

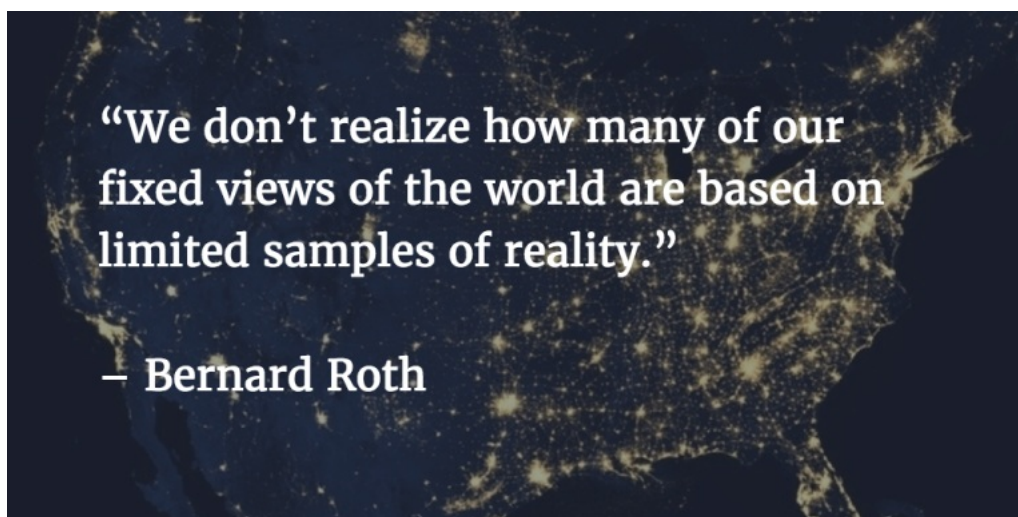
The Achievement Habit Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/the-achievement-habit-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *The Achievement Habit shows you that being an achiever can be learned, by using the principles of design thinking to walk you through several stories and exercises, which will get you to stop wishing and start doing.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Bernie Roth is a professor of engineering at Stanford and co-founded the school's design institute, nicknamed "The d.School" in 2003.

Bernie is a genuinely nice guy and he's always on the lookout what he can do to help people. This is why during both of his sabbaticals as a professor, he started writing a book.

The first one was at the very beginning of his career, which ended up taking 9 years to write and turned out to be a 525-page collection of equations. It was dubbed "the book of the century" and "the best kinematics book ever written" – but unfortunately only by his academic peers, so it ended up selling just 2,000 copies.

The second one was *The Achievement Habit*, which took him less than a year, became an instant bestseller and Bernie now receives a constant influx of thank you notes in his inbox – I'm glad he gave it a go again

Here are 3 things to learn from *The Achievement Habit*:

1. Stop giving reasons, they're just another form of excuses.
2. Swap "but" for "and" in everything you say.
3. Don't network, make real friends instead.

Ready to become an achiever? Here we go!

Lesson 1: Reasons are just another form of excuses, so stop looking for them.

Have you ever been late to a meeting? Of course you have, everyone has.

Chances are, the 2 minutes before you entered the room your mind was racing through your journey of getting there, looking for anything and everything that might have potentially caused a delay.

Was there a lot of traffic?

Did your car make funny noises?

An old lady stopped you to ask for directions?

Magically, your brain always finds a reason, so when you enter that room, you can feel relieved and just say: "Sorry guys, INSANE traffic today!"

Here's the problem: **You knew about all these eventual delays.**

You knew the traffic would be a problem, your car's been acting up for weeks, and being asked for directions can always happen.

You simply didn't make the meeting enough of a priority to leave as early as you needed to, in order to get there on time.

That's because in most of all cases, **the reasons we assign to certain events are really just correlations, not causations.**

For example you might tell a friend you don't have time to help, but in reality you just want to finish watching a movie. Later that day, you spill your coffee all over yourself.

Of course your brain instantly jumps to the conclusion that because you lied to your friend, you are now being punished – but really it's just a coincidence.

Similarly, someone might call you the very day you thought of them again after a long time. You might already plan your career as a psychic, but in reality, you think about 300 people a day, and it just so happened that one of them called you.

Your brain naturally assigned meaning to that one person, ignoring all the 299 that didn't call you.

So stop looking for reasons everywhere, because they block you from making decisions and actually changing your behavior.

Know that most of the things you think are causally linked are really just correlated.

Lesson 2: Every time you want to say “but” say “and” instead.

Reframing is one of Bernie’s big ideas in the book.

Simply by changing the angle you take to look at a problem, you might make it a lot easier, or figure out it’s not a problem at all.

Here’s one exercise in particular, which I loved:

Instead of saying something like: “I want to watch a movie tonight, *but* I have to work.” say “I want to watch a movie tonight, *and* I have to work.”

When you say the former, you’ve created a problem, that might not even exist, because hey, you can work AND see a movie.

The latter will instantly make your brain think about **how you can do both**, instead of sacrificing one for the other, which always makes you feel bad.

Dead simple, but incredibly powerful.

Lesson 3: Forget networking, make real friends!

Ugh.

“Networking.”

I hate that word.

Think about it.

Every time you treat someone as a business contact, you lose out on making a true friend.

Never approach someone with the angle of “what can I do for them so they’ll want to do something for me?”.

Just think like a true friend would. Take yourself out of the equation.

“How can I help them?”

The rest will follow.

When you come from a perspective of abundance, when you share your wisdom, ideas and knowledge freely, it will come back to you 10 times over.

Stop “networking” so much and keeping things on a business level, instead, make more true friends!

The Achievement Habit Review

What a great guy!

I’m not sure why, but even though I just learned about Bernie today, I feel very strongly about him. He’s really out there to help people.

He calls the advice from his book “fuzzy guy stuff”, and I know what he means – the advice is less specific than any equations in a kinematics book for sure – but that makes it all the more helpful.

The Achievement Habit reminded me of books like *The One Thing*, *Do The Work* or *Essentialism*, where the concepts and ideas are clear to everyone immediately because they’re common sense, but the way they’re described in the book makes them a lot more accessible.

There were lots of exercises and stories in the summary on Blinkist alone, I can’t wait to dive into the plethora of wisdom the book must hold.

My tip would be to start with the summary and watch some of Bernie’s talks, then go to the book.

[Read the full book summary on Blinkist](#)

[Learn more about the author](#)

[Get the book on Amazon](#)

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- The fundamental difference between trying and doing
- How Oprah used failure to win
- Why two cases of Alzheimers were completely different (just because of one thing the family’s did differently)
- The Gun Test for making decisions really fast
- How to make sure you’re actually dealing with the right problem
- Why you should never take parenting advice from Gandhi
- A simple exercise to help identify yourself as an achiever

Who would I recommend The Achievement Habit summary to?

The 22 year old college student, who's been meaning to tackle a big project, but hasn't gotten around to it in 4 years of college, the 43 year old executive, who spends a lot of time at conferences, but feels her network of contacts is kind of shallow, and anyone who says "but" a lot.