

# Eat That Frog Summary – Brian Tracy

7 MINUTE READ

[Eat That Frog!](#) (2007)

21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time

by [Brian Tracy](#)

Eat That Frog! is a punchy, concise guide to identifying what matters, setting powerful goals and then getting to work on them right away - by productivity and self-development legend, Brian Tracy. ([128 pages](#))

[Paperback](#) | [Ebook](#) | [Audiobook](#)

**Note:** This **Eat That Frog! summary** is part of an ongoing project to summarise the [Best Productivity Books](#) and [Best Self Help Books](#) of all time.

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# Eat That Frog! Review

I'm a huge fan of [Brian Tracy](#). His advice on productivity goes deep on "What" and "How". His writing is motivational and accessible. His messages are clear and consistent.

In fact, neither his message nor his wording has changed much in the 10 years since I first read his book [Goals!](#). But not much needs to. His empowering formulas for personal and professional productivity are simple, practical and effective.

That said, I'm not sure about the structure of this version of those tips. There's a good deal of repetition. Many points seem to fit within a single theme or add detail to each other. The "21 Great Ways" ends up feeling more catchy than practical. As a result, I've restructured the content into a simple six-step plan below.

Nevertheless, Brian's original does chant a powerfully motivational mantra of planning, prioritisation and action. I am indebted to him for giving me some solid advice on productivity and sales 10 years ago at a point in my life when I needed it most.

**My advice:** Read the *Eat That Frog* summary below. And if you like it, skip [Eat That Frog](#) and read the slightly meatier, [Goals!](#)

It will definitely change the way you work.

It might just change your life.

## Eat That Frog! Summary

**Personal productivity is about taking back control of your time.**

- There will always be too much to do; and
- Lack of time is actually lack of priorities; which is why
- The key to reclaiming time is proper time management.

**Taking control of your time lets you focus on what counts: your relationships with others.**

- [The majority of your happiness is defined by your relationships.](#)
- The goal of time management is ultimately to improve those relationships.
- *Quantity* of time is what matters at home.
- *Quality* of time is what matters at work.

**Brian suggests 6-simple steps to work more often on what matters most...**

1. Decide on your Goals;
2. Plan your Goals;
3. Plan your Time;
4. Set Yourself Up for Success;
5. Work Single-Mindedly on Your Most Important Task; and
6. Repeat the Process Regularly.

Let's look at each in more detail...

## **Step 1. Decide on your Goals**

**Visualise clearly what you would like each area of life to look like in 5, 10 and 15 years.**

- [Business/Career](#);
- [Family/Relationship](#);
- [Financial](#);
- [Health](#);

- [Professional Development](#); and
- Social/Community.

**Now, take 30 seconds for each area (+ Problems / Concerns) to write your top 3 current goals:**

- 30 seconds is as good as 3 hours; and
- Write as if you had already accomplished each goal.
  - On paper;
  - In the present tense;
  - With a positive voice; and
  - In the first person.

**Identify the goal in each area that will have the greatest positive impact on your life.**

**Tips for Professional Development:**

1. Identify the 5 – 7 results areas for which you are currently entirely responsible;  
*Discuss and syndicate these with your boss, colleagues and direct reports.*
2. Grade yourself (1 – 10) in each of those areas; and
3. Make your weakest skill the focus of your professional development.  
*This major cause of procrastination sets the height at which you can use all your other skills.*

**Example results areas:**

[Management](#):

- Planning
- Organising
- Staffing
- Delegating

- Supervising
- Measuring
- Reporting

### Sales:

- Prospecting;
- Building rapport and trust;
- Identifying needs;
- Presenting persuasively;
- Answering objections;
- Closing;
- Getting resales and referrals;

## **Step 2: Plan your Goals**

*Efficiency is doing the thing right. Effectiveness is doing the right thing.*

**Write a list of everything you'll need to achieve for each of your most impactful goals.**

- Next actions;
- Barriers;
- Limiting factors.;
- Personal capabilities;
- Resources; and
- Other people.

### **Now invert:**

- Ask yourself why the goal isn't already complete; and
- Start with the end in mind and work backwards.

**Prioritise with [Pareto's 80/20 principle](#).**

- What 20% of the tasks will contribute 80% of the results?
- Solving which 20% of the barriers will unlock 80% of the progress?

### **Prioritise the list with the ABCDE technique:**

- **A – Must:** Major consequences for the goal if (not) completed;  
*Prioritise among A tasks – A1, A2, A3 etc...*
- **B – Should:** Some consequences;
- **C – Nice:** No consequences;
- **D – Delegate:** Anything not “only you”; and
- **E – Eliminate:** Anything no longer important.

### **Organise the list into a plan:**

- By priority; and
- By sequence.

### **Set deadlines:**

- Set a main deadline;
- Set sub-deadlines if necessary;
- Make the deadlines aggressive (What if you only had one day?); and  
*Creates urgency. Triggers [eustress](#). Defuses [Parkinson's law](#).*
- Add +20% to your timeline when communicating your plan with others to account for unexpected delays/diversions.

### **Tips for Business/Career:**

1. Write a list of every activity you do in a week/month;
2. Identify which one activity contributes the most value;
3. Now work out the second and third most value contributing activities;
4. These activities are your priority. Resolve to downsize, delegate or eliminate everything else; and
5. Syndicate this focus and plan with your boss, co-workers and direct reports.

## Step 3: Plan your Time

### Plan in advance and work from lists.

- Write everything down;
- Add every new thing to the list before acting;
- Move items from a master list > monthly > weekly > daily lists; and
- Do this before the start of each period.

### Prioritise your lists:

- With the 80/20 principle; and
- With the ABCDE technique.

## Step 4: Set Yourself Up for Success

*Create the time, space, energy and capabilities to work on your most important tasks.*

### Eliminate anything that fails the test of **"Zero-Based Thinking"**.

*"If I were not doing this already, knowing what I now know, would I start doing it again today?"*

### Create large chunks of time:

- Block out large chunks of your calendar for uninterrupted work; and
- Wake up early and work from home.

### Prepare everything you need in advance:

- Clear everything away not related to the task at hand.
- Gather everything you need for the task within physical reach.
- Set up your work area so it is conducive to working long periods.

Make it:

- Clean;

- Attractive;
- Organised; and
- Comfortable (especially chair).

### **Eliminate distractions.**

*Work all the time you work.*

*Every wasted minute is one not spent with friends/family or on a more important task.*

- **Eliminate / delegate 80% of email:**
  - Prepare canned responses to FAQs;
  - Train and delegate your email triage; and
  - Batch your emailing as infrequently as possible.
- **Turn off all electronics for at least:**
  - One hour each AM and PM; and
  - One full day per week.

### **Learn continuously.**

*Everyone who is good at something was once bad at it.*

*You can learn anything by simply learning to replicate what someone else has done.*

- Read for one hour every day in your field;
- Listen to audiobooks whilst you drive/travel; and
- Attend as many seminars and trainings as you can.

### **Maximise your energy.**

- **Eat as if you were a pro athlete.**
  - **Breakfast:** High protein, low fat, low carbohydrate;
  - **Lunch:** [Salad with white meat \(chicken/fish\)](#);
  - Avoid sugar, white flour and salt; and
  - Say no to pastries, desserts, soft drinks and candy bars.
- **Exercise regularly:**



- At least 200 mins per week (~30 mins per day); and
- Schedule sessions in like business meetings.
- **Get enough rest:**
  - Working >8h a day provides diminishing returns;
  - [Get to sleep](#) by 10 P.M.;
  - Take at least one full day off per week; and
  - Take regular vacations.

### **Become an optimist:**

*It's not what happens to you but the way you interpret them that determines how you feel.*

- Look for the good in every situation.
- Seek the valuable lesson in every setback or difficulty.
- Look for solutions to every problem (solution orientation).
- Look forward rather than backwards (goal orientation).
- Refuse to criticise, complain or condemn.

## **Step 5: Work Single-Mindedly on your Most Important Task**

***Eat that Frog! Each day, work on your hardest and most important task:***

- Before anything else.
- Single-mindedly (no multi-tasking) until it is complete.  
*Switching has a high cost of momentum and energy.*

### **[Overcome procrastination](#) and generate momentum:**

- **Lack of Planning:** Break the goal down into smaller steps.
- **Lack of Skill:** Expand your capabilities.
- **Lack of Will:**
  - Do just one item on your list. Do anything!

- Shift to a process goal (do just 10 minutes).
- [Practise discipline.](#)

## **Don't be afraid to fail.**

- [Trust the process](#);
- Remember: *"There is no such thing as failure only feedback"*
- Test, experiment, make it a game, have fun!

## **Step 6: Repeat the Process Regularly**

### **[Develop the habit](#) of success.**

For more on habit formation see [The Power of Habit summary.](#)

- Constantly review the activities you are engaged in.
- Constantly identify whether these are the most important things you could be working on.
- Develop a fast tempo and a sense of urgency.
- Work all the time you work.

## **Practice asking yourself constantly how to maximise your effectiveness.**

- What can I start?
- What can I stop?
- What can I do more of?
- What can I do less of?

**Never forget that all of this is a means an end: spending more time with the people you love.**

## **Eat That Frog! Contents**

***Eat That Frog!* has 21 main chapters...**

## Introduction: Eat That Frog

1. Set the Table
2. Plan Every Day in Advance
3. Apply the 80/20 Rule to Everything
4. Consider the Consequences
5. Practice Creative Procrastination
6. Use the ABCDE Method Continually
7. Focus on Key Result Areas
8. Apply the Law of Three
9. Prepare Thoroughly Before You Begin
10. Take It One Oil Barrel at a Time
11. Upgrade Your Key Skills
12. Leverage Your Special Talents
13. Identify Your Key Constraints
14. Put the Pressure on Yourself
15. Maximize Your Personal Powers
16. Motivate Yourself into Action
17. Get Out of the Technological Time Sinks
18. Slice and Dice the Task
19. Create Large Chunks of Time
20. Develop a Sense of Urgency
21. Single Handle Every Task

Conclusion: Putting It All Together

## Best Eat That Frog! Quotes

These Eat That Frog! quotes come from **The Art of Living**'s ever-growing central library of thoughts, anecdotes, notes, and [inspirational quotes](#).

***"No matter how many personal productivity techniques you master, there will always be more to do than you can ever accomplish in the time you have available to you, no matter how much it is."***

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"The ability to concentrate single-mindedly on your most important task, to do it well and to finish it completely, is the key to great success, achievement, respect, status, and happiness in life."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"Your success in life and work will be determined by the kinds of habits that you develop over time. The habit of setting priorities, overcoming procrastination, and getting on with your most important task is a mental and physical skill."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"All improvements in your outer life begin with improvements on the inside, in your mental pictures."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"One of the very worst uses of time is to do something very well that need not be done at all."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"Motivation requires motive."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"There is never enough time to do everything, but there is always enough time to do the most important thing."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"You can use three questions on a regular basis to keep yourself focussed on completing your most important tasks on schedule. The**

**first question is, 'What are my highest value activities?' The second question is, 'What can I and only I do that if done well will make a real difference?' The third question is, 'What is the most valuable use of my time right now?'"**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"Fully 85 percent of your happiness in life will come from happy relationships with other people, especially those closest to you, as well as the members of your family. The critical determinant of the quality of your relationships is the amount of time that you spend face-to-face with the people you love, and who love you in return."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"It is the quality of time at work that counts and the quantity of time at home that matters."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"Get it 80 percent right and then correct it later. Run it up the flagpole and see if anyone salutes. Don't expect perfection the first time or even the first few times. Be prepared to fail over and over before you get it right."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"Persons with comparatively moderate powers will accomplish much, if they apply themselves wholly and indefatigably to one thing at a time."**

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

**"Feed yourself as you would feed a world-class athlete before a competition because, in many respects, that's what you are before"**

***starting work each day."***

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

***"It is not what happens to you but the way that you interpret things that are happening to you that determines how you feel."***

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

***"It turns out that optimists have four special behaviors, all learned through practice and repetition. First, optimists look for the good in every situation. Second, optimists always seek the valuable lesson in every setback or difficulty. Third, optimists always look for the solution to every problem. Fourth, optimists think and talk continually about their goals."***

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

***"have several friends who have become best-selling authors by simply resolving to write one page or even one paragraph per day until the book was completed."***

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

***"One of the best work habits of all is to get up early and work at home in the morning for several hours. You can get three times as much work done at home without interruptions as you ever could in a busy office where you are surrounded by people and bombarded by phone calls."***

- [Brian Tracy](#), Eat That Frog!

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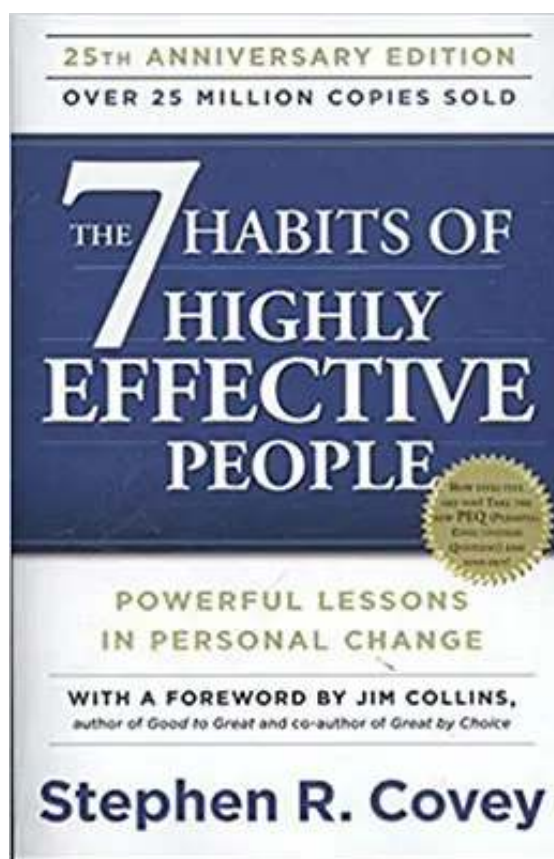
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## Read More: 5 Books Like Eat That Frog!

**Enjoyed this Eat That Frog! summary?** You might enjoy the rest of the books on these lists of the [Best Productivity Books](#) and [Best Self Help Books](#) of all time.

And in the meantime...

**Here are 5 top books like Eat That Frog!...**



1. [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) - [Stephen R. Covey](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

Powerful Lessons in Personal Change

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People is a perennial masterpiece on leading a happy, productive and purposeful existence and an unmissable stop for any pilgrim of personal improvement - by educator, author and speaker, Stephen Covey.

Published 1989 // 372 pages // Rated 4.1 over 624,500 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

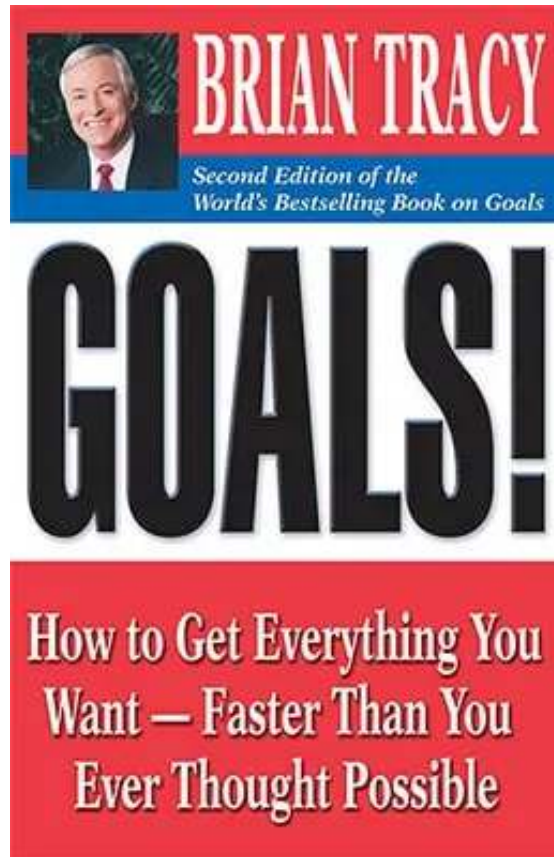


## 2. [First Things First](#) - [Stephen R. Covey](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

First Things First is an action-oriented time-management manual, filled with frameworks and exercises to help you do more of what matters and less of what doesn't - by the author of the #1 book on this list, Stephen Covey.

Published 1993 // 384 pages // Rated 4.1 over 40,400 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



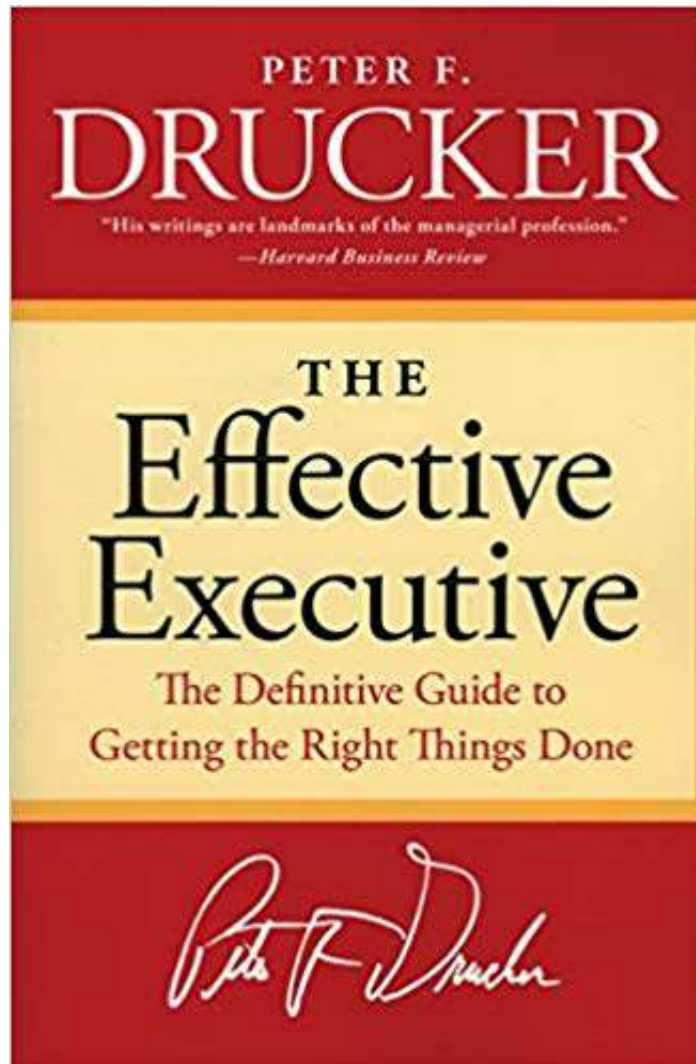


### 3. [Goals!](#) - [Brian Tracy](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

How to Get Everything You Want Faster Than You Ever Thought Possible

Goals! was the first book I ever read on productivity and probably the most readable and complete guide to goal-setting ever written - by sales legend and time-management master, Brian Tracy.

Published 1989 // 291 pages // Rated 4.2 over 14,200 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

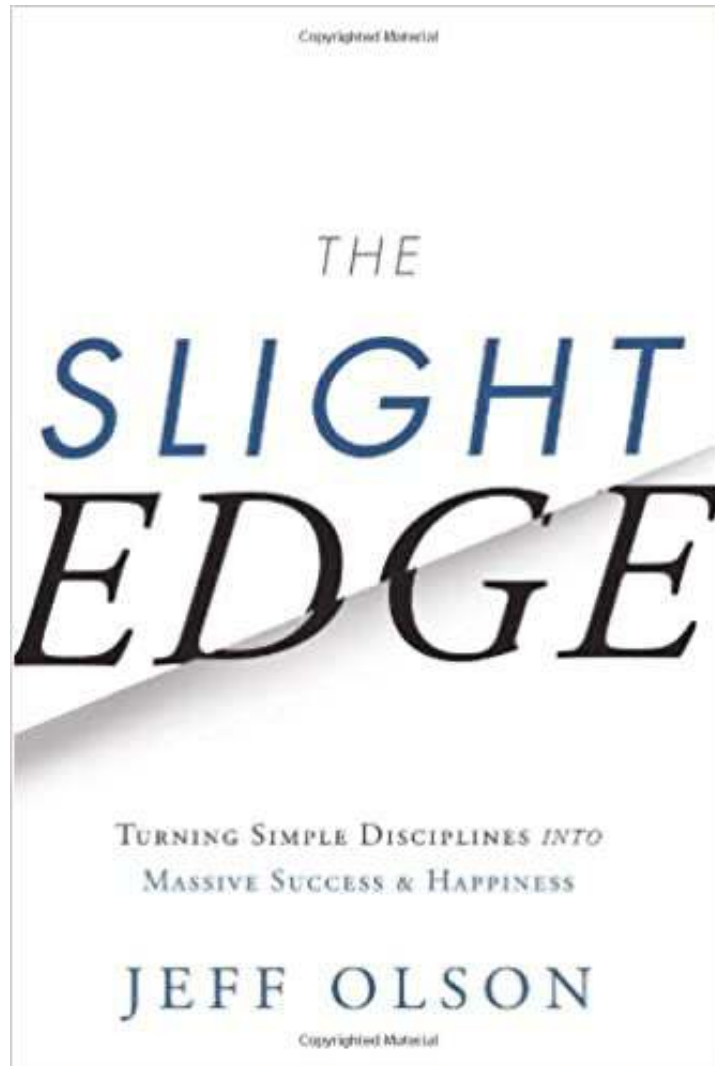


#### 4. [The Effective Executive](#) - [Peter F. Drucker](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done

The Effective Executive is THE timeless classic on leadership and management; on getting the right things done - by the dean of business and management philosophy, Peter F. Drucker.

Published 1966 // 208 pages // Rated 4.1 over 32,700 reviews [on Goodreads](#)



## 5. [The Slight Edge](#) - [Jeff Olson](#) ([FREE Summary](#))

Turning Simple Disciplines Into Massive Success & Happiness

The Slight Edge is a short, punchy, practical guide to the why, what and how of using simple daily disciplines to achieve breakthrough success - by serial entrepreneur, speaker and author, Jeff Olson.

Published 2005 // 168 pages // Rated 4.3 over 21,900 reviews [on Goodreads](#)

## **Wish There Was a Faster/Easier Way?**

Whenever you're ready, here are four ways I can help you be more productive, find more balance and live life more on purpose...

1. **Curious? Discover how productive you really are...** Take this free, 2-minute assessment to unlock your PQ and discover the top 25 habits you need to get big things done. [Take the 2-minute quiz →](#)
2. **Overwhelmed? Get a free chapter of my book...** Let me show you how to beat procrastination, permanently, with this free sneak peek inside **TAoL**'s ultimate productivity primer. [Download your free chapter →](#)
3. **Stuck? Grab a 90-Day TRACKTION Planner...** Get the tool thousands trust to help them take control of their time, master their habits and hit goals in every part of their lives. [Order your 90-day planner →](#)
4. **Burned out? Join the TRACKTION Community...** Take the 6-week masterclass, get weekly group coaching, find accountability partners and connect with like-minded self-starters. [Get started FREE →](#)

### [Arthur Worsley](#)

I founded **TAoL** to discover and share the best wisdom on how to live long and prosper. Before that I studied Psychology, Philosophy & Physiology at Oxford and consulted at McKinsey. **Still curious?** [Learn more](#) or [take my FREE productivity quiz](#).