

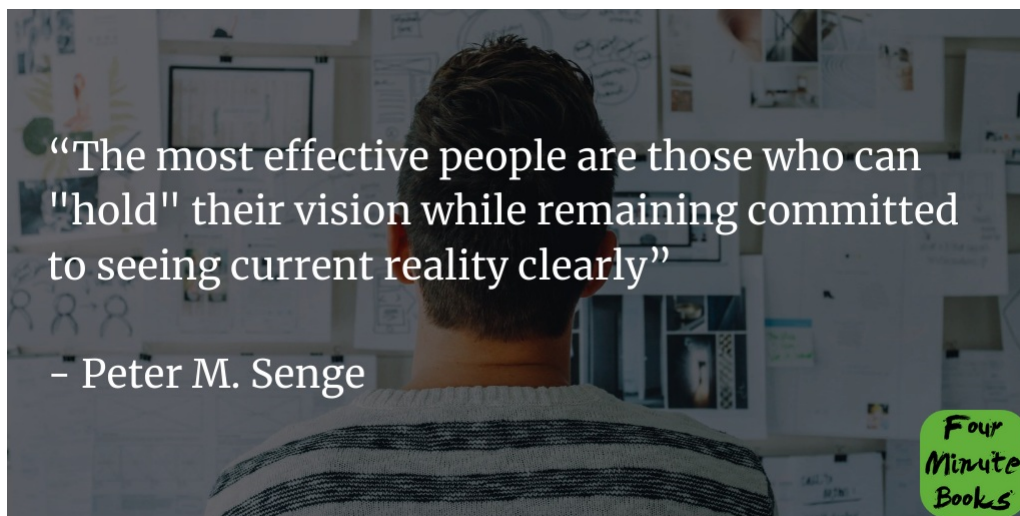
The Fifth Discipline Summary



1-Sentence-Summary: *The Fifth Discipline* shows you how to find joy at work again as an employee and improve your company's productivity if you're an employer by outlining the five values you must adopt to turn your workplace into a learning environment.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Can you remember the last day that you were excited to go to work? This probably seems like a crazy thing to even consider because of how much you know you hate going to the office.

Most people think about work as just something they have to do. It's just part of life, right? You just punch in, punch out, each weekday for 30 years or so until retirement. Then you finally get to work on what you really care about.

But can you imagine how much better it would be if you could actually enjoy your work? What would it feel like if each day at the office you got to nourish your curiosity and find new passions? It might sound like a longshot, but the reality is this situation is much more achievable than you think.

What you and your company need is to become a learning organization. And this is exactly what you'll learn how to do in Peter Senge's book *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization*.

Let's see how much we can learn from this book in just 3 lessons:

1. You love learning, but your job smothers your passion for it.
2. Use the five disciplines to turn your office into a learning atmosphere and bring enthusiasm back at work.
3. Leaders must shift their mindset to adopt the roles of designers, teachers, and stewards.

Get ready to find more happiness at work, whether you're an employee or an employer! Let's get right to it!

Lesson 1: The passion you have for learning new things can be really useful at work, but your job smothers it.

You might not remember it, but when you were a kid you loved learning. And you were great at it too. If you want to see why, just find a toddler and watch them as they touch, smell, and taste everything they see. They don't care if they fall when walking or fail at anything else, they just get back up and try again.

Somewhere inside of you, that flame of curiousness is still alive. But you struggle to see it because your company, with its hierarchy, narrow job details, and incompetent managers, smothers this out.

Your limiting responsibilities is just one curiosity killer. Executives encourage a "just punch the clock" mentality by confining you to only a few tasks. This kills your engagement and severely inhibits the chances you'll ever try to solve problems.

Another huge problem in the workplace is reactivity. I worked for a company that was constantly putting out fires and it was exhausting and expensive. Even worse, there was no chance to plan and prepare for growth.

It's just like that old story about how to cook a frog. You have to place the frog in normal temperature water then slowly turn up the heat. The frog doesn't notice and gets cooked, just like your reactive company doesn't notice growing problems before it's too late.

Fortunately, you can beat all of these problems with the five disciplines, which you'll discover next.

Lesson 2: You can get enthusiasm back at the office by adopting the five disciplines to make it a place of learning.

Old habits might be hard to break, but if you work at them every day, you can make new ones in no time. In your workplace, you'll be tempted to go back to the old ways as you try to implement the five disciplines, but don't give up and it will work.

The first is **personal mastery**, which the company must promote to employees. In the

author's view, this means a commitment to learning and growth and consistently being your best. As each employee does this, they will find fulfillment again.

Next comes examining and improving **mental models**, which are the filters through which we all see the world. All of your experiences, judgments, and assumptions make this up. Once you identify what they are, you can begin challenging the inefficient ones.

Team learning is the third discipline. This piece works as employees learn to communicate well. Together, they ask questions, check their biases, and offer feedback. **By thinking collectively, employees can accomplish more than each individual can.**

The fourth, which must build on team learning, is **shared vision**. This isn't about a visionary leader implementing their ideas, but instead involves each employee feeling ownership over the company's direction.

Last and most important is **systems thinking**, which requires looking at problems as a whole. That means examining each aspect and how it influences all the others, thus integrating all five disciplines into one.

Lesson 3: If you are a leader, change your mindset around your role to adopt the ideals of a designer, teacher, and steward.

What comes to mind when you hear the word "leader?" You might think of managers or executives that take the "top spots" or "senior ranks" within a company. But this doesn't work for learning organizations as it focuses solely on the title.

Instead, you need to deconstruct the typical notions of management and reimagine leadership altogether. There are three distinct roles you must take on:

- Designer
- Teacher
- Steward

When considering your position as a designer, you need to recognize that it's your job to make spaces, or infrastructure, for learning. That might mean setting up a place for virtual meetings, planning a new conference pattern, or allowing chances for feedback.

As you think about the role of a teacher, remember those you had as a kid that really inspired your learning. Everybody has had at least one great teacher, and by looking to the ideals of yours you can begin using them yourself. These traits might vary, but be sure to express a love of knowledge.

Last comes the mantle of a steward who protects the most important things. To do this, you'll need to take care that employee well-being and the company's larger vision are never at the mercy of growth. When you take charge of these aspects of business, your employees will feel more comfortable taking risks and experimenting.

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The Fifth Discipline Review

Whoa, I really enjoyed *The Fifth Discipline* a lot more than I thought I would! I think that the title doesn't do it justice, this book is fantastic. It's an inspiring marriage of career and passion in a way that integrates employee's and employer's goals that I think everyone will enjoy.

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Who would I recommend The Fifth Discipline summary to?

The 38-year-old manager who can't seem to understand why his team members keep leaving, the 58-year-old that wants to start a company that attracts motivated people, and anyone that is tired of not feeling passionate at work.