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The 4-Hour Workweek, Expanded and Updated: Expanded and Updated, With Over 100 New Pages of Cutting-Edge Content.

by Timothy Ferriss

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44 Highlights

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 561

When I was in data storage sales, my first gig out of college, I realized that most cold calls didn't get to the intended person for one reason: gatekeepers. If I simply made all my calls from 8:00–8:30 A.M. and 6:00–6:30 P.M., for a total of one hour, I was able to avoid secretaries and book more than twice as many meetings as the senior sales executives who called from 9–5. In other words, I got twice the results for 1/8 the time.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 605

For all of the most important things, the timing always sucks. Waiting for a good time to quit your job? The stars will never align and the traffic lights of life will never all be green at the same time. The universe doesn't conspire against you, but it doesn't go out of its way to line up all the pins either. Conditions are never perfect. "Someday" is a disease that will take your dreams to the grave with you. Pro and con lists are just as bad. If it's important to you and you want to do it "eventually," just do it and correct course along the way. 5. Ask for Forgiveness, Not Permission.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 619

It is far more lucrative and fun to leverage your strengths instead of attempting to fix all the chinks in your armor. The choice is between multiplication of results using strengths or incremental improvement fixing weaknesses that will, at best, become mediocre. Focus on better use of your best weapons instead of constant repair.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 713

Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action. —BENJAMIN DISRAELI, former British Prime Minister

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 811

What we fear doing most is usually what we most need to do. As I have heard said, a person's success in life can usually be measured by the number of uncomfortable conversations he or she is willing to have. Resolve to do one thing every day that you fear. I got into this habit by attempting to contact celebrities and famous businesspeople for advice.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 829

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?” “That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat. “I don’t much care where ...” said Alice. “Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 859

It’s lonely at the top. Ninety-nine percent of people in the world are convinced they are incapable of achieving great things, so they aim for the mediocre. The level of competition is thus fiercest for “realistic” goals, paradoxically making them the most time- and energy-consuming. It is easier to raise \$1,000,000 than it is \$100,000. It is easier to pick up the one perfect 10 in the bar than the five 8s. If you are insecure, guess what? The rest of the world is, too. Do not overestimate the competition and underestimate yourself. You are better than you think.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 883

Excitement is the more practical synonym for happiness, and it is precisely what you should strive to chase. It is the cure-all. When people suggest you follow your “passion” or your “bliss,” I propose that they are, in fact, referring to the same singular concept: excitement. This brings us full circle. The question you should be asking isn’t, “What do I want?” or “What are my goals?” but “What would excite me?”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 956

My maxim comes from Samuel Beckett, a personal hero of mine: ‘Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.’ You won’t believe what you can accomplish by attempting the impossible with the courage to repeatedly fail better.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 962

Ferris is proud of the effort students have put into his contest. “Most people can do absolutely awe-inspiring things,” he said. “Sometimes they just need a little nudge.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1029

I’m not a big believer in long-term planning and far-off goals. In fact, I generally set 3-month and 6-month dreamlines. The variables change too much and in-the-future distance becomes an excuse for postponing action.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1070

It is vain to do with more what can be done with less. —WILLIAM OF OCCAM (1300–1350), originator of “Occam’s Razor”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1104

would consider the best door-to-door salesperson efficient—that is, refined and excellent at selling door-to-door without wasting time—but utterly ineffective. He or she would sell more using a better vehicle such as e-mail or direct mail. This is also true for the person who checks e-mail 30 times per day and develops an elaborate system of folder rules and sophisticated techniques for ensuring that each of those 30 brain farts moves as quickly as possible. I was a specialist at such professional wheel-spinning. It is efficient on some perverse level, but far from effective.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1109

Here are two truisms to keep in mind: 1. Doing something unimportant well does not make it important. 2. Requiring a lot of time does not make a task important.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1125

Pareto's Law can be summarized as follows: 80% of the outputs result from 20% of the inputs. Alternative ways to phrase this, depending on the context, include: 80% of the consequences flow from 20% of the causes. 80% of the results come from 20% of the effort and time. 80% of company profits come from 20% of the products and customers. 80% of all stock market gains are realized by 20% of the investors and 20% of an individual portfolio.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1135

The next morning, I began a dissection of my business and personal life through the lenses of two questions: 1. Which 20% of sources are causing 80% of my problems and unhappiness? 2. Which 20% of sources are resulting in 80% of my desired outcomes and happiness?

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1173

Make no mistake, maximum income from minimal necessary effort (including minimum number of customers) is the primary goal.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1206

You don't need 8 hours per day to become a legitimate millionaire—let alone have the means to live like one. Eight hours per week is often excessive, but I don't expect all of you to believe me just yet. I know you probably feel as I did for a long time: There just aren't enough hours in the day. But let's consider a few things we can probably agree on. Since we have 8 hours to fill, we fill 8 hours. If we had 15, we would fill 15. If we have an emergency and need to suddenly leave work in 2 hours but have pending deadlines, we miraculously complete those assignments in 2 hours.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1221

Parkinson's Law dictates that a task will swell in (perceived) importance and complexity in relation to the time allotted for its completion. It is the magic of the imminent deadline.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1226

There are two synergistic approaches for increasing productivity that are inversions of each other: 1. Limit tasks to the important to shorten work time (80/20). 2. Shorten work time to limit tasks to the important (Parkinson's Law). The best solution is to use both together: Identify the few critical tasks that contribute most to income and schedule them with very short and clear deadlines.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1258

At least three times per day at scheduled times, he had to ask himself the following question: Am I being productive or just active? Charney captured the essence of this with less-abstract wording: Am I inventing things to do to avoid the important? He eliminated all of the activities he used as crutches and began to focus on demonstrating results instead of showing dedication. Dedication is often just meaningless work in disguise. Be ruthless and cut the fat.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1268

The key to having more time is doing less, and there are two paths to getting there, both of which should be used together: (1) Define a to-do list and (2) define a not-to-do list. In general terms, there are but two questions:

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1508

Learn to be difficult when it counts. In school as in life, having a reputation for being assertive will help you receive preferential treatment without having to beg or fight for it every time.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1991

Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything. If you're a man, you take it. —MALCOLM X, Malcolm X Speaks

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2167

don't like being dependent on one person, and I don't recommend it in the least. In the world of high technology, this type of dependency would be referred to as a "single point of failure"—one fragile item upon which all else depends. In the world of IT,¹⁵ the term "redundancy" is used as a selling point for systems that continue to function if there is a malfunction or mechanical failure in any given part. In the context of VAs, redundancy entails having fallback support. I recommend that you hire a VA firm or VAs with backup teams instead of sole operators. Examples abound, of course, of people who have had a single assistant for decades without incident, but I suggest that this is the exception rather than the rule. Better safe than sorry.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2433

Our goal is simple: to create an automated vehicle for generating cash without consuming time. That's it.²² I will call this vehicle a "muse" whenever possible to separate it from the ambiguous term "business," which can

refer to a lemonade stand or a Fortune 10 oil conglomerate—our objective is more limited and thus requires a more precise label. So first things first: cash flow and time. With these two currencies, all other things are possible. Without them, nothing is possible.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2483

When I was younger ... I [didn't] want to be pigeonholed ... Basically, now you want to be pigeonholed. It's your niche. —JOAN CHEN, actress; appeared in *The Last Emperor* and *Twin Peaks*

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2486

Creating demand is hard. Filling demand is much easier. Don't create a product, then seek someone to sell it to. Find a market—define your customers—then find or develop a product for them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2546

have found that a price range of \$50–200 per sale provides the most profit for the least customer service hassle. Price high and then justify.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2551

Contact contract manufacturers who specialize in the type of products you're considering: <http://www.thomasnet.com/>. Call a related manufacturer (e.g., toilet bowls) if you need a referral to a related manufacturer you cannot find (e.g., toilet cleaning solutions).

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2579

Some of the world's best-known brands and products have been borrowed from someone or somewhere else. The basis for the energy drink Red Bull came from a tonic in Thailand, and the Smurfs were brought from Belgium. Pokémon came from the land of Honda. The band KISS made millions in record and concert sales, but the real profit has been in licensing—granting others the right to produce hundreds of products with their name and image in exchange for a percentage of sales.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2634

The degree to which you personally need expert status also depends on how you obtain your content. There are three main options. 1. Create the content yourself, often via paraphrasing and combining points from several books on a topic. 2. Repurpose content that is in the public domain and not subject to copyright protection, such as government documents and material that predates modern copyright law. 3. License content or compensate an expert to help create content. Fees can be one-time and paid up front or royalty-based (5–10% of net revenue, for example).

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2683

Join ProfNet, which is a service that journalists use to find experts to quote for articles. Getting PR is simple if you stop shouting and start listening. Use steps 1, 3, and 4 to demonstrate credibility and online research to respond to journalist queries. Done properly, this will get you featured in media ranging from small local publications to the New York Times and ABC News.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2696

Find Yoda (3 Days) Call at least one potential superstar mentor per day for three days. E-mail only after attempting a phone call. I recommend calling before 8:30 A.M. or after 6:00 P.M. to reduce run-ins with secretaries and other gatekeepers. Have a single question in mind, one that you have researched but have been unable to answer yourself. Shoot for “A” players—CEOs, ultrasuccessful entrepreneurs, famous authors, etc.—and don’t aim low to make it less frightening.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3633

By working faithfully eight hours a day, you may eventually get to be a boss and work twelve hours a day. — ROBERT FROST, American poet and winner of four Pulitzer Prizes

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3785

you had a heart attack, and assuming your boss were sympathetic, how could you work remotely for four weeks? If you hit a brick wall with a task that doesn’t seem remote-compatible or if you predict resistance from your boss, ask the following: What are you accomplishing with this task—what is the purpose? If you had to find other ways to accomplish the same—if your life depended on it—how would you do it? Remote conferencing? Video conferencing? GoToMeeting, GoToMyPC, DimDim.com (Mac), or related services? Why would your boss resist remote work? What is the immediate negative effect it would have on the company and what could you do to prevent or minimize

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3821

LIFESTYLE DESIGN IN ACTION Consider trying Earth Class Mail, a service that you can reroute all your mail to, at which point they scan and e-mail you everything that comes in, giving you the option of recycling/shredding junk, getting a scan of the contents, or having specific items forwarded to you or someone you designate.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 4983

met with my Japanese publisher, Seishisha, and had media interviews in Tokyo, where the 4HWW is now #1 in several of the largest chains. I took a complete 10-day media fast and felt like I’d had a two-year vacation from computers. I attended the Tokyo International Film Festival and hung out with one of my heroes, the producer of the Planet Earth television series.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 4988

Once you realize that you can turn off the noise without the world ending, you're liberated in a way that few people ever know. Just remember: If you don't have attention, you don't have time. Did I have time to check e-mail and voicemail? Sure. It might take 10 minutes. Did I have the attention to risk fishing for crises in those 10 minutes? Not at all.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 5030

doesn't matter how many people don't get it. What matters is how many people do. If you have a strong informed opinion, don't keep it to yourself. Try to help people and make the world a better place. If you strive to do anything remotely interesting, just expect a small percentage of the population to always find a way to take it personally. F*ck 'em. There are no statues erected to critics.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 5127

For example: Is your weekend really free if you find a crisis in the inbox Saturday morning that you can't address until Monday morning? Even if the inbox scan lasts 30 seconds, the preoccupation and forward projection for the subsequent 48 hours effectively deletes that experience from your life. You had time but you didn't have attention, so the time had no practical value. The choice-minimal lifestyle becomes an attractive tool when we consider two truths.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 5131

Considering options costs attention that then can't be spent on action or present-state awareness. 2. Attention is necessary for not only productivity but appreciation.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 5164

Regret is past-tense decision making. Eliminate complaining to minimize regret. Condition yourself to notice complaints and stop making them with a simple program like the "21-day no-complaint experiment" made famous by Will Bowen, where you wear a single bracelet and move it from one wrist to the other each time you complain.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 5277

Limit Downside to Ensure Upside—SACRIFICE MARGIN FOR SAFETY Don't manufacture product in large quantities to increase margin unless your product and marketing are tested and ready for rollout without changes. If a limited number of prototypes cost \$10 per piece to manufacture and sell for \$11 each, that's fine for the initial testing period, and essential for limiting downside. Sacrifice margin temporarily for the testing phase, if need be, and avoid potentially fatal upfront overcommitments.
