

# Get Smart Summary

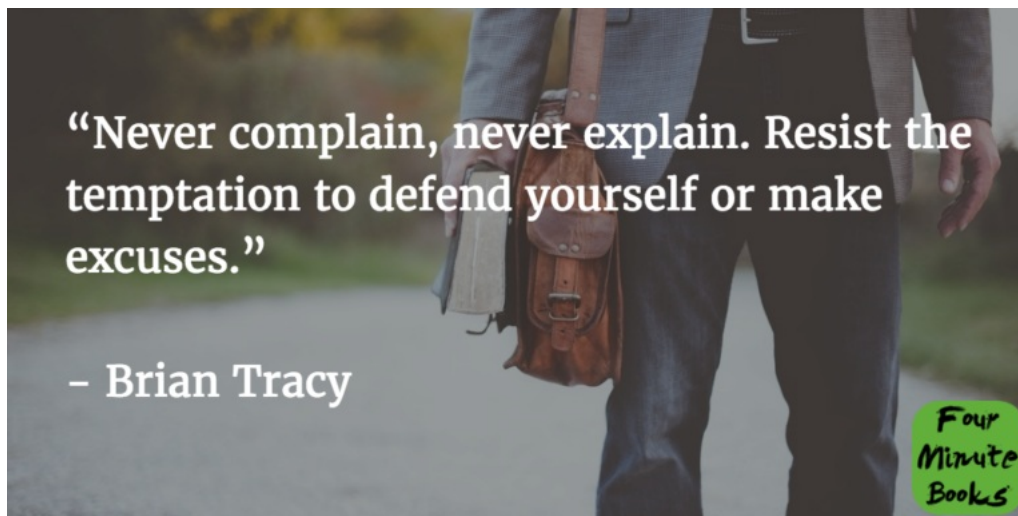
---

 [fourminutebooks.com/get-smart-summary](https://fourminutebooks.com/get-smart-summary)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Get Smart reveals how you can access more of your brain's power through simple, actionable brain training techniques that'll spark your creativity, make you look for the positive and help you achieve your goals faster.*

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



If you've ever been told to "eat a frog" when faced with an unpleasant task, the name Brian Tracy might ring a bell. While not having invented the phrase, his book *Eat That Frog!* is one of the most popular productivity books worldwide. Brian has provided leadership coaching, sales training and psychology advice through his work and books for over three decades now.

*Get Smart!* is his latest book and it dissects the thinking abilities of the best performers in a variety of professional fields. The book introduces you to various ways of thinking, which it then backs up with actionable tactics to adopt them.

Here are my 3 favorites:

1. Always look for the big picture, even if you might not see it clearly.
2. Think slowly and make time to understand your goals.
3. Avoid mechanical thinking at all costs.

A huge proportion of intelligence has nothing to do with IQ. Today, we'll expand that proportion. Time to get smarter!

**Lesson 1:** Try to see things in their entirety, even if you might fail.

---

You might have heard that we only use 10%, or 2%, or some low share of our brain. That's a myth. We don't use all of our brain's cells simultaneously, but we do use 100% over the course of a 24-hour day. What we use them *for*, however, is a different story.

When I started my seminar on family business this semester, the teacher told us a story.

*There is an old, Buddhist monastery, where all the monks are blind. One day, an elephant shows up in front of the main gate. This animal is entirely unknown to the monks and so six men rush outside to examine it. The first monk touches the elephant's ear and concludes the animal's like a thick sheet of cloth. The second touches the elephant's tusk, resuming it is sharp and pointy. The third feels the leg and thinks an elephant is like a tree. The fourth puts his hand on its side and says it's like a wall. The fifth touches its tail and believes it's like a rope. The last man feels the elephant's head and concludes it's like a rock.*

The men are all right, but all just *to some degree*. They've all correctly identified one aspect of an elephant, but nobody was able to see the whole picture. **It's always hard to think of overarching themes and high-level connections, but at least make an attempt.**

Even if you fail to see the whole, you'll still see more than most people. And you sure won't be blind.

## Lesson 2: Find unbiased information by making time to think slowly and consider your path towards your goals.

---

Brian makes a great analogy about human thoughts: they're like bubbles in a champagne glass. Everything is fizzing, all the time, but the bubbles pop fast too. Often, the spark fizzles out soon and the bubbles were, well, just filled with air.

A whopping 1,500 words rush through your head every minute, while at the same time, dozens of cognitive biases work against your quest to find out what's true and important. In his 2011 book, *Thinking Fast And Slow*, nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman differentiates between the two systems in our mind: one fast and intuitive, the other slow and deliberate. In our modern world, very few situations require us to think fast, but that system is where all information first lands!

It takes a conscious effort to get new input from the fast system to the slow system and that's exactly what Brian suggests. **Slow down. Make time for thinking.** Especially when it comes to your long-term goals.

10 minutes a day spent on how you can end up where you want to be in five years will make your champagne fizzle a lot longer.

## Lesson 3: Take three precautions to avoid mechanical thinking.

---

One style of thinking that's been systemically trained out of us for the past 110 years, but is becoming more important by the minute, is creative thinking. Since the dawn of the assembly line, workers have been trained to think as mechanically as the machines they operate and now it costs us dearly.

Mechanical thinking only works in extremes: great successes or total failures. It blocks our path to improvement. Think of a restaurant you know that's had the same menu for 15 years. How long do you think they'll remain open? And if so, is that not because of their creativity in other areas?

In today's world, nothing works forever. Constant learning is a given. Everything can be improved. Always. To block out mechanical thinking, Brian Tracy suggests three precautionary measures:

1. **Be clear.** Set bold, but straightforward goals and then be flexible in how you'll reach them.
2. **Be focused.** Spend your time effectively. Don't chunk it too much. Do fewer things better.
3. **Concentrate.** Spend your time efficiently. Turn off your phone. Avoid email. Design your environment the right way.

We're working on robots to take over mechanical labor. We might as well ditch their way of thinking while we're at it.

## Get Smart! Review

---

This book is straightforward. It introduces you to several scientific ideas from performance psychology, supplemented with little tips to implement the mindsets behind them. If you're new to this field and are looking for a combination of philosophical ideas about productivity, inspiration and actionable tactics, Get Smart! is a good place to start.

[Read full summary on Blinkist >>](#)

[Free Preview >>](#)

[Learn more about the author >>](#)

## What else can you learn from the blinks?

---

- How many brain cells you have and how they're connected
- Why a lack of IQ isn't a problem if you compensate it with the right behavior
- Which cognitive bias is one of the hardest to fight
- The pros and cons of positive and negative thinking
- Why Albert Einstein gave his students the same test from last year once

## Who would I recommend the Get Smart summary to?

---

The 22 year old student, who's new to psychology and wants to learn the basics fast, the 49 year old manager in a medium-sized company, who's been doing things the same way for a long time, and anyone who loves Zen stories.