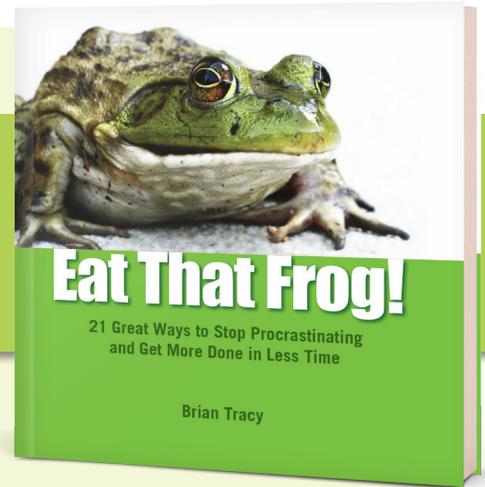


Discussion Guide

Eat That Frog...21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time

by Brian Tracy



If you are like most people today, you are overwhelmed with too much to do and too little time. As you struggle to get caught up, new tasks and responsibilities just keep rolling in, like waves in the ocean. Because of this, you will never be able to do everything you have to do. You will never be caught up. You will always be behind in some of your tasks and responsibilities, and probably in many of them.

For this reason, and perhaps more than ever before, your ability to select the most important task at each moment, and then to get started on that task and to get it done both quickly and well, will probably have more of an impact on your success than any other quality or skill you can develop.

Mark Twain once said that if the first thing you do each morning is to eat a live frog, you can go through the day with the satisfaction of knowing that that is probably the worst thing that is going to happen to you all day long.

The first rule: If you have to eat two frogs, eat the ugliest one first. This is another way of saying that if you have two important tasks before you, start with the biggest, hardest, and most important task first.

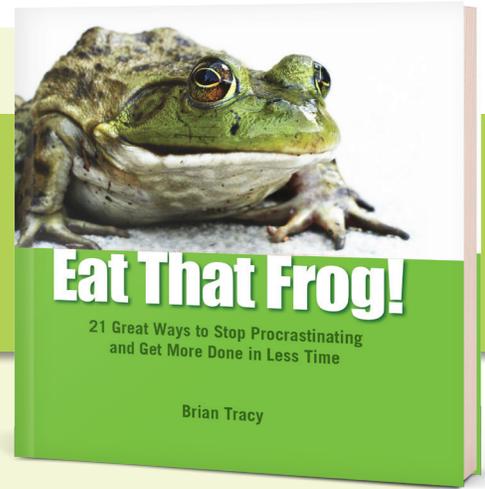
The second rule: If you have to eat a live frog at all, it doesn't pay to sit and look at it very long. The key to reaching high levels of performance and productivity is to develop the lifelong habit of tackling your major tasks first thing each morning. You must develop the routine of "eating your frog" before you do anything else and without taking too much time to think about it.

1. The book starts out by telling us that clarity is perhaps the most important concept in personal productivity and that having clearly defined, written goals helps gain that clarity. Let's go through those steps now:
 - a) Decide exactly what you want: be crystal clear about what is expected of you and the priority you can place on these goals. Don't be vague or unclear in stating these goals.
 - b) Write these goals down in the order of importance to you.
 - c) Set a deadline for each goal; set sub deadlines, if necessary.
 - d) Make a list of everything you can think of that you are going to have to do to achieve each goal.
 - e) Organize this list into a plan (prioritize and sequence—decide what should be worked on first and what can wait a while).
 - f) Take action on your plan immediately: outline the first action steps of your plan and make a resolution of sorts—something every day that moves you toward your goals.

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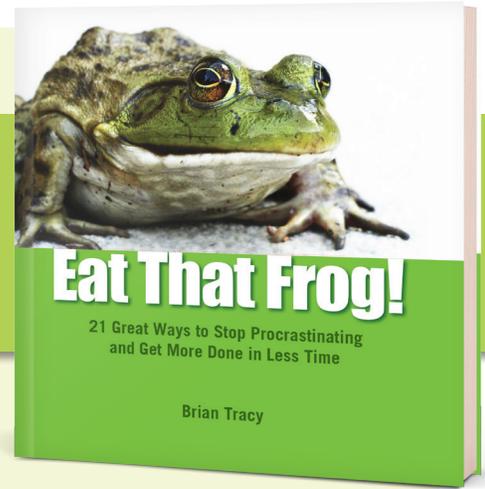


2. You may have heard of the Six-P formula. It says “Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance.” Spend 10 minutes planning out what your day will look like tomorrow—decide what tasks you will complete first (the frogs!) and what tasks can take lower priority. Don’t forget the 80/20 rule: That 20% of your activities, customers, and products and services will account for 80% of your results, sales, and profits. Therefore, make sure to focus on activities, not accomplishments.
3. Use the following three questions to keep yourself on task and write down the appropriate answers for today:
 - a) What are my highest value activities?
 - b) What can I, and only I, do that if done well will make a real difference?
 - c) What is the most valuable use of my time right now?
4. Everyone procrastinates, but what is the biggest difference between high and low performers?
5. Name some recent situations where you should have said “no.” How can you do a better job of figuring out in the future if something is a “high-value use” of your time or if you should say “no”?
6. What is the A,B,C,D, and E method? Apply this method to the list you created in #1 of this exercise.
7. Ask yourself, “Why am I on payroll?” You have been hired to get specific results (also called key result areas), so what are those results?
8. What one skill, if you developed it and did it in excellent fashion, would have the greatest positive impact on your career?
9. The Law of Three explains that we all have 3 Core Tasks that contain most of our value to our company or corporation. Like Cynthia in the book, make a list of everything you do over the course of a week. Then circle the top three tasks that you feel contribute the greatest amount to your company’s overall success. Consider ways to delegate or eliminate the other tasks.
10. Think of the example of how author Brian Tracy bought a typing program for his computer and practiced for 20-30 minutes per day so that he could write his first book and forty more after that. What methods can you employ to improve at your key tasks?

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11. Make a list of things that you do especially well or things that you can do easily even though they are difficult for others to do. These are areas to place great focus upon.
12. In addition to knowing your Core Tasks and what you are good at, it is as, if not more, important to know what your constraints are. What is within you that is holding you back? Identify the bottlenecks and limiting factors of that constraint and how you can alleviate them in order to quicken the pace for achieving your goal.
13. Name some activities that you can engage in to “Maximize Your Personal Powers” and energize you for the workday ahead.
14. Take a recent situation you had at work and apply the four special behaviors of optimism.
 - a) What was the good in this situation?
 - b) What was the valuable lesson?
 - c) What was the solution/what’s the next step?
 - d) What are your goals and how does this situation contribute to them?
15. What does slice and dice the task mean? How can you practice the salami and cheese analogy in your work tasks?

Every great achievement of humankind has been preceded by a long period of hard, concentrated work until the job was done. Your ability to select the most important task, to begin it, and then to concentrate on it single-mindedly until it is complete, is the key to high levels of performance and personal productivity. Once you get going, keep going. By concentrating single-mindedly on your most important task, you can reduce the time required to complete it by 50 percent or more.

Self-discipline, self-mastery, and self-control are the basic building blocks of character and high performance. Starting a high-priority task and persisting with that task until it is 100 percent complete is the true test of your character, your willpower, and your resolve. Persistence is actually self-discipline in action. The good news is that the more you discipline yourself to persist on a major task, the more you like and respect yourself and the easier it is for you to discipline yourself to persist even more. And the key to all of this is for you to determine the most valuable and important thing you could possibly do at every single moment and then Eat That Frog!