

AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF

THE ONE THING

THE SURPRISINGLY SIMPLE TRUTH BEHIND EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS

by Gary Keller and Jay Papasan

Who are Gary Keller and Jay Papasan?

While Gary Keller is a real-estate entrepreneur, Jay Papasan is a business executive and writer. Both the authors had joined hands to release another bestseller that dealt with real estate. To know more read reviews of this book: [The One Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth behind Extraordinary Results](#).

Preston and Stig's General Thoughts on the Book

This is one of those books that you don't need to read – but will get better results if you do. Confused? Please let me elaborate. “The One Thing” would likely not provide you with anything that you haven't heard before. The funny thing however, is that we don't apply common sense to everything we do. We do what is fun, easy, and not always the most valuable activity.

We have to use our will power to change the inherent bias in human nature. In the book you'll find that while successful people work hard, it's not what makes them successful. Success and extraordinary results comes from focusing on the one thing that adds the most value. Successful people block out 4 hours a day to focus on the one thing that is most important, and don't even think about all the other things that might appear urgent, but are really just distractions. Although the book is very repetitive, I think you'll find your productivity greatly improve upon the completion of reading this book.

Chapter 1: The One Thing

We all have the same number of hours every day, yet some people tend to achieve more. How is it possible for some people to excel and be better than others? Why is it that people who multitask still find themselves short when it comes to results? So, what's the secret? Well, the answer is very simple: People who narrow their focus on concentrate on ONE single thing – the only thing that matters – are sure to be successful. It's always better to go small and do that one thing and keep chasing it until you succeed, rather than going big by doing loads of things and not succeeding at even one of them.

Chapter 2: The Domino Effect

The power of the domino effect cannot be underestimated. It sure does start small and insignificant but grows so big that it simply can't be stopped. Similarly, if you want to be successful, you need to shoot for the moon. Everything is achievable if one prioritizes things and puts all his energy into attaining the one thing that is most important. This delivers extraordinary results because it creates that domino effect that can pave the road for you. However, life isn't



as simple as toppling dominos and therefore, successful people who are aware of that prioritize things afresh every day to create the effect.

Chapter 3: Success Leaves Clues

The concept of the ONE thing is found in many areas of our life. Take some of the biggest companies for example. While coffee is the one thing for Starbucks, KFC believes it's their secret recipe that's the most important thing. Even when it comes to skill and passion, there's always that one thing you're good at. No matter how bad or unskilled you are at other things, you're surely going to be a master of something that could distinguish you from the others. We all are good at something and the point is to find out what that is.

Chapter 4: Everything Matters Equally

Equality is simply a lie but we've believed that to be the case most of our lives. When you have too many things to do on one given day, you can't treat all your tasks equally because some of them are more important than the others. The first mantra is to go small and not focus on just being busy but instead to be more productive. This will allow an individual to understand what really matters the most and once he figures it out, he needs to go extreme and keep asking himself as to what's most important until there's only one task left to complete. This automatically helps him realize what he needs to do.

Chapter 5: Multitasking

There is a misconception or a lie we often hear that multitaskers perform better. Not only is multitasking a big lie, but it also prevents you from excelling at one single thing. It's best to do one thing and do it well, instead of trying to juggle three tasks and fail at all of them. Multitasking often distracts a person, no matter how hard he tries to focus. Of course, it is natural to get distracted because we all find it difficult to juggle many things at a single time. In addition, this will take a toll on work because it will simply frustrate you to no end.

Chapter 6: A Disciplined Life

There's another misconception that successful people are disciplined and lead a strict life. In fact, discipline here simply means that you work on something regularly until it finally becomes a habit or a routine. It's all about training your mind to do things until it becomes automated. In order to do that, one needs to build up a series of habits, but it should be done one at a time too. As you slowly start building your habits, it's necessary to give each habit some time until it comes automatically to you. Successful people aren't superhuman, but the fact that they build habits to train themselves is what makes them different from the others.

Chapter 7: Will Power Is Always on Will-call

Your willpower is a driving force that will help you get through and accomplish things, but for your will to have its way, the timing is crucially important. Like everything else, we also have a limited amount of willpower and it's in our hands to use it significantly when it's at the maximum. Simply put, your willpower needs to be used on that ONE thing that's most important for you. You can't compromise and divide your willpower to other things that are trivial. In addition, willpower also requires that you're at your full strength, so eat well and ensure that you aren't letting anything slip by.

Chapter 8: A Balanced Life

Many people think that they need to balance their lives more to become successful, but they couldn't be more far from the truth. There's no such thing as a balanced life because it doesn't exist. It's just an idea and needs to be only treated that way. Instead of compartmentalizing your personal and work life, it's best to separate them into two

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unmistakable buckets. In order to counterbalance the work life, an individual needs to figure out that most important thing and stop worrying about everything else. Similarly, when it comes to personal life, one will have to understand that there are several areas that require attention and counterbalance it to lead a good life.

Chapter 9: Big Is Bad

When talking about something big, there's always an element of bad inserted and it has occurred to such an extent that we now believe that big is bad. This is untrue and is perhaps the biggest misconception of all. When thinking about what you need to do next, aim higher and bigger because setting goals above what you really want will help you excel the original goal. In addition, think different and don't restrict yourself to options that are easily available. If you explore, you'll be able to enhance your own creativity. But, in order to make it big, you need to be bold and stop fearing failure because extraordinary results are also built on failures.

Chapter 10: The Focusing Question

In order to achieve something of significance, we must ask questions along the way because great questions create the path to equally great answers. If you ask questions, you'll be able to find that first domino that could propel you to success. The question you ask is the focusing question and is divided into two forms that include the big-picture question and the small-focus question. While the former helps you construct a vision for your life and proceed in the right direction, the latter helps you focus on anything that's most essential to you.

Chapter 11: The Success Habit

Habits are very hard to break once it's established. In order to make that ONE thing a part of your routine, the very first step is to believe it after understanding it. It's also essential to ask the focusing question at every opportunity to make things easier. This inevitably makes it a habit for you if you regularly question yourself. No matter how long it takes, remember to continue doing it. If you find that you're straying away from the focusing question, set up a few reminders so that you don't forget it. Lastly, surround yourself with people who make a positive impact on your life.

Chapter 12: The Path to Great Answers

Now you know that the focusing question is perhaps the most important thing because it helps you understand the one thing necessary to gain success. A focusing question could also be taken as a goal you set for yourself. Once you question about how you can achieve something, you will certainly find the answer. While setting goals, remember that a doable goal could simply help you to check off things from your list, but a difficult goal will make you stretch and get out of your comfort zone.

Chapter 13: Live with Purpose

Happiness is desirable to everyone, but it can't be attained by simply chasing it. In order to find happiness, it's extremely important to find a purpose to your life. The purpose we have may differ, but once you question yourself as to what drives you every day, the answer becomes amazingly clear. The authors call this question as the "Big Why" and it's something that will tell you why you're doing what you're doing. Your purpose doesn't need to be heavy, but it simply needs to be that ONE thing that pushes you to do things.

Chapter 14: Live By Priority

There is a very close relationship between priority and purpose. When you have a purpose, you know what needs to be done and you train yourself to do so without any problem. Priority works pretty much the same way where you make that ONE thing your priority. Sure, there could be many priorities on any given day, but again, it's recommended

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that you question yourself and find the answer. Apart from that, it's also possible to set future goals with priority and uncover the most important goal that will help you.

Chapter 15: Live For Productivity

Productivity is not a word that's used quite often, yet it's something that can deliver extraordinary results. With a clear purpose that is enhanced by priorities, it's very simple to understand what you want to do. Once you're completely clear about it, the only thing you need to do is get to work and deliver. The best solution to make the ONE thing work for you is by analyzing your thoughts constantly.

Chapter 16: The Three Commitments

Extraordinary results can be achieved only when you focus on one thing and strive to become a master of whatever skill you possess. If you commit to becoming the best at something that matters the most, you automatically walk on a path that leads to success. In addition, your mastery should have a purpose because your purpose will drive you to think and open the door to embrace new possibilities and beginnings that may not come if you settle for less. Take responsibility for your actions, whether it's a success or failure.

Chapter 17: The Four Thieves

In this section, the authors talk about how important it is to be productive. However, we are all surrounded by the four thieves that threaten to snatch our productivity away from us and they are:

- Unable to say "No" – If you constantly get requests that take you away from your ONE thing, you need to be able to refuse and focus on your top priority. By saying yes to something, you're refusing something else and such mistakes can make you less productive.
- Fearing chaos – Chasing your ONE thing can throw unavoidable chaos down your path since you're neglecting everything else apart from your main goal. However, your success with your top goal should help you overcome these little obstacles.
- Poor energy levels or health habits – Don't overburden yourself by taking up something more than you can handle. This will reflect on your health and since it's essential to be healthy to achieve your dreams, don't neglect your body.
- Wrong environment – Surround yourself with people who render positive support to whatever project you're pursuing. When your environment is in alignment to the ONE thing you want, everything will become much easier.

Chapter 18: The Journey

It's okay to focus on the ONE thing that's most important to you. In order to live large and lead a full life, your dreams should be converted to actions. Here, the authors provide a simple analogy. Write down your income on a piece of paper and multiply it by any number such as 2, 3, 4 etc. Ask yourself as to whether your current life and actions will allow you to get to that new number in 5 years. If the answer is yes, double that number until it doesn't match; however, later down the lane, if you do match that doubled number, you have successfully lived large! This is about income and money, but this can be applied to other areas of your life too. The point is to focus on that ONE thing and move forward until you own it.

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