



## The Power to Get Things Done: (Whether You Feel Like It or Not)

By Steve Levinson Ph.D., Chris Cooper

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**Turn your good intentions into action.**

"This book contains a ton of practical and easy-to-implement techniques and strategies for getting yourself to do whatever needs to be done." --Jack Canfield, coauthor of *The Success Principles* and the bestselling *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series.

Whether you run your own business or work for someone else, you've probably got a lot on your plate. Along with the portion of your work that you truly feel like doing comes a generous helping of things you'd rather not do.

As consultants, Steve Levinson and Chris Cooper have seen countless clients struggle—and often fail—to do the many success-producing things they know they *should* do but don't feel like doing.

*The Power to Get Things Done* will teach you how to consistently turn your good intentions into action so that you can be as successful as possible in the work you do.

Don't feel like filing those pesky tax forms or making the follow-up calls you've been putting off? *The Power to Get Things Done* will show you how to get yourself--and keep yourself--in gear.

Levinson and Cooper offer you a host of practical solutions, including:

- the smart way to think about and treat your own good intentions
- three key principles of following through that will change everything
- simple but powerful principles and strategies that will turn you into a follow-through champion.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

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### About the Author

**Steve Levinson, Ph.D.**, is a licensed clinical psychologist and inventor who specializes in helping people follow through on their own good intentions.

**Chris Cooper** is an internationally recognized business expert, entrepreneur, and popular radio show host who has achieved remarkable success by using the principles and strategies revealed in this book.

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## **FOREWORD**

Whether you're in business for yourself or you work for a company, the better able you are to do what you intend to do, whether you feel like it or not, the more successful you're likely to be. Without a doubt, the ability to turn good intentions into action is one of the most valuable assets that anyone who is serious about success can have.

Clearly, however, some of us are naturally better at this than others, and a rare few are even blessed with built-in unstoppable determination; they are veritable productivity machines. For them, there's no space at all between a good intention and the action it calls for. If they decide something should be done, they just do it—whether they feel like it or not.

But what if, like most of us, your determination is anything but unstoppable? What if you're not naturally driven to instantly turn every good intention into action? What if, like most people who want to be successful, you sometimes—maybe even often—know exactly what you should do but still put off doing it, or do it without the enthusiasm and energy it takes to do it well, or never even get around to doing it at all?

What can we do about this? How do we make ourselves do the things we know we should do but don't feel like doing? Are you simply doomed to settle for less success?

With this book, Levinson and Cooper provide the answers to these questions and more. They explain that just because you may not be a natural-born success machine with built-in, unstoppable determination, it most certainly does *not* mean you have to settle. You *can* improve your ability to turn your good intentions into success-producing action, and no, you don't need a brain transplant, a personality transfusion, or years of therapy. All it takes is knowing *how* to improve by learning and applying a few simple, clever principles, concepts, insights, and strategies.

The premise of *The Power to Get Things Done* is quite exciting when you really think about it. Just imagine what a difference it would make to be able to do the success-producing things you know you should do even

when you dread doing them. Whether procrastination is built into your nature or it simply gets the best of you from time to time, no longer will you fall victim to it. No longer will you think yourself into inaction on a project or fall into the rut of doing nothing for fear that what you do won't be perfect.

If you're serious about being successful, you can *make* your own unstoppable determination whenever you need it! If you ask me, there couldn't be a more priceless investment in your own future.

—IVAN MISNER, PHD,

*New York Times* bestselling author and founder of BNI

## INTRODUCTION

Whether you run your own business or work for someone else, you've probably got a lot on your plate. Unfortunately, much of it may not be all that appetizing. Along with the portion of your work that you truly feel like doing comes a generous helping of things you'd rather not do. Yet to be successful, you obviously can't just do the things you're eager to do. You also have to do the things that you don't feel like doing.

You probably truly *intend* to do most of the unpleasant things that you decide you should do. But do you actually do them? In other words, do you *follow through*?

Really, do you?

You see, how well you follow through matters. It matters a lot. If you're not consistently doing the things you know you should be doing, you're simply working against yourself. Yes, you're in your own way. You're preventing yourself from being as successful as you could be.

How do we know? Steve is a clinical psychologist, inventor, entrepreneur, and CEO who specializes in helping people follow through on their own good intentions. Chris, who describes himself as a "business elevationist," is a business consultant, executive mentor, and coach who draws on extensive executive-level experience in corporations to elevate performance. First as employees and later as business owners, we've walked in your shoes. We learned the hard way just how much it matters to be able to do whatever we intend to do. Until we actually learned how to follow through, we had our share of follow-through failures. And trust us, they were not pretty.

But that's not all. As consultants, we've seen client after client struggle—and often fail—to do the many success-producing things they know they should do but don't feel like doing. And we've seen the amazing things that clients can accomplish once they actually learn how to consistently turn their good intentions into action.

We wrote this book because we're passionate about calling attention to the vital—but, amazingly, largely overlooked—role that follow-through plays in success. And we're frustrated by society's failure to fully recognize just how important and just how teachable follow-through skills are.

The purpose of this book is simple: to teach you how to consistently turn your good intentions into action so you can be as successful as possible in the work you do.

The book is based on these two premises:

1. The better able you are to do what you know you should do, whether you feel like it or not, the more

success you can achieve in your business, job, or career.

2. By learning and applying a few simple but powerful follow-through concepts and strategies, you can dramatically improve your ability to follow through.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

We're convinced that reading this book will contribute generously to your future success. But be prepared: We might make you a little uncomfortable along the way. That's because we won't be whispering sweet nothings in your ear. We'll challenge some assumptions you may not even be aware of making. We won't hesitate to tell you the truth about how poor follow-through is robbing you of success. And we won't let you pretend that you can do a better job of following through just by trying harder. Instead we'll tell you why you have to stop pretending and start pushing, pulling, prodding, tricking, and forcing yourself into doing—and keeping on doing—the unappealing things you know you must do to be successful.

And, yes, we'll show you how.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

We realize that you're busy, which is why we tried to write this book in a way that would allow you to benefit from it regardless of how much time and effort you're willing and able to invest in reading it.

If you have the time and interest, by all means, please read the entire book. The first section, which explains why it's so hard to follow through and why it's so important, will provide you with an important foundation for the practical advice we'll give you later on. The questions at the end of each chapter are designed to further stimulate your thinking about how to turn your own good intentions into action.

If you just can't wait to get down to the nuts and bolts of how to follow through better, you can skip the foundation and start reading at Part Two. You can always come back later and read Part One.

Regardless of how you read this book initially, we hope that you'll revisit it from time to time. We're confident that once you start paying more attention to how you go about turning your good intentions into action, you'll get something new and valuable each time you visit.

## PART ONE

### Why It's So Hard to Follow Through

Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not. It is the first lesson that ought to be learned and however early a person's training begins, it is probably the last lesson a person learns thoroughly.

—THOMAS HUXLEY

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In this section, we'll explain why it's so hard to do the things you know you should do but don't feel like doing. You'll learn why poor follow-through is not exactly your fault and why greater independence can actually bring special follow-through challenges.

## CHAPTER 1

### WHY MOTIVATION ISN'T ENOUGH

The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off.

—GLORIA STEINEM

Meet Edward. He started his own technology consulting business a few months ago. He's come to the conclusion that his business will grow at a much faster rate if he starts spending more of his time making sales calls. Edward certainly knows how to make sales calls. In fact, he's pretty good at it. But unfortunately, there's nothing he dislikes doing more. Still, there's not a shred of a doubt in Edward's mind about what he should do. He most definitely should make more sales calls—a lot more. After all, he's got a lot on the line, and he badly wants his business to succeed. So Edward promises himself that from now on he'll make lots of sales calls even though he hates making them.

But will Edward actually make more sales calls? Will he follow through on his good intention? Even if he starts, will he keep it up, or will he quickly fizzle out? It seems only logical that Edward's strong motivation to succeed will *override* his distaste for making sales calls. But will it?

How about Megan? She's a department manager for a large chemical company. She just discovered an opportunity to significantly improve her department's bottom line. All she has to do is begin closely monitoring the department's spending on outside services. She knows exactly what she needs to do, knows how to do it, and can certainly afford to spend the fifteen minutes or less a week it will take. The only problem is that, fifteen minutes or not, Megan can't stand doing the kind of tedious detail work that would be required. Still, because she cares about her department's financial performance and its implications for her career, she promises herself that she will start doing the pesky monitoring anyway.

But will Megan actually do the monitoring? And even if she starts, will she continue? In other words, despite her distaste for the success-producing task she's promised to do, will she consistently do what she intends to do? You'd certainly think so. After all, her intention is an expression of her expertise and good judgment as an executive. It points to a way to satisfy her desire to make her department's performance shine while also increasing the chances that she'll someday be offered a position with greater responsibility, which she definitely wants. So surely her intention should overpower her distaste for doing a simple monitoring job. Surely it should. But will it?

Well, we've known lots of Edwards and Megans. They identify things both large and small that they know they could do to be more successful. They promise themselves they'll do them. But their promises are no match for that awful "I don't wanna do it!" feeling in their gut.

If the Edwards and Megans and everyone else like them didn't care so much about being successful, failing to follow through wouldn't be such a tragedy. But they do care. They care a great deal. And so do you.

Whenever you feel that "I don't wanna do it!" feeling, it urges you to put the work off. Maybe you do the work anyway but so reluctantly and halfheartedly that it hardly pays; or you start doing it but then quit long before the job is done; or you simply don't do it at all. The bottom line is that whenever you let that "I don't wanna do it!" feeling win, you're robbing yourself of potential and telling failure where to find you.

### SUCCESS HINGES ON YOUR ABILITY TO FOLLOW THROUGH

There's no way around it. Whether you're striving to achieve success in your business, job, or career, you



must be able to do work that you don't feel like doing. Yet even when you know you *could*, believe you *should*, and promise yourself you *will*, there's a good chance that you *won't*. That's right, you'll neglect some of the success-producing work you don't feel like doing. Having the ability to follow through doesn't absolutely guarantee success. But without the ability to follow through, failure is pretty much a sure thing.

Without the ability to follow through, failure is pretty much a sure thing.

Like us, you've probably worked hard and dreamed hard to get where you are, and you're probably eager to go further. You really can't afford to neglect things that you know can contribute to your success. So why in the world don't you just do the things you know you should do to be as successful as you genuinely want to be? Why would you ever fail to act in accord with your own good intentions? Why wouldn't you always follow through?

## WHY WE DON'T FOLLOW THROUGH

You'll never guess what prevents us from understanding why we don't follow through. It's *logic*. Not enough logic? No! The problem is too much logic! Without even realizing it, we make assumptions that are irresistibly logical but altogether wrong.

In order to understand what makes it so hard to follow through, we have to pay less attention to how we logically think things should work, and pay more attention to how things really do work.

Perhaps the most troublesome assumption we make is that the human mind is properly designed for turning good intentions into action. After all, how could it not be? Well, if you stop assuming and start observing, you'll see that the human mind is, in fact, rather miserably designed for follow-through.

## POOR FOLLOW-THROUGH ISN'T EXACTLY YOUR FAULT

Poor follow-through—failing to do what you realize you could do, have concluded you should do, and promised yourself you will do—isn't exactly your fault.

We're serious. Yes, you're off the hook. If you're having trouble doing what you intend to do, you can legitimately blame it on the design of the human mind.

Forget about your business, your job, or your career for a moment. As a human being, you're simply not wired to naturally do things you don't feel like doing even if you truly intend to do them.

As a psychologist, Steve decided years ago to try and make sense of why even the most highly motivated people so often fail to act in accord with their own good intentions. To make a very long story short, he eventually made a startling discovery that explains why we humans do such a lousy job of doing what we intend to do. His discovery led to a theory that made its official debut in 1998 in *Following Through*, a book he wrote with his colleague and good friend Pete Greider.

What he discovered is that poor follow-through is caused primarily by the mixed-up way the normal human mind treats good intentions.

When it comes to enabling us to follow through on our good intentions, the mind is a big disappointment.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **David Simpson:**

Book is usually written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can recognize everything you want by a book. Book has a different type. As it is known to us that book is important thing to bring us around the world. Adjacent to that you can your reading talent was fluently. A publication The Power to Get Things Done: (Whether You Feel Like It or Not) will make you to always be smarter. You can feel much more confidence if you can know about every thing. But some of you think in which open or reading any book make you bored. It's not make you fun. Why they are often thought like that? Have you looking for best book or suitable book with you?

#### **Jenny Davis:**

Spent a free time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, about to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? May be reading a book could be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the book untitled The Power to Get Things Done: (Whether You Feel Like It or Not) can be very good book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

#### **Patricia Coburn:**

On this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability in doing something more are more valuable than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you should do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. One of many books in the top list in your reading list will be The Power to Get Things Done: (Whether You Feel Like It or Not). This book which can be qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking upwards and review this guide you can get many advantages.

#### **Amber Tyson:**

As a scholar exactly feel bored in order to reading. If their teacher questioned them to go to the library or make summary for some book, they are complained. Just minor students that has reading's heart or real their interest. They just do what the professor want, like asked to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading very seriously. Any students feel that reading through is not important, boring along with can't see colorful pictures on there. Yeah, it is for being complicated. Book is very important for you. As we know that on this period, many ways to get whatever we would like. Likewise word says, ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore this The Power to Get Things Done: (Whether You Feel Like It or Not) can make you feel more interested to read.

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