

## Nuggets and Bright Lines

- *Focus on the majors*
- *Lead Measures*
- *Keep Score*
- *Be accountable*



## The Four Disciplines of Execution

This is a book by some of the major players at Franklin Covey. It discusses the following four factors as keys to implementing ideas, creating strategies and ultimately positive results.

### Focus on Your Major and Meaningful Goals.

These must be few in number to allow you to focus. It is not easy to put a number on this but I think it should most certainly be in single figures. How many important goals do you think a world or Olympic champion has? Probably one or two. The important thing here is understanding the power of focus.

If the goals light a fire within you, excite and empower you then all well and good. Just a wish or whim will not cut it. You will have to say no to many things, things that tug at your heart and mind. You will possibly have to face these battles daily. You may argue that this does not meet the requirements of a balanced life. You may well have a point.

In addition the goals must be highly meaningful. They must have enough influence to inspire you to take action consistently at an uncomfortable level so that improvements occur. Going through the motions in a comfort zone will not lead to optimal success.

### Act on Your Lead Measures

Studies into successful achievement particularly in the business world have identified what are called *lead and lag measures*. Lag measures are the indicators of that which you are aiming to achieve. In the coaching world for example a lag measure may be any of the following: a certain position in the league table at the end of the season, a certain number of points achieved or a certain number of players achieving a scholarship. This measure in effect represents or describes your ultimate outcome. The lead measures are the things that come first. They come before the outcome or lag measure is achieved. For example in the world of coaching your lead measures may be: attendance at sessions, distances covered in sessions, number of successfully completed passes, number of final third entries or time spent in focussed practice of a particular skill. They

are activity based and under our control. It is possible to control to a greater or lesser degree the lead measures which is fundamental to why this method works.

Focussing on lead measures reduces unnecessary anxiety and wasted time. It allows you to do what is known to be the best possible action to get closer to the goal. The thinking and analysis has been done. All that is left is to take action and repeat the process. This of course does not mean there should be no feedback or review of progress. Successful movement towards an objective requires appropriate analysis following action so that necessary adjustments can be made. If a ship sailing to a destination does not adjust its course one or two degrees regularly it will end up far away from its originally intended destination. What are your key lead measures? Write them down and do them as a priority on a consistent basis.

## Keep Score

Evidence suggests that whatever we observe, or even more beneficially keep score or track of, will grow. People who track their weight are nearer to their desired weight than those who don't. Keeping score allows you to know where you are in relation to where you want to be. Not keeping score is not knowing where you are. Try punching in a destination on a satellite navigation tool and asking for directions without a starting point. You have to know where you are. It enables you to track progress. It is vital for psychological well being to know how you are doing. Keeping score will inspire you to do more, to be better and to attempt to make incremental improvements. Experts say the optimum level of stretch we should be aiming for is four per cent. Often this is our best estimate but it is better than not estimating at all. Only by knowing how we are doing can we make quality judgements as to how much we should be stretching ourselves. It all requires a score of some kind. Keep score. It has been proven time and time again that when accurate scores are kept and made available for all to see performances go up. This is the effect that game and session analysis is having in the world of sports. There are less places to hide. Scores tell the truth. The truth is where it starts and finishes. Without it, it's just a haze.

## Be Accountable

Should this section really need much explanation? How accountable are you? Maybe we can hold our heads high, rest them on the pillow come evening and sleep well. By definition being accountable means being required to take responsibility. It means taking conscious decisions and being happy to be transparent! if only to ourselves. Forced to read the definition it may seem daunting. It is daunting to take full responsibility for your life. Being daunted is part of the hero's journey. Embrace it, stand up and be accountable.

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## The Author

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