Focal Point
A Proven System to Simplify Your Life, Double Your Productivity, and Achieve All Your Goals
by Brian Tracy

When an "ordinary" neighbor, friend or colleague suddenly rockets to success, most of us chalk up their good fortune to pure luck, office politics or endless hours of backbreaking work. But in some cases, these factors have nothing at all to do with it.

More and more, people are learning to achieve maximum success by identifying "focal points" in their lives, and then concentrating all of their energies on those few things they need to do to accomplish their most sought-after goals. The well-known "80/20 Rule" tells us that 20 percent of our tasks contribute 80 percent of the value of all the things we do. And so by identifying those activities that fall into the bottom 80 percent, and then eliminating as many of them as we can, some experts feel it is possible to increase both our productivity, and our time off.

Best-selling author and motivational speaker Brian Tracy has found through experience that most people are pretty skeptical when they hear claims such as these. Despite the existence of ample evidence to the contrary, the average person simply does not believe that it is possible to double one's income while simultaneously giving oneself more time off.

This is because most people are still trapped in what Tracy calls an "ancient paradigm" — they believe that the only way they can affect their incomes is by increasing the number of hours they work. In fact, many people often feel guilty when they are not working themselves to the point of exhaustion each and every day. But this way of life is clearly not sustainable.

Brian Tracy has seen first-hand with his own clients that there is a better way. This is why he decided to create Focal Point — a proven system to simplify your life, double your productivity and achieve all your goals. Field-tested and honed through over 20 years of research and practical experience, Focal Point is designed to help you to achieve life-altering results by focusing exclusively on higher-value activities in all aspects of your life.

Focal Point teaches you how to do personal strategic planning in seven fundamental areas: business and career, money and investments, family and relationships, health and fitness, personal development, community involvement, and spiritual enlightenment. You then learn how to develop your own personalized action plan for achieving rapid results in those areas of life that are most important to you.

Unlock Your Full Potential

You can dramatically improve the overall quality of your life faster than you might
think possible. All you need, says Tracy, is the desire to make a change, the
decision to take action, the discipline to practice the new behaviors you have
chosen, and the determination to persist until you get the results you want.

Unlocking your full potential isn’t as challenging as you might think. This is
because, in Tracy’s view, there are essentially only four very simple steps that
need to be taken to improve the quality of your life and work:

1. **Do MORE of certain things** — ideally the things that are of greater value to
you, and which bring you greater rewards and satisfaction.

2. **Do LESS of other things.** Deliberately decide to reduce or discontinue
activities that are not as helpful as others, as well as behaviors that can
actually hinder your ability to accomplish your goals.

3. **START doing some things you are not doing at all today.** You can make
new choices, learn new skills, begin new projects or change the entire
focus of your work or personal life.

4. **STOP doing certain things altogether.** "Stand back and evaluate your life
with fresh eyes," advises Tracy. "You may then decide to discontinue
activities and behaviors that are no longer consistent with where you want
to go. Most of the time, unsuccessful, unhappy people have too many bad
habits that are holding them back."

Implementing these four simple steps is largely a matter of personal choice, says
Tracy. And among the most important personal choices you will ever make is
accepting complete responsibility for everything you are and everything you will
ever be. "Accepting responsibility is what separates the superior person from the
average person," Tracy writes. "It is the foundation of high self-esteem, self-
respect and personal pride. So from now on, if you are not happy with any part of
your life say 'I am responsible,' and get busy changing it."

**Tracy’s Grand Slam Formula**

The Grand Slam Formula is the cornerstone of Brian Tracy’s Focal Point process.
It is the key to doubling your income as well as your time off. The Formula has
four main components: Simplification, Leveraging, Acceleration and Multiplication
(S-L-A-M). Here’s the Formula in a nutshell:

**Simplify** – "To get better control of your time both at home and at work, you must
learn to simplify everything you do," writes Tracy. "You must continually reduce
and eliminate activities that take up too much time and contribute little or nothing
to your goals."

To simplify your life, Tracy suggests using zero-based thinking as a strategy for
shedding low-value activities. Here’s how it works: ask yourself "Is there anything I
am doing right now that, knowing what I know today, I wouldn’t get into if I were
starting over?" If your answer is "yes," then your next question is, "How do I get
out of this situation, and how fast?”

Chapter 3 of Tracy's book deals extensively with the simplification process. For example, he sometimes advises his clients to articulate an ideal future vision. What do you need to add to your life, and what do you need to eliminate to realize your vision? “The very act of becoming clear about what you want and where you want to be can dramatically increase the likelihood that you will realize your goals as you imagined them,” he says.

Tracy also strongly recommends that people practice the habit of saying "no" to any new demand on their time that is not consistent with what they want most out of life. Smaller steps like clearing clutter off your desk, throwing out old magazines and giving your old clothes to charity can also make a big difference, says Tracy.

**Leverage** – The second letter in the Grand Slam Formula stands for leverage. It’s about leveraging your strengths and abilities to achieve more than you thought you could.

By Tracy's count, there are at least six forms of leverage available to the average person. The first form of leverage is other people's knowledge. One key piece of knowledge applied to your efforts can save you enormous amounts of time and money, he says. Successful people understand this, which is why they are like radar screens, constantly sweeping the minds of others for good ideas and insights they can apply to their own lives.

The second form of leverage is other people's energy. Highly effective people are always looking for ways to delegate and outsource lower-value activities so they have more time to focus on those that yield the highest payoff. Another form of leverage is other people's money. You should always be looking for ways to borrow and invest money to achieve returns that exceed the cost of that money, advises Tracy.

A fourth and fifth form of leverage are other people's successes, as well as their failures. Many of the greatest successes in history have come about as a result of carefully studying the failures of other people in similar fields and learning from them.

Tracy's sixth and final form of leverage is other people's contacts or other people's credibility. Who do you know that could open doors for you, or introduce you to the right people, asks Tracy? One well-timed, well-handled introduction to the right person could change the direction of your life forever.

**Accelerate** – the third letter in the Grand Slam Formula stands for accelerate. In today's society, there is an incredible appetite for speed. Everyone is growing increasingly impatient with everyone else. For this reason, people who are able to act quickly to satisfy the needs of others — especially key customers — usually get rewarded.
Recognizing the importance of learning to do things faster, Tracy also stresses the need to set aside time for yourself. For optimum health and productivity, Tracy recommends paying more attention to little things, like getting proper sleep, eating a balanced diet (including nutritional supplements), setting aside 30 minutes per day for spiritual solitude, drinking one glass of water per hour and, of course, getting proper exercise.

Tracy admits that finding extra time to exercise and cook proper meals can be challenging. But effective time management is synonymous with effective life management, which is why it is so important not to misuse or waste too many precious minutes in any given day.

Many highly effective people plan their days in tight time segments, writes Tracy. They think in terms of fifteen minute blocks. Because they plan activities in advance, they learn to make every minute count, and thus they accomplish vastly more than the average person.

Above all, however, Tracy reminds us that the ancient Greeks had a saying: "Moderation in all things." In today's fast-paced, fast-food world, this philosophy helps us to remember that even speed and efficiency need to be used in moderation. A properly balanced life also involves taking the odd day off just to rest and relax.

Multiply – The fourth and final word in the S-L-A-M acronym is multiply. Tracy's recommended technique for multiplying your efforts is to work with other people who have skills and abilities that are complimentary to your own. "A good manager becomes a multiplication sign when she learns how to co-ordinate the work of different people so that the outcome of the team is far greater than the outcome of the individuals working alone," he says. "Your ability to assemble a team of excellent people and then motivate them to accomplish important tasks is central to your long-term personal success."

Outside of the office, multiplication techniques can also be applied to the organization of one's family life, often with surprising results. While perhaps not for everyone, Tracy suggests that some families may want to create a mission statement that guides and directs its members' behavior toward each other. It doesn't have to be complicated, he says. Something simple like: "Our family mission is to create a loving environment where everyone feels safe, respected and free to develop his or her individual potential to become everything he or she is capable of becoming."

By becoming a role model and living your work or family's mission statement, the more likely it is that you will be able to transform your life, and the lives of others, from something ordinary into something truly extraordinary.

Conclusion

It is often said that the average person uses only 10 percent of his or her
potential. According to studies done at Stanford University, however, it is actually
closer to 5 percent. This means that, on average, people have enormous reserves
of potential that they consistently fail to use. But if you were to use only a small
additional percentage of your natural, inborn capabilities, you could be healthier,
happier and more prosperous than you have ever imagined.

"Too many people settle for far less than they are truly capable of. They convince
themselves, or allow themselves to be convinced, on the basis of flimsy evidence,
that they lack the potential and ability of others who are doing better than them,"
says Tracy. "I believe, however, that each person has the potential to do
something wonderful with his or her life, if only they learn how to focus on what's
most important and direct their energies accordingly."

For true believers like Brian Tracy and thousands of others across North America,
there are almost no limits to what you can be, do, or have when you apply the
Focal Point process to your life.