

Unlearn Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *Unlearn will show you how to win even in changing circumstances by revealing why the patterns you used for past successes won't always work and how to adopt a learning attitude to stop them from holding you back.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



In the Dark Knight Rises, the villain Bane gives Batman the beating of his life. It's the hero's first loss, and to make it worse, Bane utters these words as they are fighting:

| "Victory has defeated you."

You don't often think of the bad guy giving the best wisdom, but this quote has got a lot of truth to it. And, although it might sting a little, you might even be nodding in agreement with it if you've ever failed after a big success.

It's easy to make something amazing happen then rest on your laurels. It makes sense. You've found a way that works and you want to make the most of it, so you repeat it.

But you get so lost in your "bulletproof" process that you don't see the warning signs of upcoming failure until it's too late. This is how once great companies and individuals fall.

It doesn't have to be this way though. You can rise back to your full potential after plateauing. All you need to do is learn how, which is just what Barry O'Reilly teaches in his book *Unlearn: Let Go of Past Success to Achieve Extraordinary Results*.

These are 3 of the many great lessons inside the book:

1. Use The Cycle of Unlearning to keep succeeding just like Serena Williams did.
2. If you want to win in the future, you must let go of your past wins.
3. Break the relearning process down into small steps to make it stick.

Let's do some unlearning!

Lesson 1: Serena Williams used The Cycle of Unlearning to break free of failures after success, and so can you.

The best-ranked woman tennis player in 2010 was Serena Williams. In the next season, she sat out the first half due to injury and her performance afterward wasn't great. By 2012 she saw herself losing to a low-ranked player at the French Open.

With a determination to keep trying, Williams started making dramatic changes to her process. She got a new coach who helped her implement new techniques. Williams had won all four Grand Slam titles by the end of the 2015 season.

She'd unlearned how to be a tennis champion and relearned what success really took.

This story is inspiring for those with big aspirations and teaches a crucial principle of success. **When Williams got back to playing in 2011 she was doing things the way she always had, but not getting the same results.**

The only way to succeed was to change by unlearning.

Doing this requires courage, humility, and getting out of your comfort zone. Trying new strategies might feel risky, but it's necessary in the fast-paced world we live in. What worked just last year might not work today. You have to be hungry for new knowledge at all times because of its short expiration date.

If you're having a hard time accepting that it's time for a change, just consider that some of the world's best companies, including Apple and Google, have thrived by adapting with the changing times.

Lesson 2: Let go of your past wins if you want to keep winning.

Have you ever attended an inspiring conference only to revert to your old ways once you get back to your life? Why is it so hard to make lasting changes stick?

While our world is changing rapidly, our neural pathways take a while to adapt to new circumstances. In other words, your mind defaults to past thinking patterns even when you're in a different situation.

And in most cases, what worked for you before won't do the trick anymore. You need to adapt to what's going on right now, not what happened a year ago. This is where unlearning comes in.

Start by having the humility to accept that you need to stop doing things just because you've "always done it this way." Then, identify a goal you have that might require some unlearning to achieve.

Next, write a vision of the best possible outcome. Consider what success looks like and how you'll know if you've achieved it.

Finally, become willing to courageously get outside of your comfort zone and try something new. Your brain will always try to protect you from new things, which is why doing them is uncomfortable.

Persist through the fear and you'll make great breakthroughs.

Lesson 3: If you want the relearning process to stick, you must break it down into small steps.

What would you say if I told you that you could go from couch potato to marathon runner in just six months? Although you might think I was crazy, there's actually an app that does this successfully. But how?

The developers understand and utilize the important truth that you can achieve massive goals by taking tiny steps each day. That's their reasoning behind starting the training plan with an easy 10-minute walk.

Relearning, the next phase in The Cycle of Unlearning, follows this same pattern. In part one you questioned your mindset, and now it's time to challenge your assumptions about what you can accomplish.

Start by making your goal from the previous step measurable. You might say that you want to lose 12 pounds in the next 12 weeks, for instance.

Then, make a plan to reach your objective. **Break it down into small pieces and start with the simplest ones.** Write every idea you have for achieving your goal without censoring any of them, then narrow down just one to start acting on.

Also consider how you might support yourself as you work toward your ambitions. Remember that every action you take gives you important information about your process and the goal itself.

Celebrate results even when they appear negative. This vital information shows you what doesn't work so you can stop wasting your time wondering what will get you to your goal!

Unlearn Review

I really enjoyed *Unlearn* but wish it had more on personal development than just business ideas. These principles are universal though and it's not too difficult to extract them and apply them to life in general. The idea that I need to get over my past wins and try new things to succeed is one I hadn't considered before and that I'm sure will contribute to a brighter future for me!

Who would I recommend the Unlearn summary to?

The 38-year-old manager who has had big wins in the past but can't seem to get them anymore, The 56-year-old CEO of a company that's about to go under, and anyone who thinks that they can continue to be successful by following the same routine.