



*The following information contains Tom's personal notes and opinions/ key takeaways that he gained whilst reading 'Great At Work', and also valued statements and examples that Morten Hansen has used in his writing.*

## **GREAT AT WORK – HOW TOP PERFORMERS DO LESS AND ACHIEVE MORE**

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### 7 Work smart practices seemed to explain a substantial portion of performance

1. Small set of priorities and make huge efforts in those areas (SCOPE)
2. Focus on creating value (TARGETING)
3. Stop mindless repetition in favour of better skills practice (QUALITY LEARNING)
4. Seek roles that match your passion with strong sense of purpose (INNER MOTIVATION)
5. Shrewdly deploy influence tactics to gain the support of others (ADVOCACY)
6. Make sure meetings are structured to deliver outcomes and spark vigorous debate (rigorous teamwork)
7. Carefully pick which cross unit projects to get involved in and say NO to less productive ones (DISCIPLINED COLLABORATION)

### **Top performers did LESS and MORE – less volume + More concentrated effort**

Top performers matched passion with a sense of purpose.

**To work smart means to maximise the value of your work by selecting a few activities and applying intense targeted effort.**

### What explains Individual performance – stats from 5000 people in study

- 7 Smart work practices – 66%
- Hours per week – 6%
- Demographics (background, age) – 4%
- Unexplained –24%



The term focus consists of two activities: choosing a few priorities and then dedicating your efforts toward excelling at them. Many people prioritize a few items at work, but they don't obsess – they simply do less – that's a mistake.

**Do Less than obsess** – affects performance more than any other practice in this book.

**Spread too thin** – the more items we attend to, the less time we can allot to each, and the less well we will perform any of them.

**Do less – no stress** – these people failed to obsess and didn't have great performance.

### Why people can't focus at work (5000 study)

- 38% - Too broad scope
- 21% - Temptations – can't resist getting side tracked
- 24% - Do more bosses – had bosses who kept dumping more things onto them
- 17% - other

Tie yourself to the mast (sailing ship analogy)– find ways to block out distractions. Key is to devise these tactics '**ahead of time**'

To focus on being able to write the book the writer bought a laptop and removed internet and messages etc – everything but Word and then did 2 hour blocks at Starbucks.

Some people use Headphones, or Orange armbands (leave me alone)

Many top performers reported having bosses who gave them clear direction, set specific goals and had few priorities.

**Research has shown that stand up meetings are 34% shorter than sit down meetings and then decisions they produce are equally effective.**

To get better feedback ask more specific questions

1. What ideas do you have to improve patient food service

To improve a skill

1. Dedicated 15 Minutes per day
2. Pick one and only one skill at a time to develop

The best adaptors combine redesign and the learning loop. Example was surgical teams that shifted from Open heart surgery to a new method, minimally invasive cardiac surgery. The successful adaptors first embraced redesign because they understood minimally invasive surgery for what it was; a radical

couldn't cross over to the new surgical method regarded it as simply an extension of existing methods. The successful teams looped their learning, the held trials and incorporated feedback from team members, the unsuccessful ones did so sparingly or didn't meet to solicit feedback.

### Purpose and passion

They are not the same

Passion is 'do what you love' while purpose is 'do what contributes'

Passion asks 'what can I give the world' passion asks ' what can the world give me?'

### Make them Upset ... and excited

The best performers went way beyond rational arguments and adopted various tactics to advocate their projects

Work on people emotions – make them fearful about the current state and joyful about the outcomes if they take on your initiative

Jamie Oliver – dumped a truck load of pure animal fat into a huge open dumpster to show parents and students the amount of fat they were consuming.

Make them feel purpose - medical company at conference had survivors of their products speak about how their products had saved them – Now that's why they go to work.

### Meeting effectiveness

- Show up prepared to contribute
- Have it structured
- Craft an opinion and deliver it with conviction and data
- Stay open to others ideas, not just your own
- Let the best argument win, even if it isn't yours (and often it isn't)
- Feel free to get emotional but never make the argument personal
- Always listen – really listen – to minority views
- Never pursue the consensus for its own sake.

Chance for new ideas is greater when you bring in people from different cultural backgrounds.

Small changes can lead to big results

- Only attend meetings where I must be present
- Don't create extra PowerPoint slides
- Redesign to add more activities that create value and stop or reject work that doesn't.
  - HP manager submitted the ¼ report on time (achieved his goal) but no one at head office was reading it (zero value creation).

