

Book Review - The Effective Executive : The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done

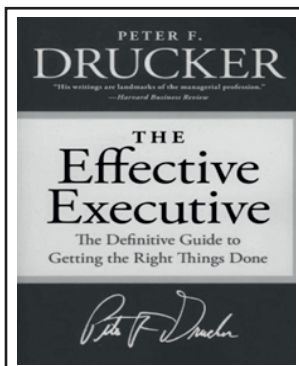
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Abstract

Management books usually deal with managing other people. The subject of the book, *The Effective Executive : The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done* is managing oneself for effectiveness. Without a doubt, officials who don't oversee themselves for viability can't in any way, shape, or form hope to deal with their subordinates. Managers who don't have an idea of how to make themselves effective in their own activity and work set the wrong example. To be sensibly successful, it is not sufficient for the person to be intelligent, to work hard, or to be educated. Effectiveness is something independent, something else. Be that as it may, to be viable additionally does not require unique endowments, exceptional inclination, or extraordinary preparing. Effectiveness as an executive requires doing certain—and genuinely basic—things. It comprises of few practices, the practices that are introduced and talked about in this book.

Keywords : effectiveness, habits, managing the self

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Book : *The Effective Executive: The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done*

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Work is becoming increasingly unstructured and creative in today's knowledge-based economy. Effectiveness is hence becoming more critical to individual and organizational success. Today, organizations and workers are increasingly knowledge-based. Unlike manual workers who use physical force or manual skills and need to focus on efficiency (doing things right), knowledge workers use knowledge and concepts to create ideas, solutions, and new knowledge. Executives are paid to be effective, that is, to get the right things done. This book has helped many executives to improve their effectiveness. It shows how

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personal effectiveness — doing the right things — can be developed through five key practices. In this summary, I will outline these five key practices as described in *The Effective Executive*.... The workplace comes with realities beyond our control, and unless we make a conscious effort to be effective, we will simply be operating without real impact. To become effective, we must acquire five habits :

- (1) Manage our time.
- (2) Focus on results and contribution to the organization.
- (3) Build on strengths (self, others, and situations), rather than focusing on weaknesses.
- (4) Set priorities and concentrate on the few major areas that will deliver outstanding results.
- (5) Make effective decisions.

Chapter 1 - Effectiveness Can Be Learnt

The subject of the book is managing oneself for effectiveness. The author feels that the Indian industry needs in-depth professionalism and it is the managers who have to inculcate professionalism in their reflexes if they want to contribute effectively. Executives who do not know how to make themselves effective in their own job and work set the wrong example. They need to integrate the new and emerging innovations, shaped by today's realities, with the orientation suited to the velocity and direction of the new winds of change. There are 10 habits of the mind that have to be acquired to be an effective executive :

- (i) Understand the ultimate goal of your life.
- (ii) Practice introspection.
- (iii) Manage your thoughts and focus on outward contribution.
- (iv) Develop will power to achieve true success.
- (v) Balance the use of the mind and the intellect for effective decision making.
- (vi) Do not give anyone the keys to your happiness.
- (vii) Stop making prejudiced and negative comparisons with others.
- (viii) Focus on SDM: *satsanga*, discipline, & meditation.
- (ix) Conserve your physical energy by living a moral life.
- (x) Understand behavioral skills towards managing change.

Chapter 2 - Know Thy Time

Effective executives do not begin with their undertakings. They start with their time. What's more, they don't begin with planning. They start by discovering where their time really goes. At that point, they deal with their time by curtailing ineffective demand on their time. At last, they merge their time into the biggest conceivable non - stop units.

The author contends that the change management technique must not be rushed into as a quick reaction. A suitable management technique should be selected only after understanding its principles and its implementation and after a thorough examination of the ground realities and ramification of the prevailing situation. Change is valid and implementable only when shared with the employees at the right time. The

following three step process is the foundation of executive effectiveness: (a) recording time, (b) managing time, (c) consolidating time.

Chapter 3 - What Can I Contribute?

Effective executives focus on commitment. They ask: "How can I contribute that will fundamentally influence the performance and the after-effects of the organisation I serve?" Their pressure is on obligation. They are busy with endeavours as opposed to results. They stress over what the association and their bosses owe them and ought to accomplish for them. Each association needs execution in three zones:

- ↳ **It Needs Direct Outcomes** : They assume the job calories play in the sustenance of the human body.
- ↳ **Building of Qualities and their Reaffirmation** : They assume a job of nutrients and minerals. There must be something this association represents, else it deteriorates into disruption, perplexity, and loss of motion.
- ↳ **Building and Creating Individuals for Tomorrow** : The association in this manner needs to give personnel today who can run it tomorrow. It needs to recharge its human capital.

Chapter 4 - Making Strength Productive

Powerful officials make quality beneficial. They realize that one can't expand on shortcomings. To accomplish results, one needs to utilize all the accessible qualities – the strength of partners, the qualities of superiors, and one's very own qualities. These qualities are the genuine chances. The executive first ensures that the activity is all around planned. What's more, if experience reveals to him/her else, he/she doesn't chase for genius to do the impossible. He/she redesigns the activities. Executives realize that the trial of the association isn't genius. It is its ability to cause average folks to accomplish unprecedented execution. The successful official realizes that to get quality, one needs to endure shortcomings. Making qualities gainful is significantly more than just adequacy. It is an ethical objective, an obligation of authority and position.

Chapter 5 - First Things First

The one secret of effectiveness is concentration. Effective executives do each thing in turn. The need to concentrate is grounded in the idea of the official's activity. The more the official works at making qualities profitable, the more he/she becomes aware of the need to focus on significant chances. This is the best way to get results. The more one can focus time, exertion, and assets, the more noteworthy the quantity of assorted variety and undertakings one can really perform. The official who needs to be powerful and who needs his/her association to be compelling polices all projects, all exercises. Effective executives generally ask : "Is it still worth doing?" and on the off chance that it isn't, they dispose of it in order to have the option to focus on a couple of assignments that whenever finished with excellence will make a difference.

Chapters 6 & 7 - The Elements of Decision-Making & Effective Decisions

Basic leadership is one of the tasks of an executive. An effective executive settles on compelling choices. Effective executives do not settle on a large number of choices. They focus on the significant ones. They attempt to settle on a couple of significant choices on the most elevated level of reasonable comprehension. According to the author, effective and reasonable prompt decision making is important to win the respect of one's superiors and

subordinates. One should be courageous enough to shoulder the blame if one's decisions go wrong and an executive should be large hearted enough to share the credit if it is a success.

The Five Elements of the Decision Making Process

- (i) The first inquiry a viable chief poses: “Is this a conventional circumstance or a special case?”
- (ii) The choice procedure is clear details with respect to what the choice needs to achieve.
- (iii) One needs to begin with what is correct as opposed to what is adequate.
- (iv) Converting the choice enthusiastically is the fourth significant component in the choice procedure.
- (v) Finally, a feedback must be incorporated with a choice to give a consistent testing, against real occasions, of the desires that underlie the choice.

Conclusion

The book provides detailed information about the complexities in this VUCA world. The author provides timely information on forces that will affect the future of individuals and organizations in the next one century and suggests necessary remedies that must be taken to solve problems. The book would be useful to the professionals all around to know the challenges involved in the 21st century and how to overcome these challenges by using various strategies as discussed in the book. The book focuses on two premises: (a) the executive's job is to be effective and (b) effectiveness can be learnt.

Effectiveness is not a “subject,” but self-discipline. Self development of an effective executive is central to the development of the organization. As executives work towards becoming effective, they raise the performance level of the whole organization.

The various inputs given in the book are of great relevance in day to day practical workplace manifestations. The inputs provided throughout the book are reflections of the actual interface between theories and practices. The reader remains engrossed as his/her curiosity to know about himself/herself is aroused. Some examples from India provide tangibility and a real feel of the intricacies of managerial practices in India. To summarize, effective executives need to :

- (i) First, manage thyself.
- (ii) Do what you're made for.
- (iii) Work how you work best.
- (iv) Count your time, and make it count.
- (v) Prepare better meetings.
- (vi) Don't make a hundred decisions when one will do.
- (vii) Identify your one big distinctive impact.
- (viii) Stop what you would not start.
- (ix) Run lean.
- (x) Be useful.

This book will certainly give a new direction to both the content development and pedagogy re-alignment for effective management learning. On the whole, the book is a welcome addition to the available literature on management as it is useful to a broad audience including practising managers, students, and academicians. The more and more one thinks about applying this in management teaching, the greater and greater potential it reveals. One can apply the opening verse to simply explain how the vision and strategy continuously change under the turbulent interaction of the different environment forces and thereby make organizations satisfied and happy.

The idea of reviewing this book evolved from the repeated persuasions and growing demand of sincere and well-meaning young MBA executives who interacted with me during orientation programmes, which were conducted by me in different management institutes and universities.

Author's Contribution

Dr. Nitin Girdharwal has done the analysis of the book and wrote the book review.

Conflict of Interest

The author certifies that he has no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest, or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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