



REWORK

by Jason Fried & David Heinemeier Hansson



Overview

This book discusses non-traditional methods to grow a successful business, even if you have never considered it before. The authors have successfully made millions of dollars by doing things their way. The tools that used to be available only to a select few are now available to anyone, usually for free. Sometimes it's better *not* to focus on your competition, to learn from *successes* not failures, and to *underdo* the competition.

"Sometimes it's better to be a quitter than a hero... let's say you think a task can be done in two hours. Four hours in you're still only a quarter of the way done. So you go into hero mode. You're determined to make it work, you grab your cape and shut yourself off from the world. But is it worth it? Probably not."

Introduction:

This book is not based on academic theories, but rather personal experience. The two started a small web design firm in 1999 and now make millions of dollars per year. Their staff of 16 focuses on defying expectations and doing things their own way.

First:

- The New Reality: Technology that was once thousands of dollars is now few dollars or even free. Tools once out of reach are readily available. One person can often do the job of two or three people. This book is for those who already have a successful business, but also for people who have never dreamed of starting a business. Today, you don't need an office, and can work with people hundreds of miles away whom you've never met. This completely changes the rules of the game.

Takedowns:

- Ignore the Real World: Plenty of naysayers will claim that your ideas will never work in the "real

world"; don't listen to them and their excuses for mediocrity. The world may limit *them*, but the author's company defies plenty of expectations.

- Learning from Mistakes is Overrated: Most people say to learn from your mistakes. Instead, learn from successes, for once you know what works, you can probably do it again, this time even better!
- Planning is Guessing: There are too many factors that will be out of your hands to plan for the future such as market conditions, competitors, and customers. Recognize that you're just guessing; you must be able to swiftly throw your "plans" aside, improvise, and adapt to opportunities (discussed in [Adaptability](#)). While you *should* think about the future and overcoming obstacles, don't obsess about it, for things will not necessarily come out how your plan describes.
- Why Grow?: In business it's considered more impressive and professional to have a larger business. Why? Do we value Harvard or Oxford because of their size? No, and we should treat businesses the same way. Don't make assumptions about how big you *should* be; if anything, be wary of it; many a company has met its premature death from large, premature hiring periods. "Small is not just a stepping stone. Small is a great destination in itself."
- Workaholicism: "Our culture celebrates the idea of the workaholic...not only is this workaholicism unnecessary, its stupid" Working like this is not sustainable over time and tries to make up for intellectual laziness by throwing more hours at problems. In addition, it leads to poor morale when others are unable to do the same, and skews your own value judgments since you cannot determine what is worth the extra effort and what is not.
- Enough with "Entrepreneurs": Let the term die. Replace this word with something more down-to-earth like "Starters", because this is a new age of young people starting businesses, just doing what they love and getting paid to do it.

