be done by someone else? From filling out spreadsheets to cleaning the house, there are always tasks that can be given to another person.

For instance, one executive believes that if it takes five minutes for you to complete a task, you should allow 150 minutes to train someone to do it. This is known as the 30x rule. People who do not have a multiplier's mindset might think that spending that extra 145 minutes to train someone else might be a waste of time. But let's approach this another way. Let's say you spend every day doing this five-minute task, that's 250 working days or 1,250 minutes a year. That first year, you would save 1,110 minutes and then 1,250 minutes every year after that. So that 150 minutes you spend training someone, actually saves you time in the long run.

While delegating might seem expensive to the average person, after all, no one is going to work for free; however, a multiplier realizes that time is money too. For example, if you earn \$100,000 a year then that is \$40 an hour. Therefore, if you delegate 1,100 minutes then you will free up your time for tasks that earn you money instead. Of course, delegating tasks means that tasks might not be done quite as efficiently at first. This means you need to allow yourself permission to be imperfect for awhile. Vaden says, "You have to learn to be okay with things just being okay. You have to embrace the idea that someone else might not be able to do it as well as you...at first."

You can't do everything yourself. "Whether it's in your professional life or your personal life, the size of your success is usually determined by the strength of your team. So fill in your gaps and supplement your weaknesses by bringing on other people. Invest the time (and money) to train them properly. Give yourself and them the permission to be imperfect and start making progress by doing more together as a team."



# Permission of Incomplete

How often do you put things off until the last minute? We find ourselves procrastinating when we don't care to get certain tasks done. However, according to Vaden, this isn't always a bad thing. In fact, when we can't delegate, automate, or eliminate, it's time to procrastinate, but not in the way you are thinking. When it comes to fishermen, for example, when might you find them fishing on the lake? Typically, fish will bite early in the morning, so it's not necessarily about waiting until the last minute to do things but waiting until the right minute to do it.

Vaden says "A Multiplier knows that it's not just about what to do, or how much to do. It's also about when." When picking up a new task, you should first ask yourself if this needs to be done now or if it could be done later. If it can be done later, set it aside. In fact, Vaden suggests that there is such a thing as getting stuff done too early. Sometimes the act of waiting to do something at the right time prevents you from wasting time re-doing work that you have already done.

For instance, say a business owner receives an order for a product that's due in a few weeks, but immediately packs it up to ship as soon as possible. However, what if that customer calls back the following day and wishes to change or cancel the order? Now, the business owner must spend time unpacking the order. If the owner had just waited until the day before the due date, he would have been able to take the changes into account and saved himself time and money.

There are many ways that you can procrastinate and use your time wisely to save you money. The best way to do this is by batching your work. Doing similar tasks at once will allow you to complete tasks far more efficiently than when switching among different tasks. Some ways you can batch work is through setting time aside each day to do the following tasks: emails, phone calls, paperwork, shopping, and paying bills. For instance, you might worry about not responding to emails right away, but that is simply your own fear and insecurity, emails can wait! Or if you have many phone calls to make, try to complete them together one after another. And lastly, if you have yet to automate paying your bills, then set time aside to pay all your bills at once.

Vaden states, "There is no limit to the magnitude and significance of understanding the value of patience and that timing really does matter."

# Permission to Protect

So how do you know which task to do? How do you know where to focus your energy? Well, we can actually learn a thing or two from a farmer who works during the harvest season. A farmer during this time can work up to 18 hours a day and can't afford to get sick or even take a break. Picking crops at the appropriate time is essential for the livelihood of the farmer and his family. So how can we learn from this? Well, sometimes you simply need to focus your energy on the task at hand.

After eliminating, automating, delegating, and procrastinating, it's time to start concentrating. How do you determine what's worth your time to concentrate on? In the elimination stage, you asked yourself, "Is this task something I can live without?" In the automation stage it was, "Can this task be systemized?" At the delegation stage it was, "Can this task be performed by someone else?" And then at the procrastination stage, you asked, "Can this wait until later?" If your answer to all those questions is "no" then you know it's time to concentrate and prioritize that task.

When you decide to concentrate on a task, you have prioritized that task and give it your full attention. Research suggests that while you can make a schedule to divide your time, a schedule is simply not enough. When you decide it's time to concentrate on a task, you must bring both your body and mind to the table. In today's world, it's easy to get distracted by things like social media, text messages, emails, phone calls, anything. Instead, you need to absorb your attention to what you are focusing on. Before beginning your task, ask yourself "Is what I'm doing right now the next most significant use of my time? Is it the thing that is making the most out of the available time that you have? Is it the thing that is enabling you at that moment to be your highest self?"

At the end of the day, multipliers know how to protect their time and do what they do best. Can you imagine a workplace in which each person did this? Not only would the business run efficiently, but businesses wouldn't lose time and money on time-wasting activities. For instance, the average worker wastes up to 2.09 hours a day on irrelevant tasks, which is 10.45 hours a week or 543.4 hours a year! So how much does this cost the average business? Well, the average American makes \$39,795 annually which equates to \$19 an hour. So those two hours actually add up to \$10,396 per employee per year. Luckily, the solution is simple. Start implementing change, procrastinate on purpose, and stop wasting time and money.

# Final Summary

If you find that you are wasting time on irrelevant tasks in both your professional and personal life, try sifting your tasks through the focus funnel to see where your priorities lie. Begin by determining if you can eliminate the task altogether. If the answer is no, then consider automating the task. If automation isn't possible, then delegate it. Can't delegate? Procrastinate. And if you can't procrastinate, it's time to concentrate! Concentrate and prioritize the tasks that require your attention and you'll see your productivity increase significantly. Don't let your schedule control you, instead, regain control of your schedule by evaluating your daily tasks and procrastinating on purpose.



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