7 Books to Help Entrepreneurs Get More Done

These titles can ensure busy business owners make the most of their time.

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Time is an entrepreneur’s most valuable resource. Even a five-figure account might not be worth signing if it means putting product development or recruitment on pause. Running a business in general requires you to spend your days deliberately. When you’re at work, you have to set and stick to your priorities. Off the clock, you deserve to relax, but even then, it’s beneficial to do so in ways that fit your goals.

That might sound simple enough, but the real world is chaotic. Navigating it involves finding productivity strategies that work for you. It’s no surprise, then, that there are plenty of authors offering new, tech-based techniques, but some of the best suggestions still come from the classics. Even if your days are already packed, make the most of your time by reading these books, both new and old.

1. *Indistractable* by Nir Eyal

You know how easy it is to get sucked into your phone by social media or even “productive” apps like email. Instead of letting them control you, take the reins. Written by the bestselling author of *Hooked*, *Indistractable* explains how to identify external and internal triggers that precede

distractions. Just as importantly, behavioral designer Nir Eyal explains how to carve out time for “traction,” or any activity that gets you closer to your goals. *Indistractable* also covers common workplace distractions, techniques for teaching kids to manage their schedules and tips for a more attentive social life.

2. *Deep Work* by Cal Newport

When you’re in the zone, you’re multiple orders of magnitude more productive than when you’re trying to multitask. In this modern classic, computer science professor Cal Newport explains how you can cultivate intense focus. Equal parts actionable advice and cultural criticism, *Deep Work* includes everyday tips as well as outside-the-beltway advice, including the suggestion that serious workers should quit social media. Newport caps the book with four “rules” for reshaping your mind and habits, which he supports with psychological research and stories from his own life.

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3. *Attention Management* by Maura Thomas

As an entrepreneur, you’ve had the importance of time management drilled into your brain. According to Regain Your Time founder Maura Thomas, the more important skill is attention management. You can’t simply shut your door on distractions, but you can master skills like mindfulness, attentiveness and flow. *Attention Management* is about how to be present, even and especially in the age of remote work and social media. Although it isn’t tech-focused, *Attention Management* does suggest a series of tools for corralling your attention.

4. *Essentialism* by Greg McKeown

Unlike many books on this list, Greg McKeown's *Essentialism* doesn't care about getting more done; it's concerned with selecting and getting only the right things done. The book begins by exploring what McKeown calls the Essentialist mindset, with comparisons to the Nonessentialist one. Drawing on the habits of household-name executives, McKeown unpacks how successful leaders pare down their priority lists to achieve what actually matters. Optimistic and offbeat, Essentialism acknowledges the truth that none of us will ever get everything we want out of life.

5. *Eat That Frog!* by Brian Tracy

According to productivity expert Brian Tracy's *Eat That Frog!*, Mark Twain said that if you start every morning by eating a live frog, you know that the worst part of your day is already over. Tracy's book is about applying that aphorism to modern life. With techniques for beating procrastination and building what Tracy calls "positive addictions," *Eat That Frog!* takes a lighthearted look at how our mental habits can work for or against our productivity goals. There's a lot to be said, Tracy shows, for putting the toughest task first.

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6. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey

One of the oldest books on this list, the late Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* remains popular for a reason. Although not all of the seven habits directly boost personal productivity, they do make for effective leaders. Covey encourages readers to seek to understand before being understood, for example, which can minimize miscommunication.

Due to its age, Covey’s book is short on tips for using technology in more productive ways.

7. *The Productivity Project* by Chris Bailey

Bailey earned a business degree and worked for Nokia, but only briefly. After six months, he decided to set up a series of experiments around productivity. Bailey conducted many of the tests behind *The Productivity Project* on himself, including living in total isolation and cutting out sugar, to determine which lifestyle tweaks actually translated to greater productivity. His verdict? Some of the best tactics are counterintuitive. Pursue imperfection, schedule less time for more important tasks and distract yourself strategically.

The best way to save time is to spend it wisely. Rather than stumble your way into more productive habits, learn from people who’ve written books about them. Choose the right ones, and you might even enjoy yourself in the process.

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