

Catalyst Summary



fourminutebooks.com

1-Sentence-Summary: *Catalyst* gives the recipe for how to increase the rate of your career growth.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



In scientific terms, a catalyst is anything that boosts the speed of a chemical reaction. Enzymes in your stomach, for example, help your body digest food. Without those enzymes, digestion would be a much harder and longer process. Catalysts are important to many aspects of our daily lives, but the principles behind them aren't exclusive to science.

We all know that to have a great career you need a few key ingredients. Hard work combined with a love of your job and the right skills makes for a pretty satisfying career. But some commonly missed components of your work life can speed up the rate of your improvement, success, and happiness in the office.

In Chandramouli Venkatesan's *Catalyst: The ultimate strategies on how to win at work and in life*, he identifies what kinds of catalysts can boost your career growth. You'll learn just how to get these key components into your work life and how they will help you without making you feel burnt out.

Here are the 3 biggest lessons I've learned from this book

1. Successful people focus more on personal growth than on getting promoted.
2. A boss who is more of a mentor than a manager is a catalyst for your career growth.

3. The hobbies that you choose in your time away from work help you become more efficient.

Are you ready to find out what it takes to give your career path a boost? Let's go!

Lesson 1: A focus on personal growth will carry you further throughout your career than trying to get promoted.

As much as you don't want to admit it, careers are unpredictable. Your progression through your chosen field isn't a straight path, either. Even though you'd love to move smoothly up the corporate ladder, reality is tough. The road to success is bumpy and sometimes takes unexpected turns, for better or worse.

You may find yourself in a position to receive a promotion soon. But then your manager announces their retirement and executives eliminate the position entirely. **Instead of worrying about what you can't control, like promotions, focus on self-improvement.**

Look to your experience and seek to gain as much as you can. Sometimes that may mean doing the grunt-work to put in your 10,000 hours. As your skillset expands, you'll be better prepared to weather the storms and sunshine throughout your career.

Think of this focus on personal growth as if you were a baseball batter. If you concentrate too hard only on winning, you'll likely grow nervous and miss each swing of the bat. Conversely, aiming only to hit every ball pitched to you gives you a much better chance to win the game.

Lesson 2: Seek to find mentors and not managers to improve faster.

Jim Rohn's "you are the average of the five people you spend the most time with" quote certainly applies to your work also. You learn nearly everything along your career path from someone else. Usually, those who influence you the most are your superiors. This is why it's crucial to choose the right bosses who are mentors instead of managers.

Pay close attention for the two different kinds of leaders you will encounter. The first type is results-driven. These people focus more on numbers. They will give you plenty of reminders and checks on your progress to make sure you're hitting the mark. Often, these types of bosses have to control all that you do.

The other kind of leader is also committed to results, but also to your personal growth. **This focus on your improvement is what sets mentors apart from managers.** They will invite you to consider the answers to your own questions. Mentors foster an environment of trust and learning by helping you push your own limits.

It may seem easy to seek out a job that looks appealing and hope that the right bosses are there. Rather than just going with the flow and hoping for the best, seek out mentors by looking for the signs of them. Companies that hire the most talented people and keep them there are a good sign of positive leadership. What's easier is to find someone who works for the company you are considering and ask about the internal culture.

Lesson 3: Grow more effective by focusing on choosing the right hobbies when you are away from work.

One last catalyst for your career involves what you do outside the office more than what happens while you're there. The author discovered, while watching senior executives in successful companies, that each of them had a hobby about which they were passionate. But it wasn't any regular hobby. These business leaders involved themselves in *striving sports*.

A *striving sport* is anything that is difficult, competitive, and done individually. Take running for example. Most runners of marathons aren't competing to win the race, they're working to beat themselves. That's the key of striving sports like running, golf, or cycling, to attempt to triumph against yourself.

This is a great skill to have when leading a team, too. To become successful in a highly competitive market you must learn to surpass your own limits. **Executives put themselves in this improvement mindset by trying to outcompete themselves in their striving sports.**

Additionally, the wise use of time outside of the office can act as a pressure valve. Intensely competitive activities allow leaders to let off steam. This helps them leave that energy at home, instead of bringing it into the boardroom where it could lead to disaster.

Catalyst Review

Catalyst is a great read, especially for anyone who wants to find the best ways to improve their work-life. The advice in this book will work excellent for anyone who follows the traditional career path. For those more entrepreneurially minded, however, you will want to take some of the principles with a grain of salt.

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

[Free Preview >>](#)

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

Who would I recommend the Catalyst summary to?

The 43-year-old manager who wants to become a more effective leader, the 31-year-old business coach who is seeking a better way to help her clients, and anyone who is ambitious and wants to have a great career.