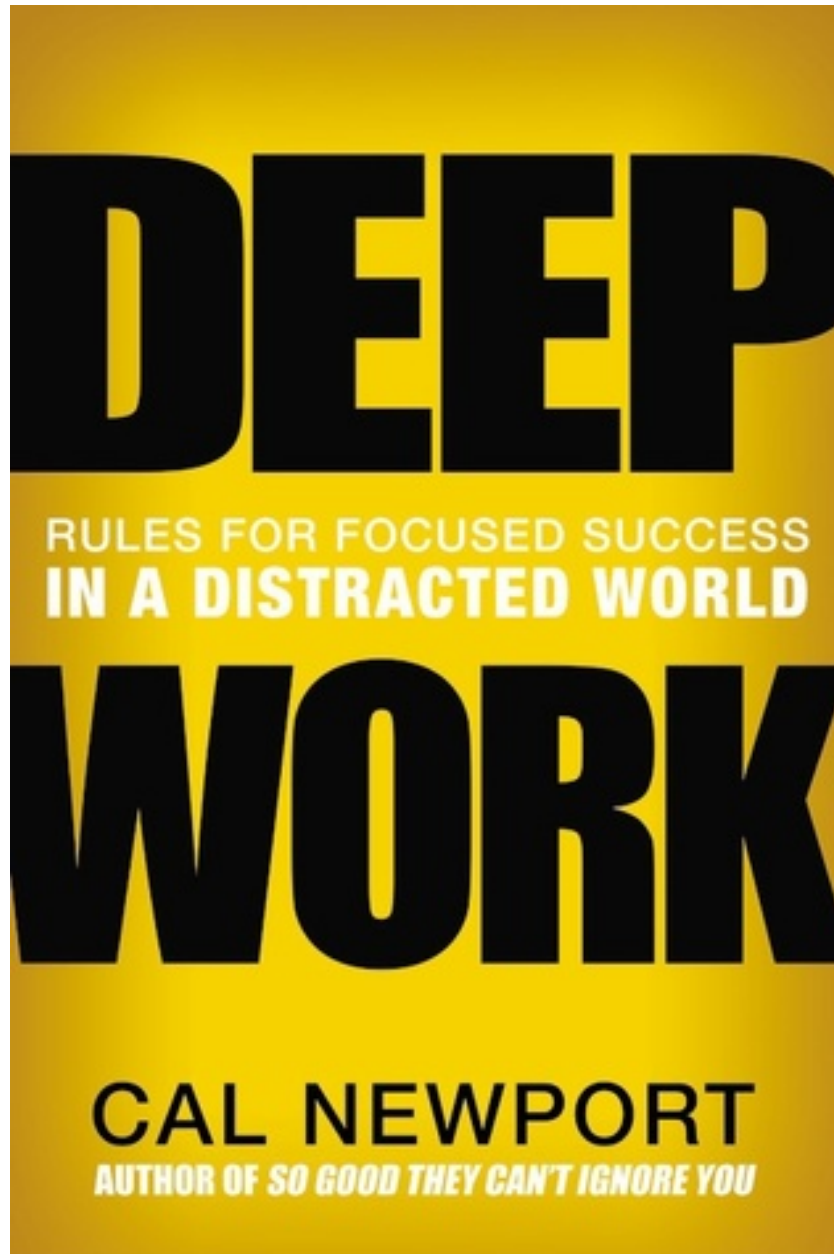


Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World Book PDF Download



By:
Cal Newport

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What people Say:

Adam Zerner

Overview: the thesis is that deep work is both rare and valuable in today's world. That's about 1/3 of the book. The rest of the book is practical advice on how to pursue deep work.

Part of me feels like a lot of what was said in the book is common sense. Particularly things that people know but can't find the willpower to do. I think that there is some truth to this. But there's also a difference between "knowing", and *knowing*. I think this book can help take a lot of people from "knowing" to *

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I gave this book a 5 star rating primarily because of how important I think the topic is. By following the advice, I think it could be genuinely life changing.

Things I personally am planning to change after reading the book:

- A rekindled commitment to eliminating distraction/shallow work from my life. I'm willing to be ruthless in this pursuit. Ex. no more reading marginally useful articles.
- A rekindled commitment to seek out hard things. As Paul Graham puts it, "run uphill".
- Research says that 4 hours is sort of the limit for how much legitimate deep work a human can do in one day. There are also tons of examples of successful people who only put in ~4 hours of deep work per day. So I don't feel (as) guilty anymore about the amount of actual work I get done each day.
- Setting a cutoff point each day. "I don't do any work after 7:00pm". Your brain needs to recharge, and before it can recharge, it needs the confidence to know that there won't be any more incoming work requests until morning. I've noticed that being "constantly on" really stresses me out and makes me less productive, so it needs to stop.

Rachel Bayles

If you do one thing to improve your life this year, subscribe to Dr. Newport's blog and start reading his books. I would suggest starting with "So Good They Can't Ignore You" and then read "Deep Work." They compliment each other. The first helps you sort out what you should be focusing on, and the second one tells you how to make sure what's important gets done. Over the years I've read lots of productivity books, and the related literature. But his approach to work impacts me everyday, and noth

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SR

Worth reading. Helped me make some drastic changes in my schedule. I will post an update how these changes went after six months.

What I learned: (spoiler alerts)

1. Figure out what is most valuable to your success.
2. Spend most of the time on it, mostly in the early hours of your day where your attention span is long.
3. Try to spend at least 3 deep sessions on it approx. 90 min each.
4. Almost anything other than your main task is a shallow task.
5. Bunch all the shallow tasks into one deep task.
- 6.

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What I learned: (spoiler alerts)

Holger Matthies

It is easy to lose yourself in shallow work - I'll agree with the author. Other than that, there is very little of value or substance in this book. You might want to review your excessive tweeting. You might stop using Facebook altogether. You might abandon email.

The problem is that the real ideas (have sender filter their own email, take time away from office, take email sabbaticals) might work for specialists, freelancers, entry-level workers or academics, like the author. But not once does th

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Another problem is that the author continuously touts his own horn. How many grants he got. How many children he fathered. How many books he wrote. How much he travels.

If you want original ideas, this is the wrong place. Read David Allen instead, whose ideas permeate

this book to a degree, but who cannot be quoted every second page although he should be.

Chris

This had a lot of valuable ideas about the importance of deep work and how to do it. Most people are going to buy into this concept easily enough, but Cal did a nice job further arguing it with some examples, various research, and so on...but this book also felt like a very good 100-page book that was stretched into a mediocre 260-page book. It's repetitive. And his research often relies on the "correlation = causation" mistake. For example, someone gives up social media, so instead of writing 4

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...Hmm, not exactly.

That probably does play a part, but someone naturally gets smarter as their career progresses (at least in the beginning), so the speed and quality of their work likely improves. Plus, researchers build off their previous research, which I assume makes it easier for them to publish more, more easily. As well, in the world of academic publishing, you might get asked to be a co-author on a paper (such as the 4th or 5th author), especially as your stature in the discipline grows, and when you're a 4th or 5th author, your contribution might be very little, thus taking very little of your time.

In this book, Cal implies that Bill Gates is as successful as he is, because of his commitment to deep work. Well...sure, but also a "right place at the right time" situation, right (see the Malcolm Gladwell essay about this in "Outliers"), as well as just natural intelligence and aptitude--things that Cal kind of ignores or shrugs off.

An author like Jonathan Franzen can more easily shrug off Twitter and other social media, and instead engage in mostly deep work, because anything he writes gets a lot of attention already, because he's a famous/popular author. A less well-known author does need to prioritize deep work, but also probably has to tweet and do some of these other "shallow tasks," as that's how people build up attention for their product/brand, when the world won't automatically pay attention to it. Yes, the actual work itself should be more important, but this other component is also (unfortunately) important to the success (money/attention) of their deep work. These are things Cal seems to mostly ignore (in between reminding you every five pages that he published 9 papers in a year).

So I found some of his conclusions slightly flawed (in their methods or their data to back it up), even if the point of the conclusions (that you will be more productive if you eliminate shallow tasks), I did buy.