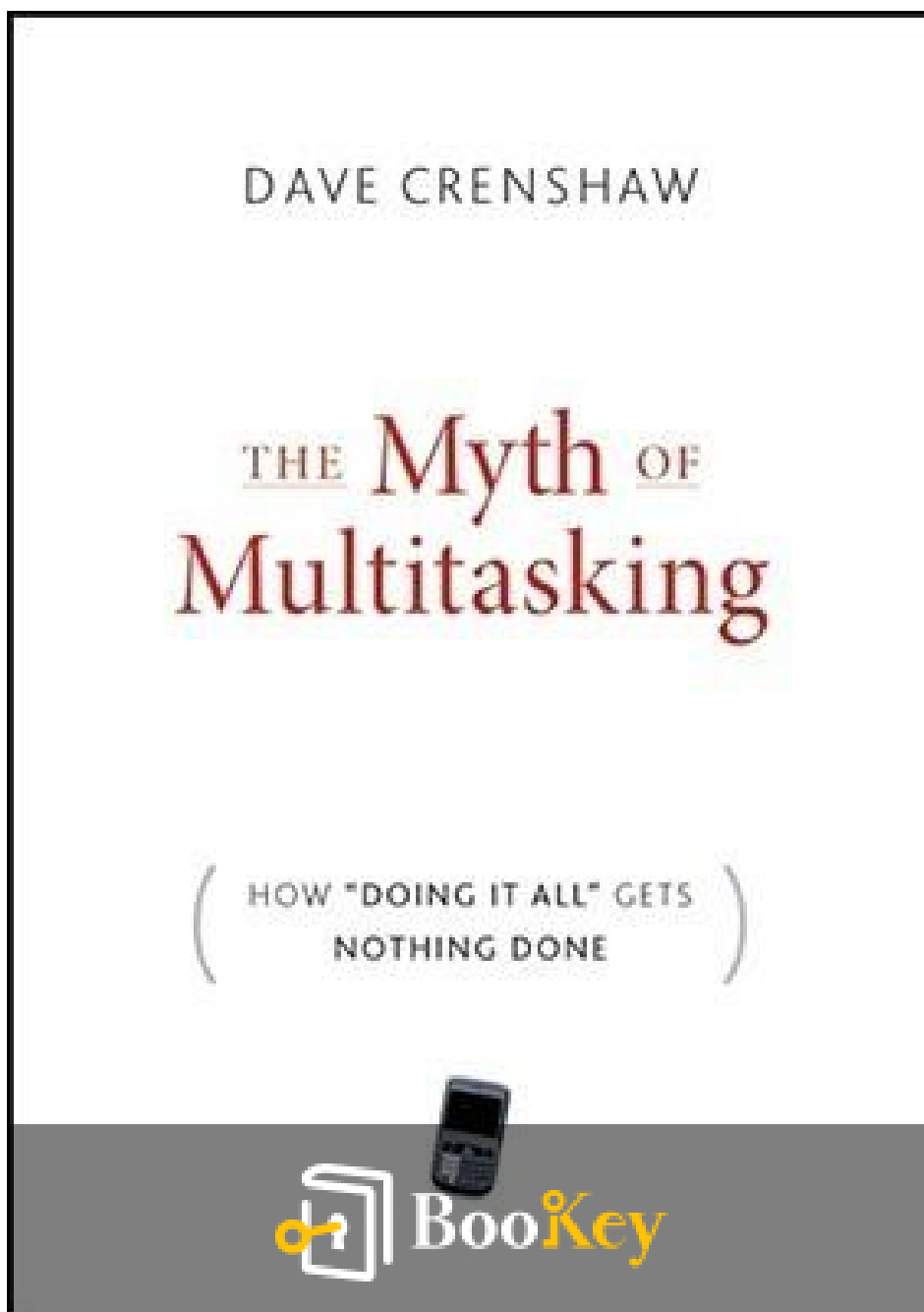


The Myth Of Multitasking PDF (Limited Copy)

Dave Crenshaw



More Free Book



Scan to Download

The Myth Of Multitasking Summary

"Unveiling the Truth: Why Focus Trumps Task Juggling"

Written by Books1

More Free Book



Scan to Download

About the book

In an age where multitasking is often celebrated as a measure of productivity and efficiency, Dave Crenshaw's "The Myth of Multitasking" unveils the stark reality behind this widespread misconception. Drawing readers in with engaging anecdotes, Crenshaw reveals how the very act of juggling tasks we believe in doubling our output, actually sabotages our efficiency and diminishes our effectiveness. By dissecting the lie of multitasking, he provides a counter-intuitive yet liberating perspective: focus and single-tasking are the true pillars of productivity. This compelling approach not only offers clarity and insight into the often misunderstood concept but also equips readers with actionable strategies to reclaim control of their time and sharpen their focus for excellent performance in both personal and professional life. Dive in, and discover the empowering reality of doing more by doing less.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

About the author

****Dave Crenshaw**** is an influential business coach, author, and speaker renowned for his insights on productivity and time management. With a dynamic and engaging approach, Dave empowers individuals and organizations to maximize their efficiency through his realistic and actionable strategies. His work has reached a global audience, offering valuable guidance to business leaders, entrepreneurs, and everyday professionals seeking to optimize their workflow and minimize distractions. Crenshaw's expertise is rooted in a career spanning over two decades, where he's been dedicated to dismantling myths such as multitasking to unlock true productivity. Not merely content on offering theoretical advice, he equips others with practical tools, enabling them to achieve their full potential. As a trusted authority in the realm of productivity, Dave Crenshaw continues to transform lives with his compelling teachings.

More Free Book



Scan to Download



Try Bookey App to read 1000+ summary of world best books

Unlock **1000+** Titles, **80+** Topics

New titles added every week

- Brand
- Leadership & Collaboration
- Time Management
- Relationship & Communication
- Business Strategy
- Creativity
- Public
- Money & Investing
- Know Yourself
- Positive Psychology
- Entrepreneurship
- World History
- Parent-Child Communication
- Self-care
- Mind & Spirituality

Insights of world best books



Free Trial with Bookey



Summary Content List

Chapter 1: THE COMPANY

Chapter 2: THE OWNER

Chapter 3: THE LIE

Chapter 4: THE COST

Chapter 5: THE ORIGIN

Chapter 6: THE EXERCISE

Chapter 7: THE EXAMPLE

Chapter 8: THE QUESTION

Chapter 9: THE MEETING

Chapter 10: THE EXPECTATION

Chapter 11: THE TRUTH

Chapter 12: THE DEAL

Chapter 13: THE CHANGE

Chapter 14: THE STEPS

Chapter 15: THE SYSTEMS

Chapter 16: THE FOLLOW-UP

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 1 Summary: THE COMPANY

In the opening chapter of "The Company," we meet Phil, a time management and efficiency coach who exemplifies the principles he teaches by arriving early for a meeting. Climbing out of his car, he stands before GreenGarb, a burgeoning eco-friendly clothing enterprise. GreenGarb is the brainchild of Helen Whitman, a former executive from a major retail chain who pivoted to entrepreneurship to capitalize on the rising demand for sustainable products. Her decision has been validated by the company's impressive annual sales of over \$20 million, and they continue to rise.

Despite her success, Helen finds herself overwhelmed and experiencing burnout—a common plight among Phil's clientele. Successful yet stressed, these business leaders are all too familiar with the grind of increased responsibilities and diminishing personal time. In search of balance, they've turned to Phil, whose expertise offers a way out of the isolation at the top.

Entering the bustling environment of GreenGarb, Phil is greeted by a no-nonsense receptionist and a flurry of activity. The workspace buzzes with the energy of controlled chaos, messy desks, and hurried conversations—a microcosm of Helen's challenges. As he is led to Helen's office, Phil senses that the state of these offices naturally mirrors the leadership's mindset, reinforcing the notion that businesses inherently reflect their owners. This foundational understanding positions him to offer the guidance and insight



Helen seeks, promising a path to greater efficiency and a more sustainable work-life balance.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 2 Summary: THE OWNER

In the CEO's office, the atmosphere was thick with tension. Phil arrived to find a woman wearing glasses, giving him a knowing look that implied Helen was quite occupied. Helen, the CEO, invited Phil to join the conversation despite the ongoing discussions. It was clear that the room was bustling with activity and anticipation, involving two managers and the persistent woman by the name of Sally.

Sally seemed eager to address an issue with Helen, and her impatience was tangible as she waited for her turn to speak. After the meeting with the managers concluded, Helen acknowledged Sally's urgency with a hint of her own impatience, asking her directly what she needed.

Sally relayed a pressing concern about a supplier in Kansas who needed Helen's decision on a color change from khaki to light tan. Helen, visibly controlling her own frustration, reminded Sally that she had already communicated approval for the color change the previous day. She stressed the importance of not delaying the shipment.

With this matter settled, Sally hesitantly asked about some designs she had sent Helen the day before. Helen, overwhelmed with tasks, admitted she hadn't reviewed them yet but promised to do so within the day.



Sally, appearing unresolved, began to leave but paused when addressed again by Helen. Sally turned back with anticipation, as if expecting something important. Instead, Helen simply requested her to close the door as she left, signaling an end to the interaction.

The scene depicted a high-pressure environment where Helen, as the CEO, was juggling numerous responsibilities, balancing her managerial duties while addressing the concerns of her team. The interaction highlighted the challenges of priorities and communication in a fast-paced corporate setting.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 3 Summary: THE LIE

In the chapter titled "The Lie," we are introduced to Helen, a character overwhelmed by the demands of her busy life. She is consumed by the need to respond to emails, manage full voicemail inboxes, and attend to constant interruptions, all while attempting to maintain productivity. In a meeting with Phil, presumably a consultant or coach, Helen expresses her stress and challenges. Phil encourages Helen to focus on their meeting without disturbances, highlighting the importance of uninterrupted time.

Phil introduces the concept of multitasking, which immediately brings a sense of pride to Helen. She regards herself as the "Queen of Multitasking," believing this skill to be essential for her and her employees. However, Phil challenges her perception by comparing multitasking to Mark Twain's famous quote, "There are lies, damned lies, and statistics," suggesting the modern equivalent would involve multitasking being a widespread fallacy.

Phil argues that multitasking is more than just a lie; it's a widely accepted misconception that is neither true nor efficient. Despite Helen's confidence in her ability to multitask and her hard work, Phil points out that it's not about the effort but the effectiveness of the results. He questions whether multitasking truly yields the desired outcomes, implying that its perceived benefits are misleading.



This conversation signifies a turning point, emphasizing that the key to Helen's lack of effectiveness lies in her reliance on multitasking. The chapter sets the stage for Phil to educate Helen on the pitfalls of multitasking and guide her towards a more efficient and focused approach to her tasks and responsibilities.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Critical Thinking

Key Point: Focus on Focused Work

Critical Interpretation: Discovering the profound impact of setting aside dedicated time for focused work can be life-changing for you.

As seen in Helen's story, the common belief in multitasking as a badge of efficiency often leads to stress, distraction, and diluted outcomes.

By prioritizing undisturbed time, you're empowered to concentrate deeply, work creatively, and achieve higher-quality results.

Recognizing the fallacy of multitasking liberates you from the clutches of unnecessary chaos, providing a sense of control and clarity. This realization opens the door to a more balanced, productive, and fulfilling life.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 4: THE COST

In the chapter titled "The Cost," Phil, an efficiency expert, engages in a revealing conversation with Helen, a busy professional, about the hidden drawbacks of multitasking. Phil initiates their discussion by highlighting the interruptions Helen faces during an average work hour, drawing attention to her frequent email checks, phone calls, and spontaneous coworker queries. Phil's investigation reveals that Helen experiences roughly six interruptions every hour, leading her to constantly switch back and forth between tasks.

Phil explains the concept of "switchtasking," the act of rapidly shifting attention between tasks, rather than genuinely performing them simultaneously. This practice results in "switching costs," a term borrowed from economics, which refers to the time and efficiency lost during these transitions. As they delve into Helen's work routine, it becomes evident that Helen's belief in the effectiveness of multitasking is misplaced, as her frequent task-switching significantly disrupts her productivity.

Supporting this insight, Phil references research by renowned scholars, such as René Marois and studies from the University of California, Irvine, which suggest that the brain is biologically incapable of multitasking effectively. Phil further discusses the economic implications, noting how interruptions and inefficiencies collectively lead to massive productivity losses in the workplace.



The chapter emphasizes that a significant portion of the workday is consumed by both active interruptions, which are self-initiated, and passive ones, triggered by external factors. Phil points out that these constant disruptions lead to a considerable loss of focus and efficiency, especially for

Install Bookey App to Unlock Full Text and Audio

Free Trial with Bookey





Why Bookey is must have App for Book Lovers



30min Content

The deeper and clearer interpretation we provide, the better grasp of each title you have.



Text and Audio format

Absorb knowledge even in fragmented time.



Quiz

Check whether you have mastered what you just learned.



And more

Multiple Voices & fonts, Mind Map, Quotes, IdeaClips...

Free Trial with Bookey



Chapter 5 Summary: THE ORIGIN

In a lively discussion about multitasking, Helen and Phil delve into the misconceptions surrounding the term and its implications for human efficiency. Helen, feeling as though she had just completed a workout, starts with a query about why multitasking, often seen in a negative light, is so prevalent. Phil offers a historical perspective, explaining how the term originated at the end of the twentieth century, drawing a parallel to computers' operation and quickly becoming a buzzword. Despite its popularity, the term was originally intended for machines, not humans. Multitasking, Phil points out, originated in the computing world, where a CPU rapidly switches tasks, giving the illusion of simultaneous processing.

Phil emphasizes that the word "apparent" is crucial, as neither computers nor human brains can truly focus on multiple tasks at once. Instead, they engage in a rapid switch between tasks. Helen acknowledges Phil's more digestible explanation, preferring it over a technical deep dive from her IT department. Phil proceeds to clarify the difference between what he calls "switchtasking"—attempting to perform two tasks that demand mental effort simultaneously—and "background tasking," where only one task requires such effort.

Helen catches on quickly, providing examples of switchtasking like emailing while listening to a coworker and background tasking such as dining while



watching TV. Phil nods to her understanding, further illustrating background tasking with instances like working on a computer while awaiting a print job. However, when talking on the phone while driving is mentioned, Phil sidesteps potential controversy by acknowledging studies comparing its risks to drunk driving but notes societal debate.

The conversation turns to an evaluation of these practices. Phil avoids labeling them as outrightly "good" or "bad" but asserts that switchtasking is inherently less efficient and effective. Background tasking, on the other hand, might offer efficiencies when correctly utilized. Nevertheless, he admits that when people speak of multitasking in day-to-day contexts, they are usually referring to switchtasking, which remains ineffective.

Through this dialogue, Phil and Helen dissect the illusory nature of multitasking, contrasting it against truly productive activities and emphasizing the need for precise language to describe our actions in the modern world.



Chapter 6 Summary: THE EXERCISE

In this chapter, the scene is set with Helen and Phil, involved in a focused discussion about multitasking and its effects. Their conversation is interrupted by Sally, who enters with a question, despite knowing Helen prefers not to be disturbed. This initial interaction highlights the tension between maintaining focus and managing interruptions, a situation often faced in workplaces.

Phil, who is presented as an expert on productivity, challenges the common belief that multitasking is beneficial. Helen is initially frustrated by the interruption but listens as Phil suggests that any switch in attention has a cost. Sally challenges Phil's viewpoint, arguing that women are better at multitasking than men, a claim she vaguely attributes to anecdotal sources. Phil diplomatically counters by referencing scientific studies, explaining that evidence for a gender difference in multitasking abilities is unclear.

To practically demonstrate his point, Phil proposes a simple exercise for Helen and Sally. He instructs them to write a sentence while alternating between writing letters and corresponding numbers. This exercise ultimately shows that such switching doubles the time required compared to writing each sequence separately. Both women realize the impact of 'switching costs' on productivity.



Phil uses the exercise to explain that multitasking, or what they call 'switchtasking,' involves not just physical but also mental costs, as the brain struggles to maintain attention between tasks. Phil likens the brain to a computer with open tabs, capable of handling only one at a time effectively.

Helen begins to appreciate the drawbacks of multitasking, considering potential changes to her approach. Meanwhile, Sally remains skeptical, questioning whether multitasking offers any advantages in productivity. Phil and Helen propose that while multitasking isn't inherently bad, it is often misapplied, leading to inefficiency.

The chapter concludes with Phil highlighting the importance of using focused work over multitasking. Through his exercise, Phil confirms that seemingly efficient multitasking can actually hinder productivity, prompting the characters to reconsider how they allocate their attention in daily tasks.



Chapter 7 Summary: THE EXAMPLE

In this chapter, the narrative delves into the challenges and pitfalls of multitasking, particularly in the context of workplace interactions. The scene unfolds in Helen's office, where Sally, Helen, and Phil witness a live example of the implications of divided attention. From their vantage point, they observe Jason, an earnest intern, attempting to engage Tracy, his supervisor, in an important conversation. However, Tracy, engrossed in a company report, only offers Jason fragmented attention, ultimately prioritizing a phone call over their interaction.

This moment serves as a catalyst for a broader discussion among Sally, Helen, and Phil about the inefficiencies and relational costs of multitasking, or "switchtasking," as Phil terms it. Phil emphasizes that while people often pride themselves on their ability to juggle multiple tasks, this practice invariably diminishes efficiency and damages interpersonal relationships. Providing individuals with partial focus compromises the quality and efficacy of communication, which is crucial both in personal and professional realms.

Sally concedes that this is an area where she needs improvement, recognizing her habitual tendency to multitask and its impact on those around her. Phil reassures her and others who might grapple with similar tendencies that acknowledging the problem is the first step toward



improvement. He draws an analogy to contrast the perceived versus actual effectiveness of multitasking: being good at multitasking is akin to being adept at a less effective method of accomplishing tasks.

Phil further clarifies that, regardless of personal skill, multitasking is inherently less efficient than focusing on one task at a time. By comparing it to transportation—where a cyclist, no matter how skilled, will not outpace a driver—he underscores the inevitable limitations of multitasking. The chapter concludes with a consensus on the importance of undivided attention and the acknowledgment that embracing focused engagement leads to more meaningful and successful interactions.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 8: THE QUESTION

In this chapter of the story, Phil, Helen, and Sally are engaged in a conversation that reveals underlying issues about communication and time management in the workplace. Sally is hesitant before leaving the room, as if she's trying to remember something important. Phil notices this behavior and inquires about it. Sally admits she often pauses to make sure she's asked Helen everything needed before departing, reflecting a wider theme of uncertainty and urgency among Helen's employees.

Phil further probes this observation with Helen, noting that it's a common behavior for employees to try and get the most out of their time with her. He suggests that this is because they never know when they might have her attention again, pointing out her habit of being constantly busy or in "switchtasking mode"—a concept that refers to rapidly switching focus between tasks, often leading to inefficiency and stress.

Realizing that her work habits might be causing stress for her team, Helen expresses her concern and frustration, acknowledging her need to close her door to prevent constant interruptions. In response, Phil offers a solution by emphasizing the importance of establishing clear communication timings, or "whens," for her team to interact with her without feeling the urgency.

Phil proposes two strategies: setting recurring meetings and providing clear



expectations of her availability. These suggestions aim to create predictability and reduce the anxiety employees feel about approaching their boss. By establishing these "whens," Helen could potentially decrease the inefficiency of switchtasking and improve overall workplace dynamics.

This chapter highlights the challenges of managing time effectively within a busy work environment and underscores the importance of clear communication and structure in fostering a more efficient and less stressful workflow.

Install Bookey App to Unlock Full Text and Audio

Free Trial with Bookey





App Store
Editors' Choice



22k 5 star review

Positive feedback

Sara Scholz

tes after each book summary
understanding but also make the
and engaging. Bookey has
ding for me.

Fantastic!!!



I'm amazed by the variety of books and languages
Bookey supports. It's not just an app, it's a gateway
to global knowledge. Plus, earning points for charity
is a big plus!

Masood El Toure

Fi



Ab
bo
to
my

José Botín

ding habit
o's design
ual growth

Love it!



Bookey offers me time to go through the
important parts of a book. It also gives me enough
idea whether or not I should purchase the whole
book version or not! It is easy to use!

Wonnie Tappkx

Time saver!



Bookey is my go-to app for
summaries are concise, ins
curated. It's like having acc
right at my fingertips!

Awesome app!



I love audiobooks but don't always have time to listen
to the entire book! bookey allows me to get a summary
of the highlights of the book I'm interested in!!! What a
great concept !!!highly recommended!

Rahul Malviya

Beautiful App



This app is a lifesaver for book lovers with
busy schedules. The summaries are spot
on, and the mind maps help reinforce wh
I've learned. Highly recommend!

Alex Walk

Free Trial with Bookey



Chapter 9 Summary: THE MEETING

In "The Meeting," Phil introduces Helen to the concept of recurring meetings, using Sally as an example. Phil suggests scheduling daily meetings with Sally to prevent frequent interruptions and improve efficiency. Initially skeptical about the proposed thirty-minute duration, Helen realizes that past conversations have been inefficient due to "switchtasking," or managing multiple tasks simultaneously.

Phil proposes setting a recurring daily meeting at 10:00 A.M., a time that suits both Helen and Sally's schedules. He explains that this clear, consistent timing reduces unnecessary interruptions by assuring employees they will have a dedicated time to communicate their concerns. Helen agrees, understanding that the predictability of the meeting can alleviate anxiety over minor issues, which have wrongly been perceived as emergencies due to a fear of missed communication.

Phil emphasizes the importance of being prepared for these discussions to maximize their effectiveness. While Helen jests about the possibility of endless meetings, Phil clarifies that recurring meetings are necessary only for those who regularly need her guidance or accountability. He advises that the meeting frequency should correlate with the employee's level of dependence on her attention, typically suggesting an hour-long meeting every two weeks for direct reports.



Through the conversation, Phil aims to streamline Helen's workflow by minimizing disruptions and establishing a more structured communication approach with her team, fostering a more efficient and less chaotic work environment.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 10 Summary: THE EXPECTATION

In the chapter titled "The Expectation," Helen engages in a revealing conversation with Phil about managing unexpected interruptions at work. They discuss the chaos caused by unplanned phone calls, spontaneous questions, and drop-in visits. Phil offers advice on creating "personal store hours," inspired by familiar signs at businesses that inform customers of availability. He argues that it's the uncertainty of accessing someone that leads to disruptions.

Phil suggests that Helen establish clear expectations for her availability, explaining that people will adapt to these boundaries over time. He presents Helen with a practical gift: a plastic sign with adjustable clock hands to indicate when she's open for interaction, helping to reduce unwelcome interruptions.

Helen is also concerned about managing phone calls, a significant source of her multitasking. To illustrate a solution, Phil demonstrates a voicemail message from his client, James. The message provides a schedule for when James checks messages and returns calls, emphasizing the importance of planned interactions. James's approach initially surprised his peers but eventually earned him respect for his reliability and efficiency.

Phil stresses that controlling one's time is critical. By setting schedules and



managing technology rather than letting it control them, individuals like James—and potentially Helen—can escape the illusion that constant connectivity leads to productivity. Phil’s counsel centers on using a calendar to preemptively manage interruptions and eliminate the stress of switchtasking, helping Helen and others master their time in an information-overloaded world.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Critical Thinking

Key Point: Establishing Boundaries for Availability

Critical Interpretation: By setting clear expectations for your availability, just like business hours, you can create a sense of control over your schedule. This practice reduces the chaos of unexpected interruptions and allows others to respect your productive time. Implementing this strategy can significantly enhance your efficiency and focus, providing a structured environment where you can operate at your best. The predictability of knowing when you'll be available reassures your contacts and aligns their interactions to your terms. Adopting such boundaries can lead to a more intentional approach to work, empowering you to tackle tasks with greater clarity and purpose.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 11 Summary: THE TRUTH

In the chapter titled "The Truth," Phil introduces Helen to a time management exercise aimed at highlighting how she allocates her time throughout the week. Phil provides her with a USB drive containing a worksheet, which Helen prints out. The worksheet is divided into several columns, including Activity, Boundary, Current, and Future, with categories like "Lost Time," "Sleep," "Work," and "Personal Recreation."

Phil explains that "Lost Time" accounts for minor, often unnoticed activities that can cumulatively consume about an hour each day. Helen begins the exercise by listing her weekly activities, and Phil guides her in categorizing them without overlapping time. They then proceed to estimate the amount of time spent on each activity.

Phil emphasizes the immutable nature of time: there are only 24 hours in a day and 168 hours in a week. This is a revelation for Helen, who realizes her calculated activities total more than the time available in a week. This insight underscores how switchtasking, or frequently shifting focus between tasks, distorts her perception of time used.

Through the exercise, Helen discovers significant discrepancies in her time estimates, especially about family time. She acknowledges that her actual engagement with her family is often compromised by multitasking with



work-related activities at home. This realization strikes a personal chord with Helen, helping her understand similar behavior she observed in someone else.

Phil encourages Helen to create a time budget that reflects her true priorities, suggesting she draft a plan for the coming month. Helen agrees to take this on as homework, recognizing the potential to restructure her time for better alignment with her values.

Helen sees this as an opportunity to make meaningful changes. The session concludes with Phil scheduling a follow-up meeting to set her on the right path to achieving a time management balance that respects her personal and professional boundaries. This chapter lays the groundwork for Helen's journey to a more intentional and fulfilled use of her time.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Critical Thinking

Key Point: Understanding Time Allocation

Critical Interpretation: In this chapter, you are inspired by the realization that time is a finite resource and cannot be expanded. By employing a deliberate approach to track how you actually spend your time each week, you uncover the hidden minutes lost in unnoticed activities. This same revelation hits Helen when she compares her perceived versus actual time allocations. The exercise of listing every activity without overlapping enables you to see the true extent of 'Lost Time,' often wasted on activities that don't align with your values or priorities. This insight empowers you to take control, encouraging a shift from mindless multitasking to purposeful single-tasking. By creating a 'Time Budget,' you ensure your daily schedule mirrors what truly matters to you, steering your life towards deeper fulfillment and productivity.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 12: THE DEAL

In the chapter "The Deal," Phil is preparing to leave work when Sally approaches him in the parking lot of GreenGarb, a detail that establishes their place of employment and context for the conversation. Sally, concerned about a corporate culture issue, confronts Phil about a recurring problem: the phenomenon Phil refers to as "seminar letdown," where enthusiasm from training sessions fades quickly, and things return to normal. Sally expresses skepticism about potential changes, noting her experience with similar situations in the past, especially regarding Helen's unchanged attitude over the years.

Phil acknowledges Sally's perspective and decides to propose a friendly wager to introduce accountability and motivation for tracking change. He offers Sally a deal: in a couple of months, she will report back on Helen's progress. If there is no significant improvement, Phil promises to buy her a dinner for two at Carvemasters, a renowned steakhouse, appealing to Sally's love for steak. On the other hand, if there is a marked positive change, Sally will bake Phil a dozen chocolate chip cookies.

Sally is amused by the bet and warns Phil about her cooking skills, but Phil jests about trusting her culinary abilities given her stated dietary preferences. They both agree on the terms with a handshake, indicating mutual respect and setting the stage for a follow-up on Helen's progress and the potential



transformation within their workplace.

Install Bookey App to Unlock Full Text and Audio

Free Trial with Bookey





Read, Share, Empower

Finish Your Reading Challenge, Donate Books to African Children.

The Concept



This book donation activity is rolling out together with Books For Africa. We release this project because we share the same belief as BFA: For many children in Africa, the gift of books truly is a gift of hope.

The Rule



Earn 100 points



Redeem a book



Donate to Africa

Your learning not only brings knowledge but also allows you to earn points for charitable causes! For every 100 points you earn, a book will be donated to Africa.

Free Trial with Bookey



Chapter 13 Summary: THE CHANGE

In the chapter titled "The Change," we witness a significant personal and professional revelation for Helen, a character committed to personal growth and improving her familial relationships. The narrative unfolds with Phil, another key character, arriving at the office, where he is warmly greeted and directed toward Helen's office. His anticipation builds as he waits for Helen, who soon bursts in, filled with excitement about a recent personal success.

Helen shares a transformative experience she had the previous evening, where she consciously avoided "switchtasking," a term coined to describe the detrimental habit of shifting attention between multiple tasks, often under the guise of multitasking. Instead, she dedicated her full focus to her family during dinner, much to their surprise and eventual appreciation. Phil enthusiastically praises her effort, reinforcing that sustained attention strengthens trust and respect in relationships over time.

The conversation then shifts to the broader implications of switchtasking, with Phil emphasizing its negative impact not just on family dynamics, but also on professional and social interactions. He draws insights from Dr. Edward Hallowell, a noted expert on attention deficit disorder, highlighting how pervasive and damaging this habit is in everyday life.

Helen, processing these insights, astutely connects the concept of



switchtasking to its potential costs within a business context, notably affecting customer satisfaction and sales. She reasons that if employees are not fully attentive when interacting with customers, it diminishes the perceived care and quality, leading customers to seek out more attentive competitors. Furthermore, she posits that sales processes themselves—critical for business growth—could suffer when sales representatives fail to fully engage with clients due to switchtasking.

Intrigued by Helen's business acumen, Phil takes notes, humorously deflecting her jest about charging for her insights. The chapter leaves the reader contemplating the real-world implications of switchtasking, both personally and professionally, and the value of focused, undivided attention in cultivating meaningful relationships and successful business practices.

More Free Book



Scan to Download

Chapter 14 Summary: THE STEPS

In this chapter, Phil delves into a conversation with Helen about the myth of multitasking, expanding on a discussion they had the previous day. Helen is now convinced that multitasking, or what Phil terms "switchtasking," is inefficient. However, she is unsure of how to stop it in a fast-paced environment where everyone else seems to thrive on it. Phil guides Helen in consolidating her understanding of the key principles they've discussed, using a whiteboard to list them out: recognizing multitasking as a fallacy, differentiating between background tasking and switchtasking, becoming aware of her time use, creating a realistic schedule, making recurring appointments, setting expectations, and establishing clear availability periods.

Phil then suggests practical steps to minimize both active and passive switches—active ones being self-initiated and passive ones being external interruptions. He advises against constant switching and recommends improving focus by turning off digital distractions, like e-mail alerts and instant messaging. While Helen initially groans at the thought of not using instant messaging, Phil explains its potential for interrupting productivity and suggests using it sparingly, supplemented by tools with "Do Not Disturb" features to minimize passive interruptions.

Helen realizes the need for a broader company discussion, recognizing that



many of her colleagues might still view multitasking as a positive trait. Phil cautions her, pointing out that without understanding the pitfalls of multitasking, her team could resist these changes. He likens Helen's journey from skepticism to understanding to the process her managers will need to go through. By referring to the fable of the Tortoise and the Hare, Phil underscores the importance of steady perseverance. He emphasizes that before implementing changes, Helen needs to help her team understand the downsides of multitasking from the ground up, mirroring the gradual realization she experienced herself. By leading them through a similar process, her team will be more open to shifting away from the ineffective multitasking habits they once valued.

| Section | Summary |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Introduction | Phil and Helen continue their conversation on multitasking, discussing its inefficiency and how to address it in a fast-paced work environment. |
| Multitasking vs. Switchtasking | The chapter distinguishes between multitasking (a myth) and switchtasking (actively switching between tasks), emphasizing awareness and realistic scheduling. |
| Practical Steps | Phil offers strategies to reduce task-switching: turning off digital distractions, limiting instant messaging, and using 'Do Not Disturb' features to focus better. |
| Company Discussions | Helen sees the need for company-wide education on multitasking's downsides and suggests discussing these insights with colleagues for better team adaptation. |
| Tortoise and Hare Fable | Phil uses the fable to explain the value of steady perseverance over the chaotic efficiency of multitasking, emphasizing gradual understanding and change. |



| Section | Summary |
|-------------|--|
| Action Plan | Phil advises Helen to lead her team by first fostering a deeper understanding of multitasking's ineffectiveness to facilitate meaningful change. |

More Free Book



undefined

Chapter 15 Summary: THE SYSTEMS

In this chapter, titled "The Systems," Helen seeks guidance from Phil on improving communication and productivity within her company. She prefers that Phil speak to her team, as she is uncertain about how best to approach the task herself. Phil agrees and emphasizes the need for training not just on the perils of multitasking but on transforming the company's operational systems.

Phil points out that while many employees have access to excellent technological tools, they often lack the knowledge or discipline to use them effectively. He encourages Helen to consider organizational changes that reduce dependence on multitasking, which he describes as a common issue plaguing modern workplaces. He suggests that changes need to start with the organization's systems but also emphasizes the significance of personal systems, which he defines as how individuals manage their communication methods, time, and workspace.

Helen acknowledges the chaos that poor systems create, both in her business and for her personally. Phil supports this by reminding her of the stressed atmosphere he observed among employees, suggesting it mirrors Helen's own working style. Although Helen acknowledges efforts to create a more relaxed company culture, Phil gently insists the real change must begin with her personal approach to work. If she improves her personal systems—how



she organizes and prioritizes tasks—it will naturally filter down and inspire similar changes within the company.

Phil references multitasking as a familiar starting point for Helen, encouraging her to set an example by reducing distractions and prioritizing tasks. Through these efforts, her management and employees will have a model to emulate, ultimately fostering a more focused and efficient organizational culture.

Helen seems to internalize this advice, recognizing the ripple effect her personal improvements could have on her entire company. As Phil observes, by teaching and leading through example, Helen can transform not just her leadership style but also the overall company dynamics. The chapter ends with Helen ready to take the first step by organizing regular meetings with Phil to work on her personal systems, demonstrating her commitment to this transformational journey.



Chapter 16: THE FOLLOW-UP

Phil had just finished his speech, and the room filled with applause as he stepped away from the podium. Helen, sitting in the front row, was enthusiastically chatting with her GreenGarb employees. Reflecting on the past three months since he first met Helen, Phil recalled how much had changed. Initially, he helped her develop personal systems and a new time management strategy. This led to the establishment of regular meetings with her employees, starting with Sally.

At first, the employees were skeptical. They were used to being overlooked by Helen and other managers. However, over time, they realized that Helen wasn't using any gimmicks or going through a phase; she was genuinely listening and giving them her attention. This approach made a noticeable impact, increasing both productivity and job satisfaction.

Once Helen had mastered her personal systems, Phil suggested it was time to train the management team. He worked with them collectively and individually, helping them emulate Helen's new approach. The improvements were evident and growing steadily.

As Phil was leaving, a familiar face, Sally, approached him, holding his coat. She mentioned it was raining heavily outside and handed him his coat. Phil thanked her warmly and reminded her of their wager about Helen's change



lasting. Sally humorously noted that while Helen had improved, time would tell if it was permanent. She joked that if it wasn't, Phil owed her a steak dinner.

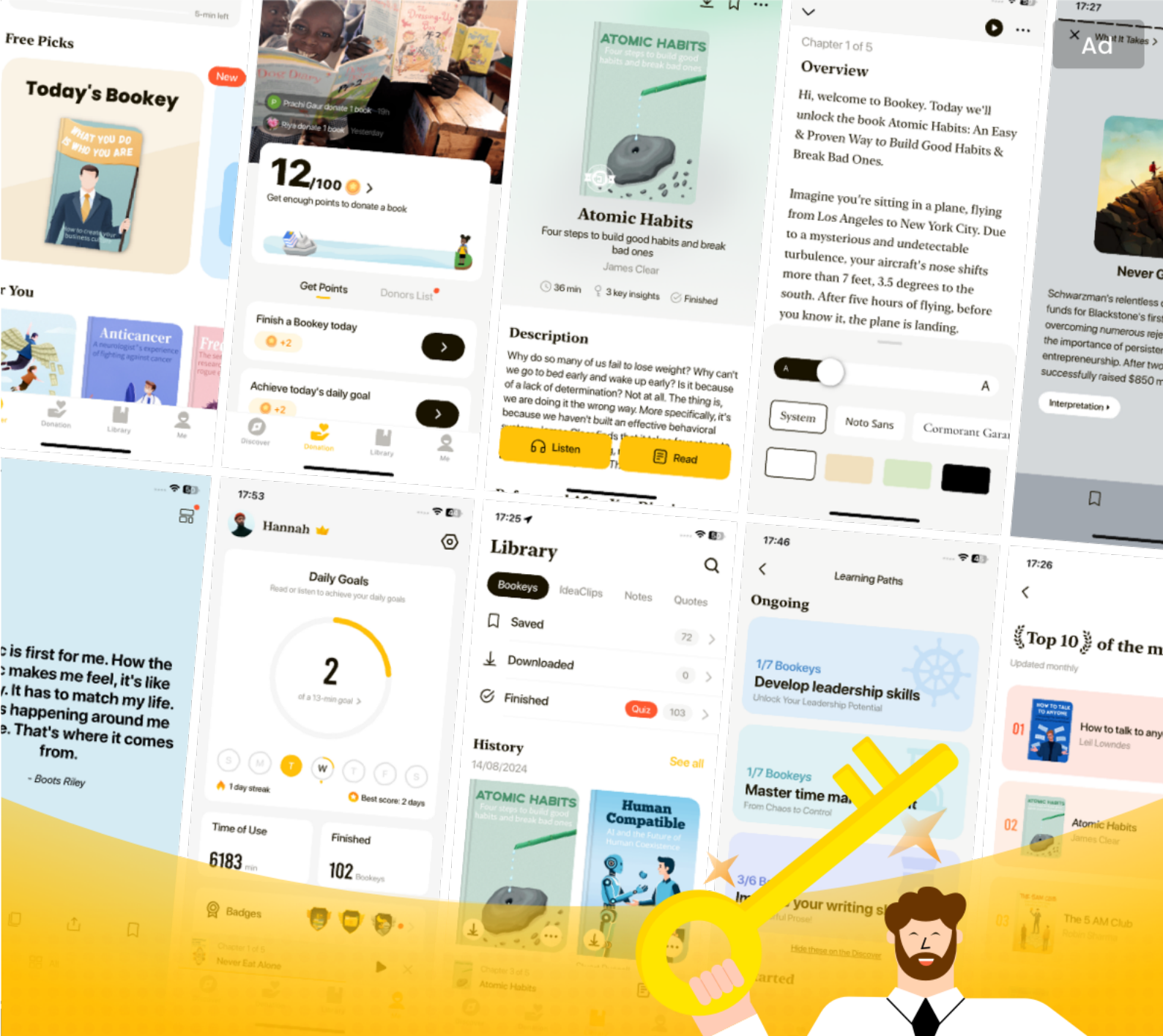
After exchanging farewells with well-wishers, Phil made his way to the entrance, realizing he'd have to dash through the rain to reach his car. Once inside his vehicle, he noticed a plate of cookies on the seat, wrapped in colorful cellophane. It came with a note from Sally, acknowledging Helen's progress and humorously admitting that the cookies were store-bought because she wasn't trustworthy in the kitchen.

Phil chuckled, placed the cookies on the passenger seat, and started his car, feeling a sense of accomplishment and optimism for the future.

Install Bookey App to Unlock Full Text and Audio

Free Trial with Bookey





World's best ideas unlock your potential

Free Trial with Bookey



Scan to download

