

THE ONE THING BY GARY KELLER | BOOK SUMMARY

The ONE Thing by Gary Keller is a must-read for anyone interested in productivity and personal improvement. This book clearly defines why productivity is the perfect vehicle for getting what you want and living an extraordinary life. The advice in this book is incredibly practical and the full copy of the book is well worth the read.

1. The ONE Thing

Going small” is ignoring all the things you could do and doing what you should do. It’s recognizing that not all things matter equally and finding the things that matter most. It’s a tighter way to connect what you do with what you want. It’s realizing that extraordinary results are directly determined by how narrow you can make your focus.

2. The Domino Effect

Toppling dominoes is pretty straightforward. You line them up and tip over the first one. In the real world, though, it’s a bit more complicated. The challenge is that life doesn’t line everything up for us and say, “Here’s where you should start.” Highly successful people know this. So every day they line up their priorities anew, find the lead domino, and whack away at it until it falls.

3. Success Leaves Clues

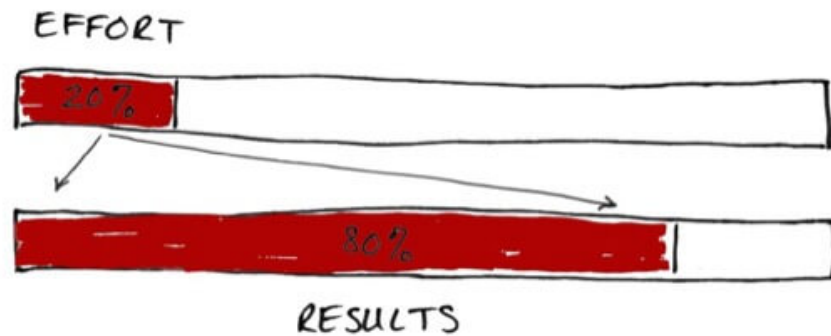
The ONE Thing shows up time and again in the lives of the successful because it’s a fundamental truth. It showed up for me, and if you let it, it will show up for you. Applying the ONE Thing to your work—and in your life—is the simplest and smartest thing you can do to propel yourself toward the success you want.

THE LIES: THEY MISLEAD AND DERAILED US

The six lies are beliefs that get into our heads and become operational principles driving us the wrong way. Highways that end as bunny trails. Fool’s gold that diverts us from the mother lode. If we’re going to maximize our potential, we’re going to have to make sure we put these lies to bed.

4. Everything Matters Equally

Pareto points us in a very clear direction: the majority of what you want will come from the minority of what you do. Extraordinary results are disproportionately created by fewer actions than most realize.

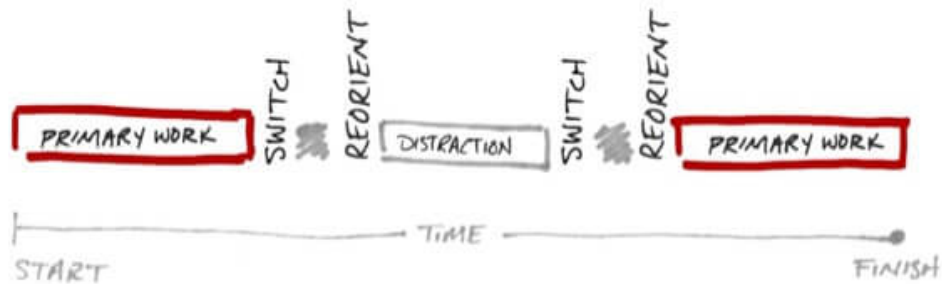


Keep going. You can actually take 20 percent of the 20 percent of the 20 percent and continue until you get to the single most important thing! (See figure 5.) No matter the task, mission, or goal. Big or small. Start with as large a list as you want, but develop the mindset that you will whittle your way from there to the critical few and not stop until you end with the essential ONE. The imperative ONE. The ONE Thing.

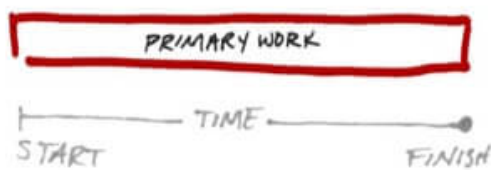
5. Multitasking

It's not that we have too little time to do all the things we need to do, it's that we feel the need to do too many things in the time we have. So we double and triple up in the hope of getting everything done.

INTERRUPTED WORKFLOW



FOCUSED WORKFLOW

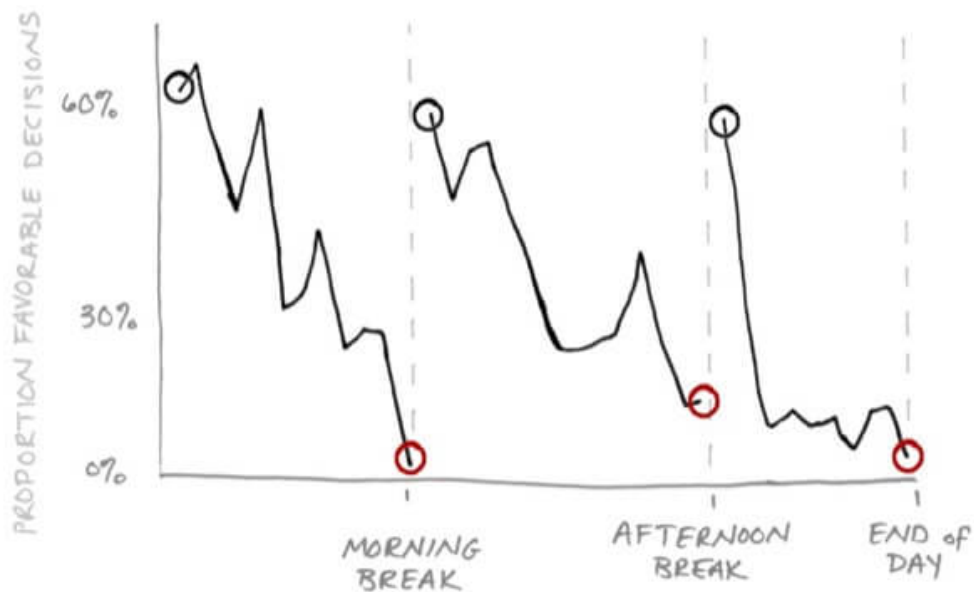


6. A Disciplined Life

You don't need to be a disciplined person to be successful. In fact, you can become successful with less discipline than you think, for one simple reason: success is about doing the right thing, not about doing everything right.

7. Willpower Is Always on Will-Call

The more we use our mind, the less minding power we have. Willpower is like a fast-twitch muscle that gets tired and needs rest. It's incredibly powerful, but it has no endurance. As Kathleen Vohs put it in Prevention magazine in 2009, "Willpower is like gas in your car... . When you resist something tempting, you use some up. The more you resist, the emptier your tank gets, until you run out of gas." In fact, a measly five extra digits is all it takes to drain our willpower dry.



8. A Balanced Life

To achieve an extraordinary result you must choose what matters most and give it all the time it demands. This requires getting extremely out of balance in relation to all other work issues, with only infrequent counterbalancing to address them.

When you act on your priority, you'll automatically go out of balance, giving more time to one thing over another.

9. Big Is Bad

Thinking big is essential to extraordinary results. Success requires action, and action requires thought. But here's the catch—the only actions that become springboards to succeeding big are those informed by big thinking to begin with. Make this connection, and the importance of how big you think begins to sink in.

THINK BIG - ACT BIG - SUCCEED BIG



THE TRUTH: THE SIMPLE PATH TO PRODUCTIVITY

I learned that success comes down to this: being appropriate in the moments of your life. If you can honestly say, "This is where I'm meant to be right now, doing exactly what I'm doing," then all the amazing possibilities for your life become possible.

10. The Focusing Question

Anyone who dreams of an uncommon life eventually discovers there is no choice but to seek an uncommon approach to living it. The Focusing Question is that uncommon approach. In a world of no instructions, it becomes the simple formula for finding exceptional answers that lead to extraordinary results.

What's the ONE Thing I can do
such that by doing it
everything else will be easier or
unnecessary?

11. The Success Habit

You know about habits. They can be hard to break—and hard to create. But we are unknowingly acquiring new ones all the time. When we start and continue a way of thinking or a way of acting over a long enough period, we've created a new habit. The choice we face is whether or not we want to form habits that get us what we want from life. If we do, then the Focusing Question is the most powerful success habit we can have.

12. The Path to Great Answers

When you ask a Great Question, you're in essence pursuing a great goal. And whenever you do this, you'll see the same pattern—Big & Specific. A big, specific question leads to a big, specific answer, which is absolutely necessary for achieving a big goal.

EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS: UNLOCKING THE POSSIBILITIES WITHIN YOU

Your big ONE Thing is your purpose and your small ONE Thing is the priority you take action on to achieve it. The most productive people start with purpose and use it like a compass. They allow purpose to be the guiding force in determining the priority that drives their actions. This is the straightest path to extraordinary results.

Personal productivity is the building block of all business profit. The two are inseparable. A business can't have unproductive people yet magically still have an immensely profitable business. Great businesses are built one productive person at a time. And not surprisingly, the most productive people receive the greatest rewards from their businesses.

13. Live with Purpose

Purpose is the straightest path to power and the ultimate source of personal strength—strength of conviction and strength to persevere. The prescription for extraordinary results is knowing what matters to you and taking daily doses of actions in alignment with it.

14. Live by Priority

Purpose has the power to shape our lives only in direct proportion to the power of the priority we connect it to. Purpose without priority is powerless.

By thinking through the filter of Goal Setting to the Now, you set a future goal and then methodically drill down to what you should be doing right now.

GOAL SETTING to the NOW

SOMEDAY GOAL

What's the ONE Thing I want to do someday?



FIVE-YEAR GOAL

Based on my Someday Goal,
what's the ONE Thing I can do in the next five years?



ONE-YEAR GOAL

Based on my Five-Year Goal,
what's the ONE Thing I can do this year?



MONTHLY GOAL

Based on my One-Year Goal,
what's the ONE Thing I can do this month?



WEEKLY GOAL

Based on my Monthly Goal,
what's the ONE Thing I can do this week?



DAILY GOAL

Based on my Weekly Goal,
what's the ONE Thing I can do today?

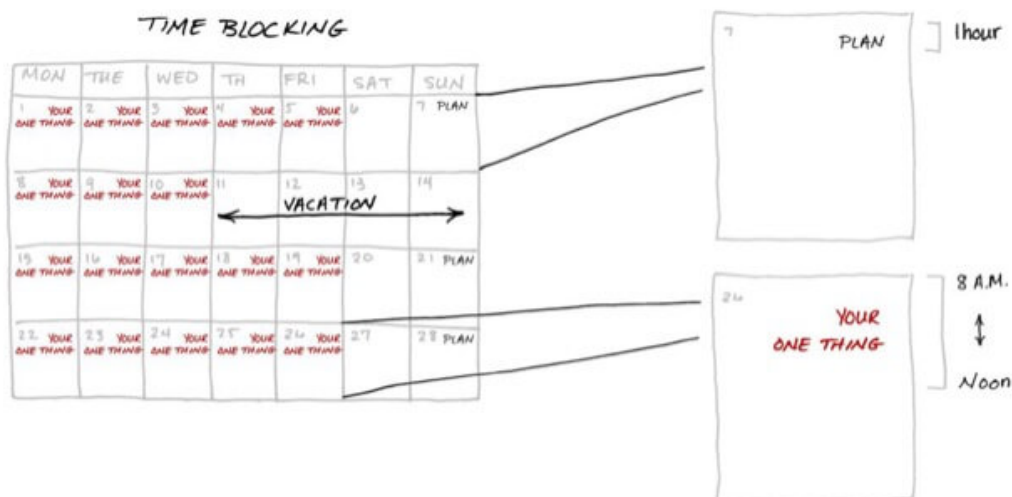


RIGHT NOW

Based on my Daily Goal,
what's the ONE Thing I can do right now?

15. Live for Productivity

Go to your calendar and block off all the time you need to accomplish your ONE Thing. If it's a onetime ONE Thing, block off the appropriate hours and days. If it's a regular thing, block off the appropriate time every day so it becomes a habit. Everything else—other projects, paperwork, e-mail, calls, correspondence, meetings, and all the other stuff— must wait.



Time blocking works on the premise that a calendar records appointments but doesn't care who those appointments are with. So, when you know your ONE Thing, make an appointment with yourself to tackle it. Every day great salespeople generate leads, great programmers program, and great artists paint. Take any profession or any position and fill in the blank. Great success shows up when time is devoted every day to becoming great.

16. The Three Commitments

Achieving extraordinary results through time blocking requires three commitments. First, you must adopt the mindset of someone seeking mastery. Mastery is a commitment to becoming your best, so to achieve extraordinary results you must embrace the extraordinary effort it represents. Second, you must continually seek the very best ways of doing things. Nothing is more futile than doing your best using an approach that can't deliver results equal to your effort. And last, you must be willing to be held accountable to doing everything you can to achieve your ONE Thing. Live these commitments and you give yourself a fighting chance to experience extraordinary

17. The Four Thieves

Clearly, our best intentions can easily be undone. Just as there are the Six Lies that will deceive and mislead you, there are Four Thieves that can hold you up and rob you of your productivity. And since there's no one standing by to protect you, it's up to you to stop these thieves in their tracks.

1. Inability to Say "No"
2. Fear of Chaos
3. Poor Health Habits
4. Environment Doesn't Support Your Goals

18. The Journey

A life worth living might be measured in many ways, but the one way that stands above all others is living a life of no regrets.

Put yourself together, and your world falls into place. When you bring purpose to your life, know your priorities, and achieve high productivity on the priority that matters most every day, your life makes sense and the extraordinary becomes possible.