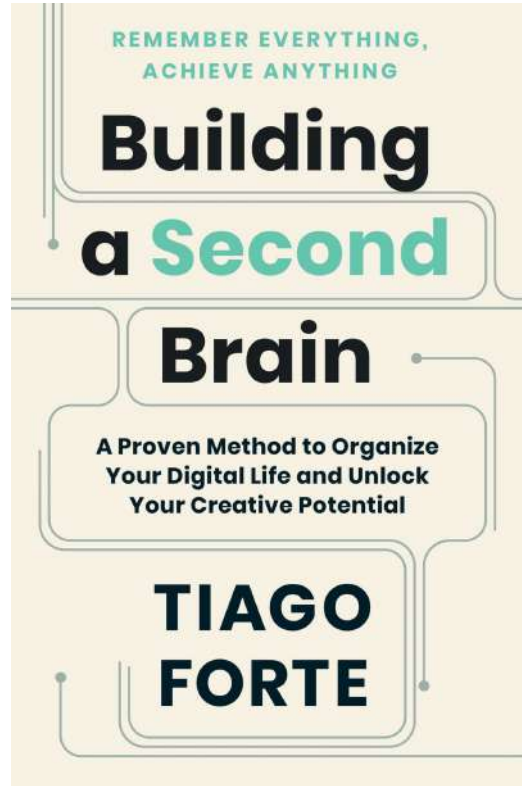




Building A Second Brain

Remember Everything, Achieve Anything



Tiago Forte

Today Topics

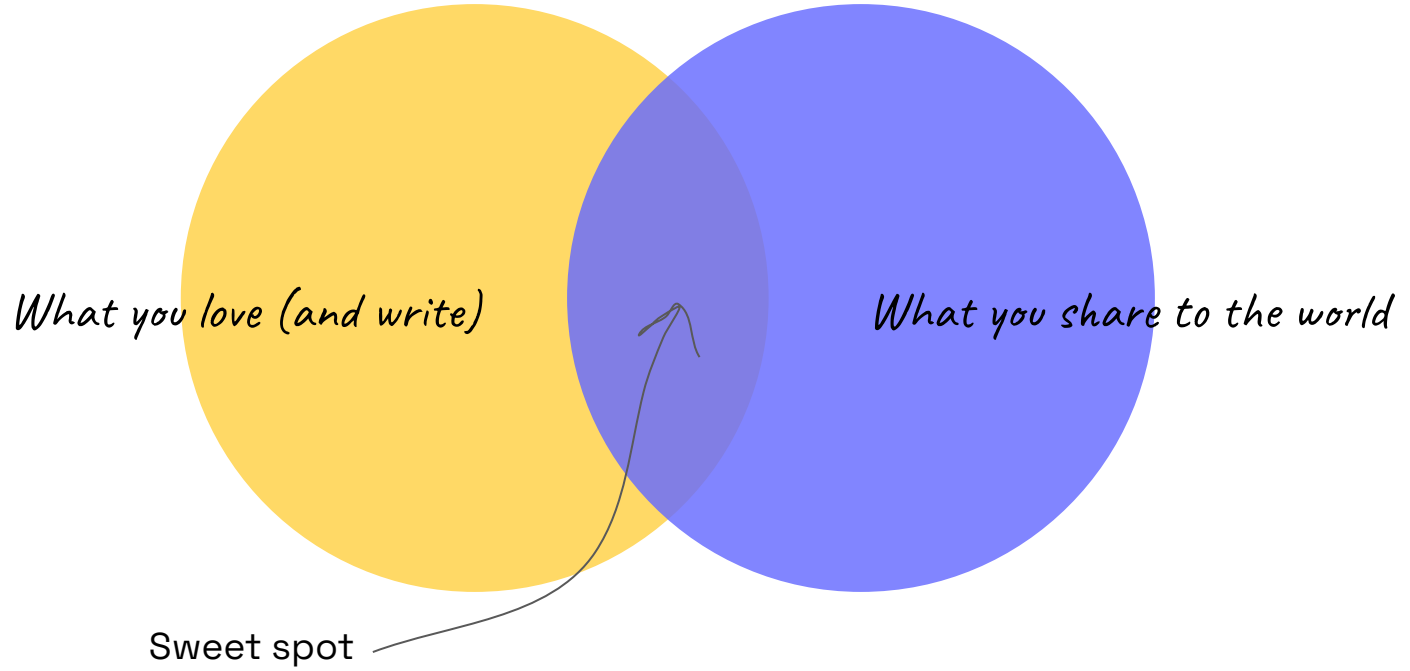
- The Foundation
 - Where It All Started
 - What is a Second Brain?
 - How a Second Brain Works
- The Method
 - Capture
 - Organize
 - Distill
 - Express
- The Shift
 - The Art of Creative Execution
 - The Essential Habits of Digital Organizers
 - The Path to Self-Expression



The power of **writing** things down

+ The power of **sharing**







The Foundation

Understanding what's possible

Getting Things Done
the art of stress-free
productivity
from the New York Times bestselling author
David Allen

An all-new
updated
edition



**You mind is for having
ideas, not holding them.**

David Allen, *Getting Things Done*



**More than half the workforce
today can be considered
“knowledge workers”**

Tiago Forte

26%

Time spent looking for and
consolidating information spread
across a variety of systems

56%

Are able to find the information required to do their jobs



What is Second Brain?

Information is the fundamental building
block of everything you do

Commonplace Book

is a portal through which educated people interacted with the world



Digital Commonplace Book

Is what [Tiago] call a second brain. Think of it as the combination of a study notebook, a personal journal and a sketchbook for new ideas.





Rethinking Notetaking: Notes as Knowledge Building Blocks

Tiago Forte

Note is a piece of content that

- Interpreted through **your lens**
- Curated according to **your taste**
- Translated into **your own words**
- Drawn from **your life experience**
- Stored in **a secure place**



Second Brain

A thinking tool + production system

The Superpower of Second Brain

- Making our ideas concrete
- Revealing new associations between ideas
- Incubating our ideas over time
- Sharpening our unique perspectives

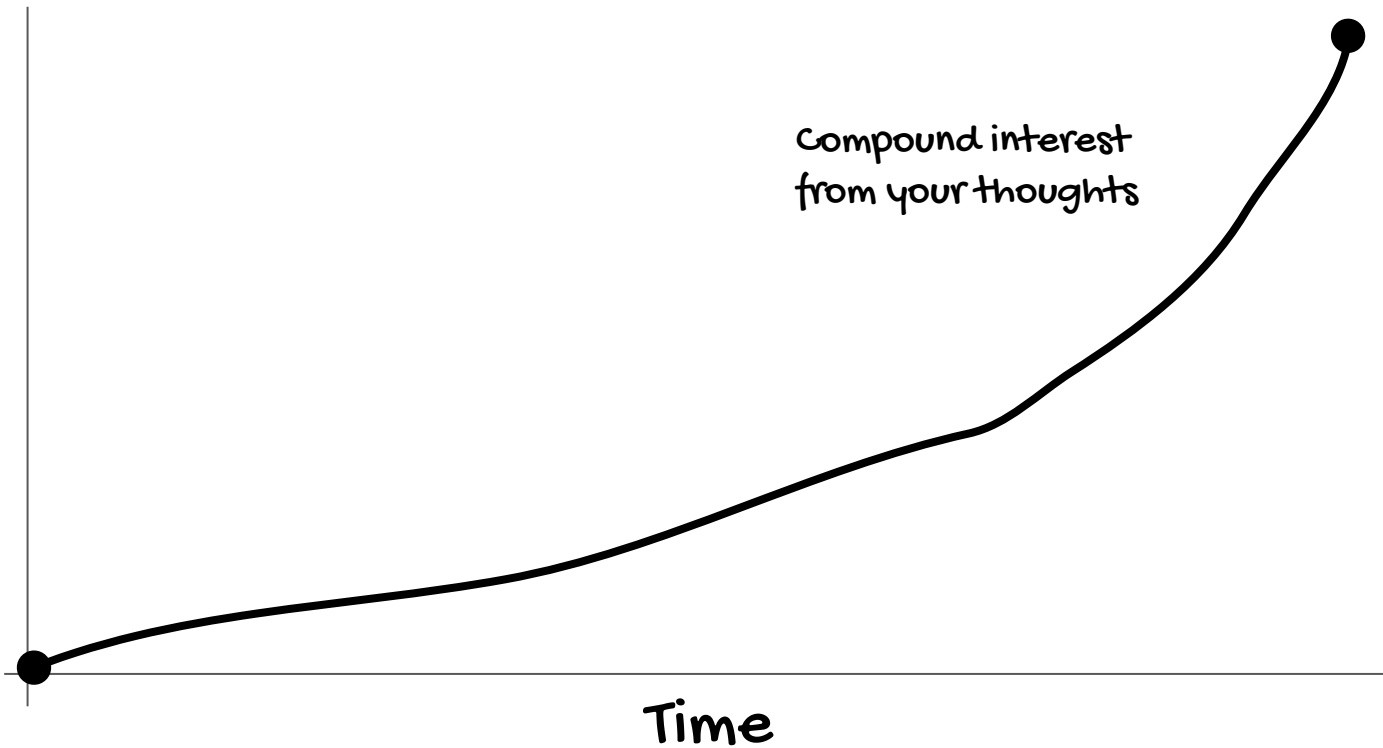
Connect the dots backwards

(Only if you can remember the dots)

Steve Jobs



Knowledge



Compound interest
from your thoughts

Time

The Neural Center of Your Second Brain 🧠



Stages of PKM

Personal Knowledge Management

Remembering



Connecting



Creating

The CODE method

Remembering what matters

Capture

Keep what
resonates



Organize

Save for
actionability



Distill

Find the
essence



Express

Show your
work

A close-up portrait of Taylor Swift with her signature blonde hair and bangs, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing large, ornate earrings and red lipstick. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

"I'm inspired to
write songs at any
time of the day"

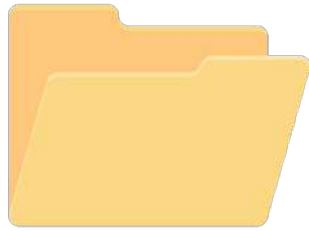
Taylor Swift

vevo

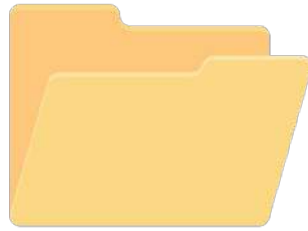


**Choose to consume information
that adds value to our lives
and let go of the rest.**

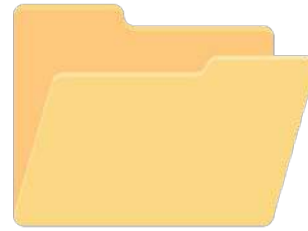
Tiago Forte



Marketing



Philosophy



Data Science



**Organize your note for action,
asking “How is this going to
help me move forward”**

Tiago Forte



You now



"How can I make this as useful as possible for my future self?"



You in the future



**Every note is seed to new
idea. Distill your notes down
to their essence.**

Tiago Forte

SHOW YOUR WORK!

From the
author of the
NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLER
STEAL LIKE AN
ARTIST

10 WAYS TO SHARE YOUR CREATIVITY AND GET DISCOVERED

AUSTIN KLEON





Shift as much of your time and effort as possible from consuming to creating.

Tiago Forte

Inputs



Outputs

Second Brain

A thinking tool + production system





The Method

The four steps of CODE



Capture

What resonates

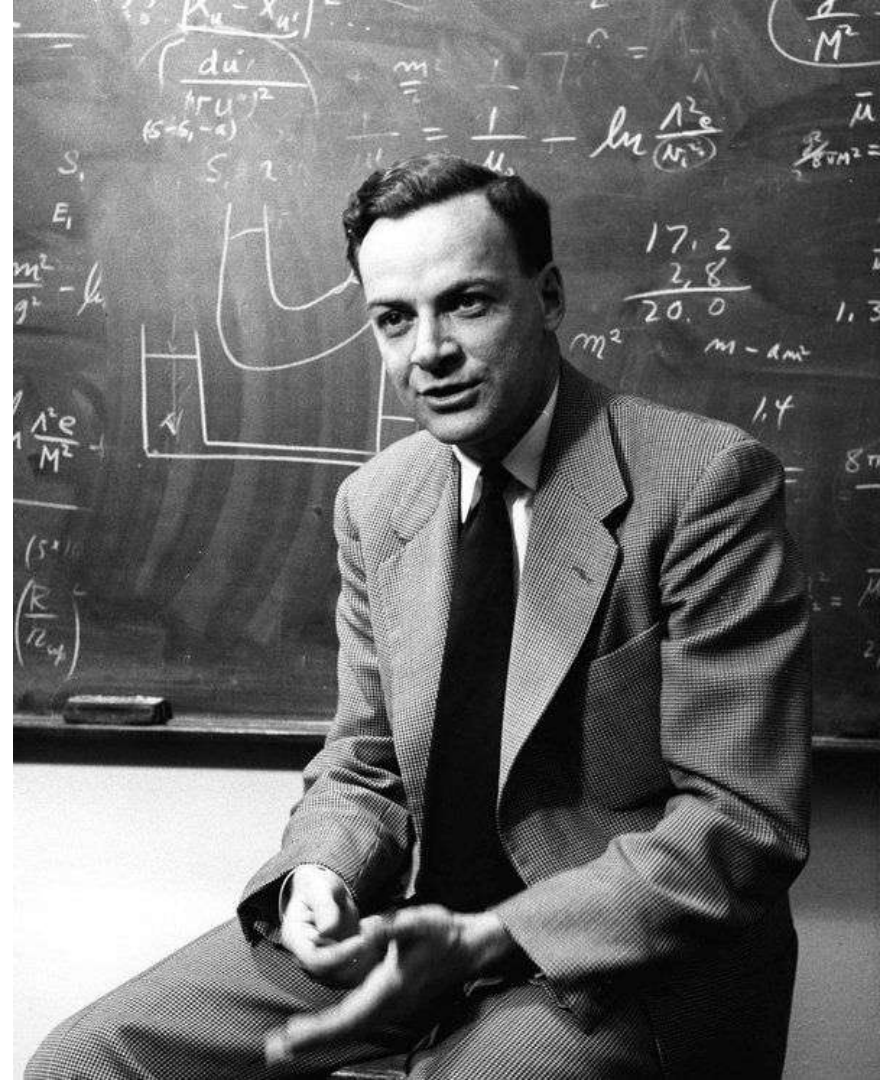
External

- Highlights
- Quotes
- Bookmarks & Favorites
- Voice memos
- Meeting notes
- Images
- Takeaways

Internal

- Stories
- Insights
- Memories
- Reflections
- Musings (Random Ideas)

Richard Feynman



How do I live less in the past and more in the present?

How can I speed up and relax at the same time?

How to not be crazy at work?



Ask Questions

- Does it inspire me?
- Is it useful?
- Is it personal?
- Is it surprising?



**Once our thoughts are outside
our head, we can examine them,
play with them, make them
better.**

Tiago Forte



Tool for Capturing

A read later app



**In any piece of content,
the value is not evenly
distributed.**

Tiago Forte



Use a read later app to save



pocket



Organize

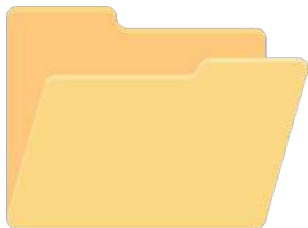
For Action



The Cathedral Effect

Design space for your idea

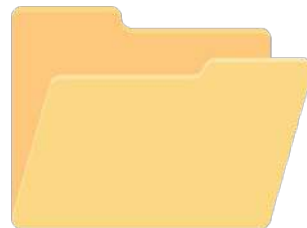
Project



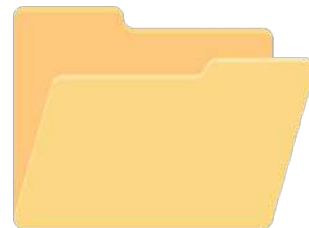
Area



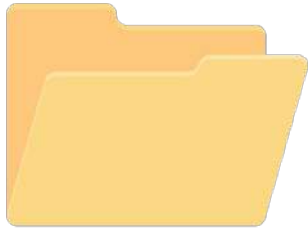
Resource



Archive

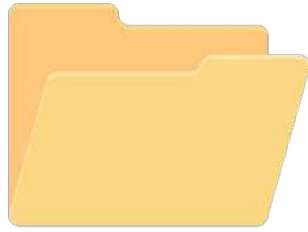


Project



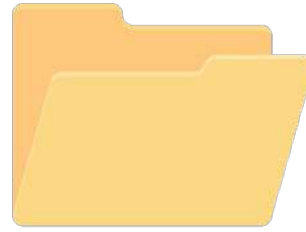
Short-term
efforts in your
work or life

Area



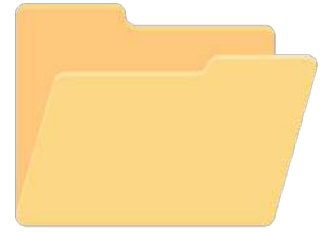
Long-term
responsibilities
you want to
manage over time

Resource



Topics or
interests that
may be useful
in the future

Archive



Inactive items
from the other
three
categories



**You'll always need to use
multiple platforms to move your
projects forward. No single
platform can do everything.**

Tiago Forte

Project	Area
Lose 10 pounds	Health
Publish a book	Writing
Save 3 months of expenses	Finance
Create app mockup	Product Design
Develop contract template	Legal
Run first facebook ads	Marketing

Projects



A Humble Guide to Data
Science



Data Science Bootcamp
Batch 6



Data Analyst 7-Month
Program



Building Home

Areas



BC_R



BC_Python



DA_cheatsheets



Home Design

A man and a woman are smiling and cooking in a kitchen. The woman is on the left, wearing a black top, and the man is on the right, wearing a white t-shirt. They are standing behind a counter with various kitchen items, including a large orange bowl of greens, a red pepper mill, and several lemons. In the background, there are shelves with jars and a large potted plant. A white text box with the title "Organizing Information like a Kitchen" is overlaid on the image.

Organizing Information like a Kitchen

Project

Area

Fridge, you want
to check more
often



Archive

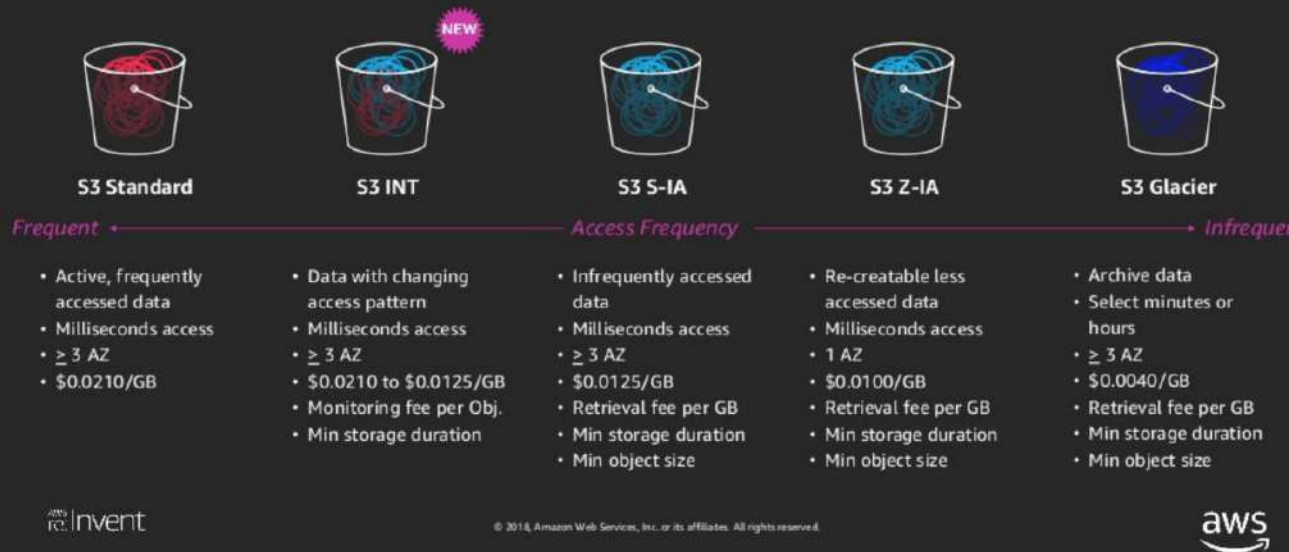
Frozen/ Cold
Storage

Resource

Available to
use, but out of
sight in the
meantime



Your choice of Amazon S3 storage classes



AWS S3 storage classes



Move Quickly, Touch Lightly.

Tiago Forte



Distill

Find the essence

Shorten!

has to
Relate
to what
the DM
wks taken
about on
P. 299
Ask
MARIO.

important!
by 1955

THE GODFATHER • 364

do that. Now here's something I'll trust you with and I don't want you to repeat it even to your father. If everything goes right, the Corleone Family will be completely legitimate in about five years. Some very sticky things have to be done to make that possible. That's when you may become a wealthy widow. Now what do I want you for? Well, because I want you and I want a family. I want kids; it's time. And I don't want those kids to be influenced by me the way I was influenced by my father. I don't mean my father deliberately influenced me. He never did. He never even wanted me in the family business. He wanted me to become a professor or a doctor, something like that. the things went bad and I had to fight for my family. I had to fight because I love and admire my father. I never knew a man more worthy of respect. He was a good husband and a good father and a good friend to people who were not so fortunate in life. There's another side to him, but that's not relevant to me at his son. Anyway I don't want that to happen to my kids. I want them to be influenced by you. I want them to grow up to be All-American kids, real All-American, the whole works. Maybe they or their grandchildren will go into politics. Michael grinned. "Maybe one of them will be President of the United States. Why the hell not? In my history course at Dartmouth we did some background on all the Presidents and they had fathers and grandfathers who were lucky they didn't get hanged. But I'll settle for my kids being doctors or musicians or teachers. They'll never be in the Family business. By the time they are that old I'll be retired anyway. And you and I will be part of some country club crowd, the good simple life of well-to-do Americans. How does that strike you for a proposition?"

"Marvellous," Kay said. "But you sort of slipped over the widow part."

"There's not much chance of that. I just mentioned it to give a fair presentation." Michael patted his nose with the handkerchief. "I can't believe it, I can't believe you're a man like that, you're just not." Kay said. Her face had a bewildered look. "I just don't understand the whole thing, how it could possibly be."

"Well, I'm not giving any more explanations," Michael said gently. "You know, you don't have to think about any of this stuff; it has nothing to do with you really, or with our life together if we get married."

Kay shook her head. "How can you want to marry me, how can you like that you love me, you never say the word but you just love

This scene
really outlines
the rest of
the book:

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

BOOK VII • 365

said you loved your father, you never said you loved me, how could you if you distrust me so much you can't tell me about the most important things in your life? How can you want to have a wife you can't trust? Your father trusts you more; I know that."

"Sure," Michael said. "But that doesn't mean he tells her everything. And, you know, he has reason to trust her. Not because they got married and she's his wife. But she bore him four children in times when it was not that safe to bear children. She nursed and guarded him when people shot him. She believed in him. He was always her first loyalty for forty years. After you do that maybe I'll tell you a few things you really don't want to hear."

"Will we have to live in the mall?" Kay asked.

Michael nodded. "We'll have our own house, it won't be so bad. My parents don't meddle. Our lives will be our own. But until everything gets straightened out, I have to live in the mall."

"Because it's dangerous for you to live outside it," Kay said.

For the first time since she had come to know him, she saw Michael angry. It was cold cutting anger that was not stimulated in any gesture or change in voice. It was a coldness that came off him like death and Kay knew that it was this coldness that would make her decide not to marry him if she so decided.

"This sounds like all just damn trash. In the movies and the newspapers," Michael said. "You've got the wrong idea of my father and the Corleone Family. I'll make a final explanation and this one will be really final. My father is a businessman trying to provide for his wife and children and those friends he might need someday in a time of trouble. He doesn't accept the rules of the society we live in because those rules would have condemned him to a life not suitable to a man like himself, a man of extraordinary force and character. What you have to understand is that he considers himself the equal of all those great men like Presidents and Prime Ministers and Supreme Court Justices and Generals of the States. He refuses to accept their way over his own. He refuses to live by rules set up by others, rules which condemn him to a defeated life, but his ultimate aim is to enter that society with a certain power, since society doesn't really protect its members even so our laws raise their individual voices. In the meantime he operates on a code of ethics he considers superior to the legal structures of society."

Kay was looking at him incredulously. "But that's ridiculous," she said. "What if everybody felt the same way? How could society ever

they
will
live in
THE MALL.

A
THE
Colours

THE
ENTIRE
CICCO
OF
THE
BOOK



Francis Coppola's Notebook (Godfather)



**Distillation is at the very
heart of all effective
communication.**

Tiago Forte

Highlight 2.0

Progressive Summarization

Capture
Notes



Bold
Passages



Highlight
Passages



Executive
Summary

Highlighting 2.0: The Progressive Summarization Technique

Progressive Summarization is the technique I teach to distill notes down to their most important points. It is a simple process of taking the raw notes you've captured and organized and distilling them into usable material that can directly inform a current project. Progressive Summarization takes advantage of a tool and a habit that we are all intimately familiar with—highlighting—while leveraging the unique capabilities of technology to make those highlights far more useful than anything you did in school. The technique is simple: you highlight the main points of a note, and then highlight the main points of those highlights, and so on, distilling the essence of a note in several “layers.” Each of these layers uses a different kind of formatting so you can easily tell them apart.

Forte, Tiago. Building a Second Brain (p. 120). Profile. Kindle Edition.

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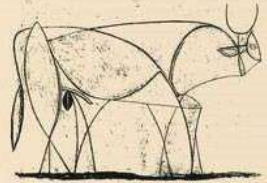
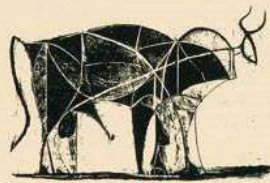
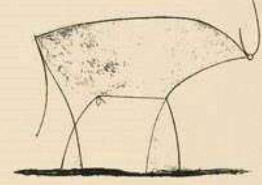
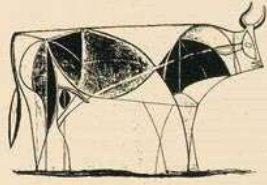
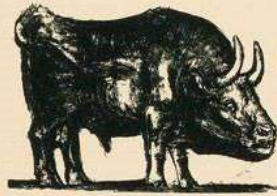
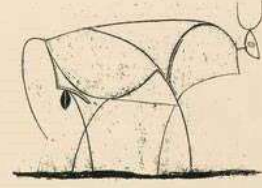
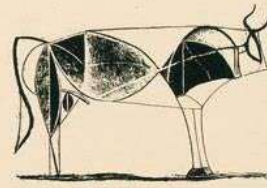
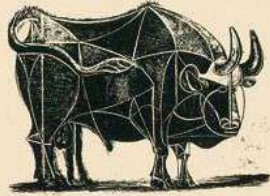
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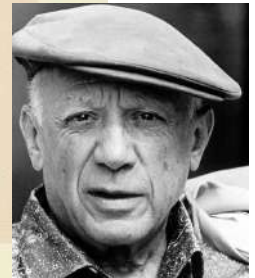
Summary:

- Progressive summarization distill information into layers
 - First, bold text
 - Then, highlight
 - Then, write a summary
- Important points can be used in our current projects



Picasso

Pablo Picasso





**In making decision about what
to keep, we inevitably have
to make decisions about what
to throw away.**

Tiago Forte

Keep your future self in mind.

The effort we put into progressive summarization is meant for one purpose: to make it easy to find and work with our notes in the future.





Express

Show your work

Intermediate Packets:

The Power of Thinking Small

- Modules
- Betas
- Sketches
- Pilots
- Prototypes
- Concept Cars
- Demos

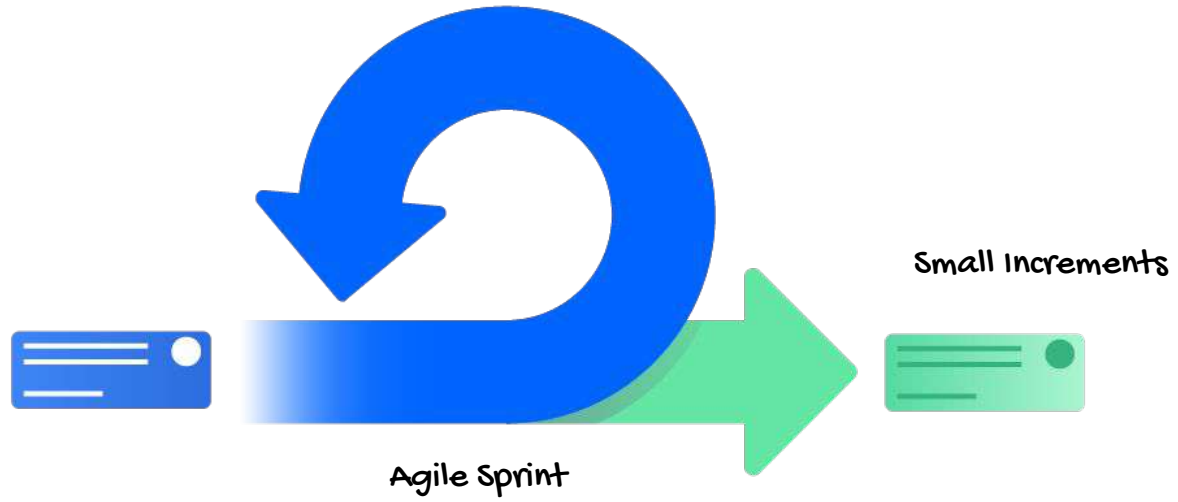


Intermediate packets are small pieces of work-in-process. They are concrete, individual building blocks that make up your work.



**By thinking small, you can
focus on creating just one IP
each time you sit down to
work.**

Tiago Forte





Over time your ability to quickly tap these creative assets and combine them into something new will make all the difference.

Tiago Forte

Reuse Your Past Work

1. Search
2. Browse
3. Tag
4. Serendipity (Chance)

Three Stages of Expressing

Remembering  Connecting  Creating

We only know what we make.





**You have to believe that the
smallest idea has the
potential to change people's
lives.**

Tiago Forte

The CODE method

Remembering what matters

Capture

Keep what
resonates



Organize

Save for
actionability



Distill

Find the
essence



Express

Show your
work



**CODE method is designed to
help your human brain do what
it does best. Imagine.
Invent. Innovate. Create.**

Tiago Forte



Archetypes

Know your trait, choose your second brain

Pick a Notes App: Your Notetaking Style (Part 1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3dDVtJ2sec>



4 Note-Taking Archetypes

- Architect
- Gardener
- Librarian
- (Student)



Librarian



Gardener



Architect





Obsidian

Learn How to Markdown

Markdown for Everyone

<https://www.markdownguide.org/basic-syntax/>

H1

H2

H3

H4

H5

H6

- item1

- item2

****bold text****

italic text

> Block Quote

[**link**](url)

![alt text](**image** url)

```code block```

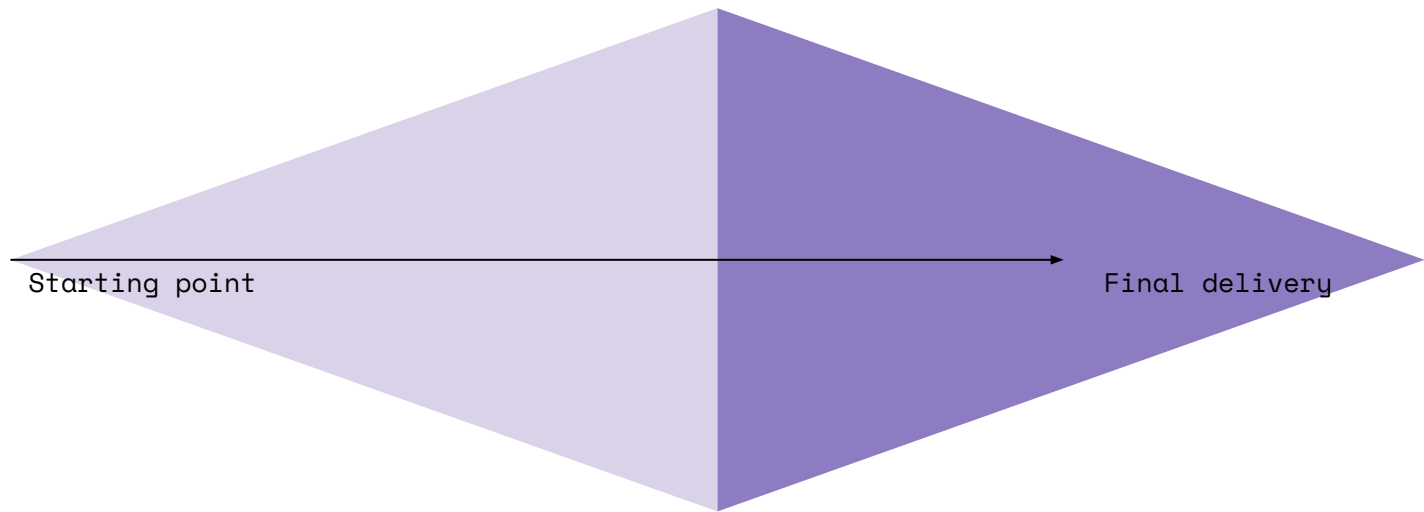


# The Shift

Making Things Happen

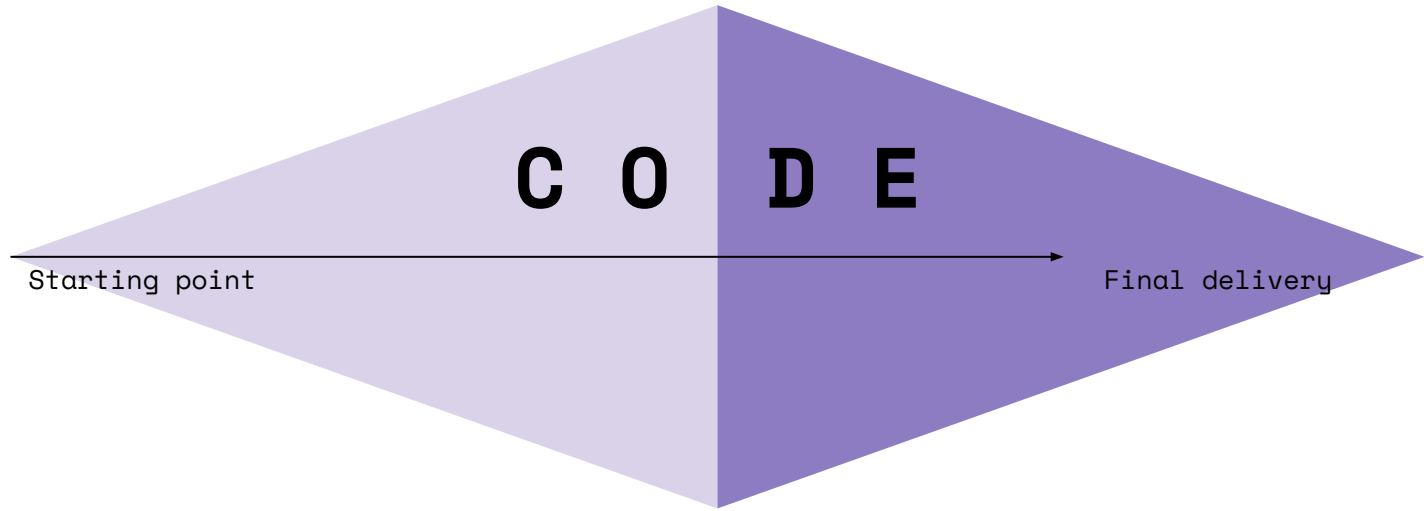
# Divergence

# Convergence



# Divergence

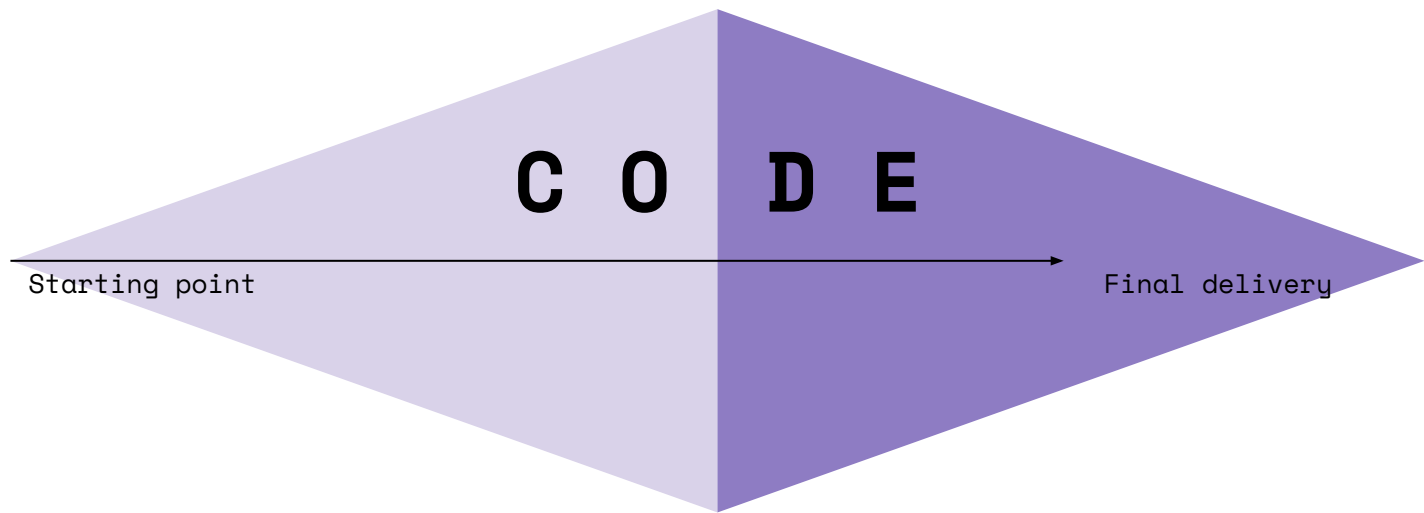
# Convergence

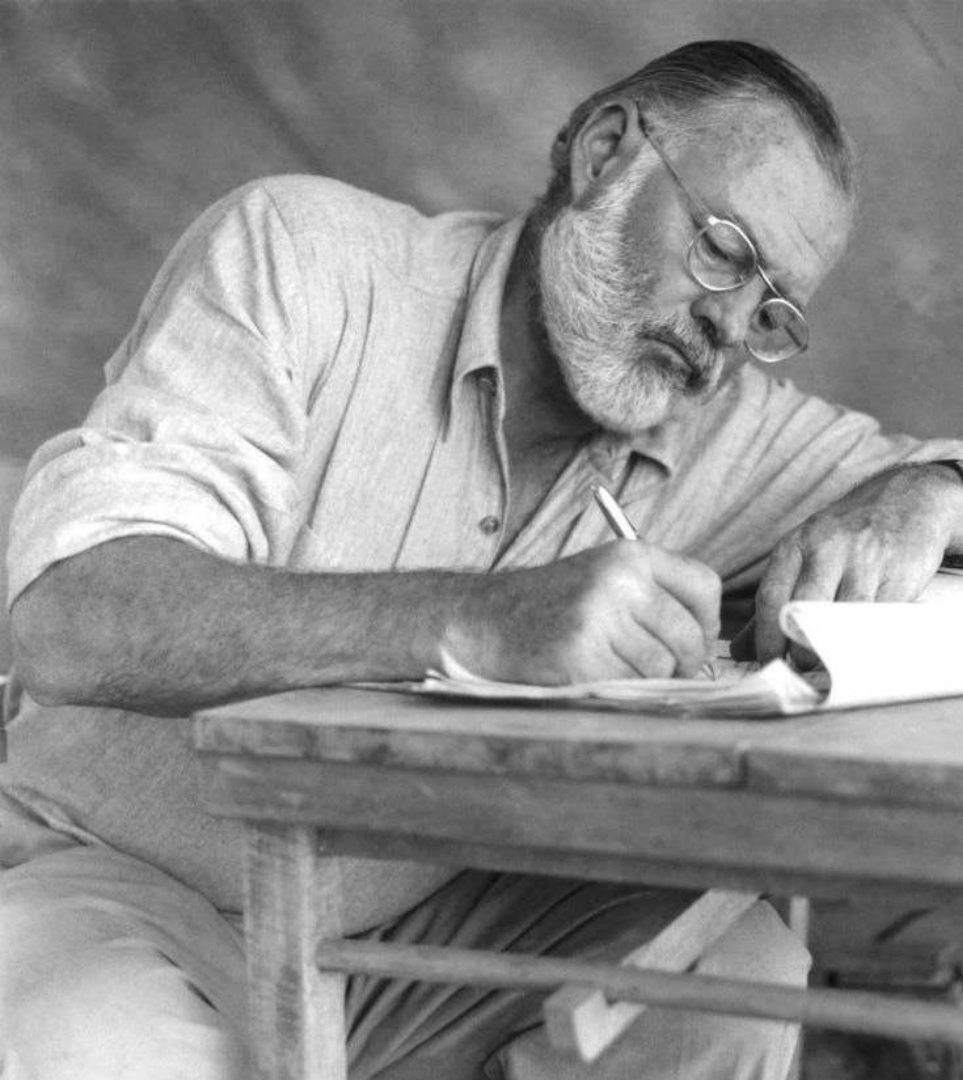




Explore

Exploit





# Hemingway Bridge

Ernest Hemingway

1. Write down ideas for next steps
2. Write down the current status
3. Write down any details you have in mind that are likely to be forgotten once you step away
4. Write out your intention for the next work session

# Dial Down the Scope

Ship Something Small and Concrete



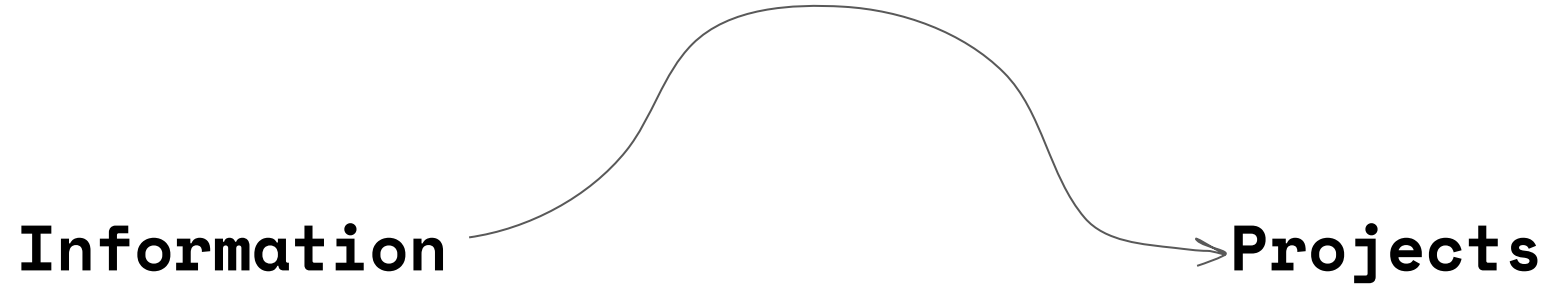
~~80-hour weeks  
Packed schedules  
Super busy  
Endless meetings  
Overflowing inbox  
Unrealistic deadlines  
Can't sleep  
Sunday-afternoon emails  
No time to think  
Stuck at the office  
All-nighters  
Chats blowing up~~

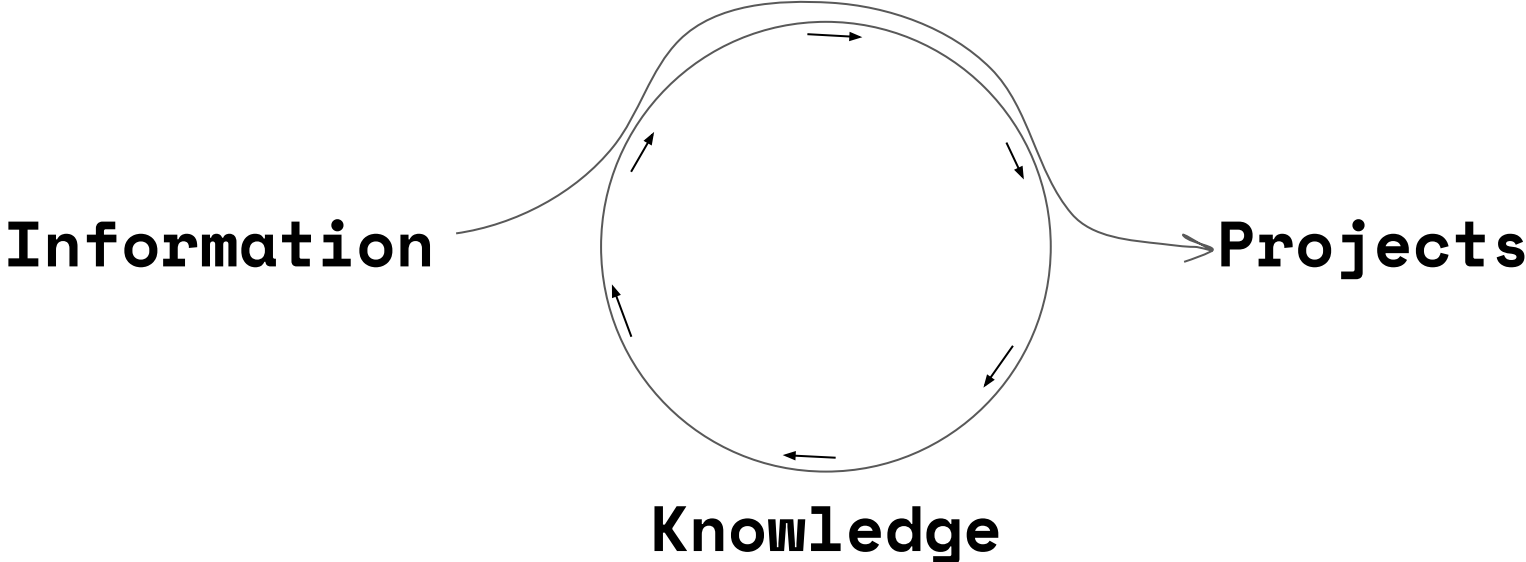
IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE  
CRAZY AT WORK

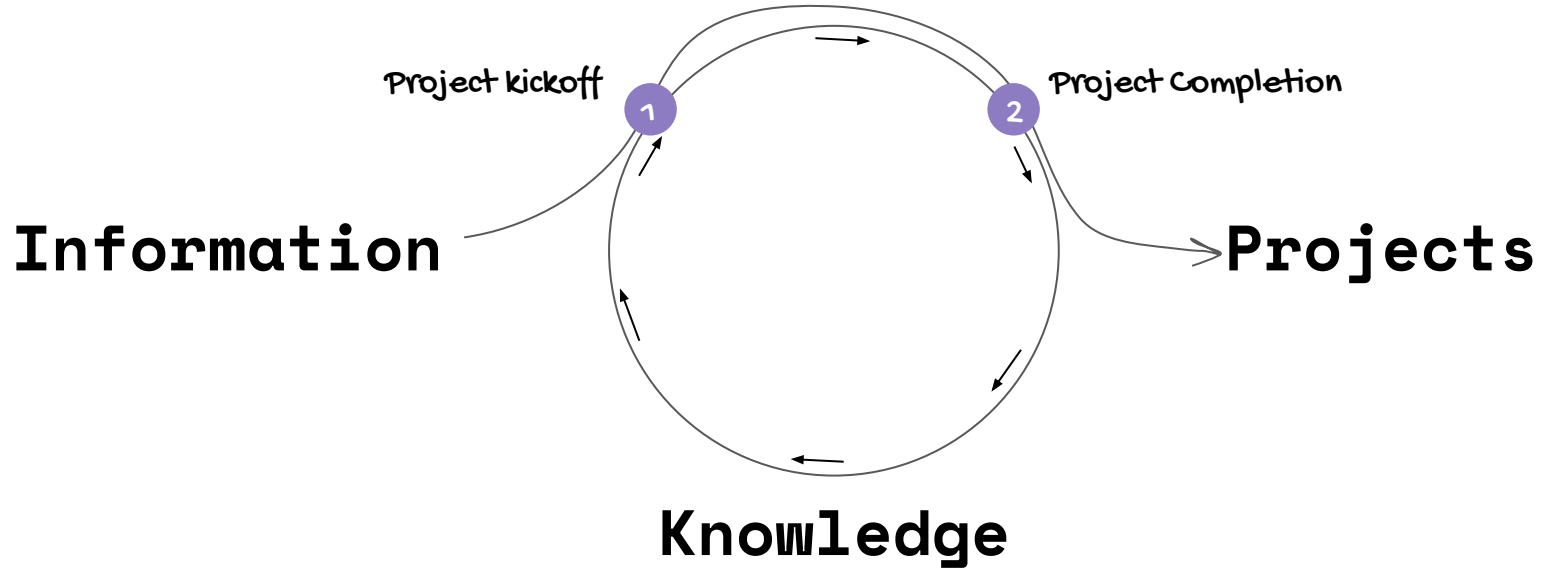


# Habits

The Essential Habits for Digital Organizers







# A Weekly Review

1. Clear email inbox
2. Clear computer desktop
3. Clear notes inbox/ read later
4. Check calendar
5. Choose tasks for next week



# Bullet Journal Method [BUJO]

Ryder Carroll



# A Monthly Review

1. Review and update goals
2. Review and update project list
3. Review areas of responsibility
4. Review someday/ maybe tasks
5. Reprioritize tasks



**A perfect system you  
don't use isn't perfect.**

Tiago Forte



# The Path

To Self-Expression



**The quality of our thinking  
define our quality of life.**

Tiago Forte

- Giving your first brain a **new job**
- The shift from scarcity to **abundance**
- The shift from obligation to **service**
- The shift from consuming to **creating**
- Our fundamental need for **self-expression**



**The purpose of knowledge is  
to be shared.**

Tiago Forte



# The Takeaway

Remember what matters





**Input**



**Processing**



**Output**

Are you processing it and then turning it into outputs of some sort?



1. Decide what you want to capture
2. Choose your notes app
3. Choose a capture tool
4. Get set up with PARA
5. Get inspired by identifying your 12 favorite problems
6. Automatically capture your ebook highlights
7. Practice progressive summarization
8. Experiment with just one intermediate package
9. Make progress on one deliverable
10. Schedule a weekly review
11. Assess your notetaking proficiency
12. Join the KPM community



# Your Turn

The courage to share



# Building A Second Brain

Remember Everything, Achieve Anything