

Brain Rules Summary

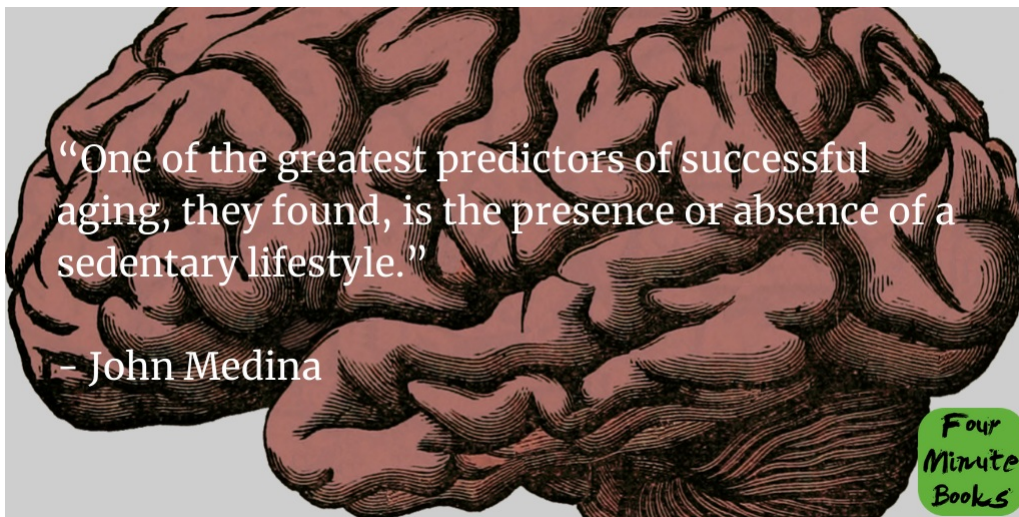


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1-Sentence-Summary: *Brain Rules teaches you how to become more productive at work and life by giving proven facts about how your mind works better with good sleep, exercise, and learning with all the senses.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Put your hands into fists and put them together. This is about the size of that gray matter in your skull that's letting you control everything you're doing right now. It seems small when you think of it like this, but your brain holds a whole lot of potential.

The big question is, can you improve it? Maybe you still think that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. But the truth is that our minds can grow and improve no matter how old we are.

That's what you'll find out how to do from *Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*. After this book, you'll know just what habits you need to have a happier and healthier mind.

Here are the 3 most helpful lessons I've discovered to improve productivity:

1. Exercise more to increase your brains and body's efficiency.
2. Discover and stick to your natural sleep cycle if you want your mind to work better.
3. The more senses you involve when you learn, the better you will retain the information.

Ready to see how you can give your gray matter a boost? Let's get to it!

Lesson 1: Your brain and body will work better if you exercise more.

It's interesting to look at our brain's development from the perspective of our early ancestors. After all, their daily activities had an impact on the way their brains evolved into what we've got today.

Each day the average Homo sapiens would walk or run 10-20 kilometers. What does that mean for neural development? **It had to happen during exercise, which means our brains today do best when we move more.**

Your mind needs fuel from the food you eat to run properly. When you exercise, all parts of your body, including your head, get better at taking in nutrients from eating.

This healthy habit also improves blood flow around the body, which helps create new blood vessels. Vitamins and minerals can then move around more easily, and waste is easier to discard.

Think of this like early civilization's road systems. At first, the pathways were bumpy and difficult to travel. But when one engineer saw the need to smooth them out, the movement of goods became more efficient. With this came better access to all sorts of supplies. The same happens to your body when you exercise as your blood flows more smoothly as well!

Another huge benefit of exercise is that it stimulates the creation of hormones, many of which improve your body's tissues. One of these is the brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which helps in the creation of new cells. It also keeps neurons and the connections between them healthy.

Lesson 2: You've got a unique sleep pattern that you need to discover and stick to for optimal mental performance.

For our early ancestors, sleeping was dangerous. You could easily be eaten by a predator if you dozed off at the wrong time! So the fact that they took the effort to make it possible and that we still do it today means that it's vital to our health.

In the simplest terms, sleep rejuvenates our body and brain. Without sleep, you begin to suffer. Not getting enough rest has such an impact that doing it one week will give you a "sleep debt" the next. And if you only get six hours or less of sleep a night for five days, you're just as cognitively impaired as if you'd gone 48-hours straight without sleeping!

While you might be thinking "I know I need to get to bed earlier" you actually might have a sleep cycle that's just later. Understanding this and adhering to it is vital for good mental and physical health. **According to research, people that know their schedule and follow**

it generally are intellectually stronger.

About 10% of people are night owls that like to stay up late. People who like to get up early are larks, and make up another 10% of the population. Everyone else is a hummingbird, changing between staying up late and rising early.

If you really want to discover yours, try searching Google for a quiz that will tell you. Once you know your type, stick to it for better mental performance!

Lesson 3: It's easier to learn when you try to get information in both visual and audial formats at once.

Your mind's integrative instincts began when the earliest Homo sapiens were still drawing on cave walls. What does that mean? Because they experienced multiple senses at once, their brains evolved to take in knowledge when all senses are engaged. You can still do this today, and should if you want to learn efficiently.

Another way to think of this is that the more senses you involve when you're learning something, the better the information will stick.

In one study, scientists had participants view a video of someone speaking that had no sound. Their auditory cortexes, the part of the brain responsible for picking up noise, were still active. Interestingly, this same area was inactive when the same people saw a silent video of someone only making faces.

In other words, learning isn't as efficient when only one sense is involved because fewer parts of the brain are active.

Research by Richard Mayer confirms this. He conducted an experiment that separated participants into three groups that were given information by different means:

- Hearing only
- Seeing only
- Hearing and seeing

When it was time to remember the material they had all been shown, the group that could see and hear it performed the best by far.

It seems illogical that the more senses that participate would help us remember things. Shouldn't our brains get overloaded from this? If we're multitasking then yes, that may be the case.

But as the science confirms, if you really want a specific thing to stick in your mind, try to get as many senses involved as possible in the experience!

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Brain Rules Review

Brain Rules has got to be one of my new favorite psychology books. It's got some advice that has been said before, but I think the repetition just adds to its validity. This is a great book to boost your productivity through brainpower that I'm sure you will enjoy!

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Who would I recommend the *Brain Rules* summary to?

The 56-year-old who is thinking of learning a new skill but isn't sure how to do so effectively, the 33-year-old that would like to become more productive at work, and anyone who wants to have a healthier brain and memory.