

NOTES FROM: *The Effective Executive*, by Peter F. Drucker

SUMMARY: Peter Drucker was a *legendary* management consultant and author of nearly 40 books whose positive impact will be felt for generations in the business world. He taught people not to just get more done, but get more of the *right* things done.

Especially relevant for knowledge workers, this book will put you decades ahead of your competition, most of whom are average at best. They waste time in meetings, they lack focus and organization, they don't take time to plan with the end in mind...in all these areas and more you have the opportunity to pull ahead.

Now, armed with Drucker's insights, you can and you will.

"Intelligence, imagination, and knowledge are essential resources, but only effectiveness converts them into results."

"It's not important to get things done, it's important to get the right things done."

"What needs to be done? What is right for the organization?"

"Focus on opportunities rather than problems."

"It is more productive to convert an opportunity into results than to solve a problem - which only restores the equilibrium of yesterday."

"Run productive meetings or don't run them at all."

"The oft-repeated quip, 'I'm sorry to write you a long letter, as I did not have time to write a short one,' could be applied to meetings: 'I'm sorry to imprison you in this long meeting, as I did not have time to prepare a short one.'"

"A written plan should anticipate the need for flexibility."

"Listen first, speak last."

"Brilliant people are often highly ineffectual."

"Every decision-maker does the same kind of work as the company president."

"Unless you take action to change your situation and how you operate, your effectiveness and life will go on much like it did before."

"The flow of events will rarely tell you what is important and what you should be focusing on."

"The truly important events on the outside are not the trends. They are *changes* in the trends."

“Know where your time actually goes.”

“Start with your time, not with your tasks.”

“The output limits of any process are set by the scarcest resource.”

“What would happen if this were not done at all?”

“A well-managed organization is a ‘dull’ organization.”

“Meetings have to be the exception, rather than the rule.”

“People adapt to the level of demands made on them.”

“Knowledge workers have to be understood by others before they can be effective.”

“Find out what others need to know in order to use the work that you have done.”

“Strong people always have strong weaknesses too.”

“No executive has ever suffered because his subordinates were strong and effective.”

“Any job that has defeated the last few qualified people who have attempted to perform it should be redesigned.”

“Create jobs that are big, so that the person has a chance to expand into their role and develop their strengths.”

“Getting an organizational superior promoted is often the fastest way to a promotion for those under him or her as well.”

“Building on strengths makes weaknesses irrelevant.”

“Dismiss weaknesses as irrelevant unless they interfere with the full deployment of the available strengths.”

“The distance between the leader and the average is constant, and it's easier to improve the performance of the leader in order to make the *average* go up than it is to try to improve the average mass.”

“Do one thing at a time.”

“The people who get nothing done often work a great deal harder.”

“Set an easy pace that isn't rushed, but keep going steadily.”

“What one postpones, one actually abandons.”

“There will always be more opportunities than there are talented people to take advantage of them.”

“Aim for something that will make a difference, rather than for something that is easy to do.”

“Today is always the result of actions and decisions taken yesterday. Man, however, whatever his title or rank, cannot foresee the future. Yesterday’s actions and decisions, no matter how courageous or wise they may have been, inevitably become today’s problems.”

"If I had to live with this for a long time, would I be willing to?"

“Once you set the right boundary conditions, or what a given decision has to achieve, then choosing the right compromises becomes much easier.”

“A decision without an action commitment is no decision at all.”

“Go out and check for yourself whether a command of yours has been carried out.”

“Always expect the assumptions to become obsolete sooner or later.”

“Reality never stands still for too long.”

“‘Gentlemen, I take it we are all in complete agreement on the decision here.’ Everyone around the table nodded assent. ‘Then,’ continued Mr. Sloan, ‘I propose we postpone further discussion of this matter until our next meeting to give ourselves time to develop disagreement and perhaps gain some understanding of what the decision is all about.’”

“Never make a decision unless there is disagreement.”

“Effectiveness can be learned but cannot be taught. Effectiveness *must* be learned.”