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# What's Best Next: How The Gospel Transforms The Way You Get Things Done



## Synopsis

Do work that matters. Productivity isn't just about getting more things done. It's about getting the right things done—the things that count, make a difference, and move the world forward. In our current era of massive overload, this is harder than ever before. So how do you get more of the right things done without confusing mere activity for actual productivity? When we take God's purposes into account, a revolutionary insight emerges. Surprisingly, we see that the way to be productive is to put others first—to make the welfare of other people our motive and criteria in determining what to do (what's best next). As both the Scriptures and the best business thinkers show, generosity is the key to unlocking our productivity. It is also the key to finding meaning and fulfillment in our work. What's Best Next offers a practical approach for improving your productivity in all areas of life. It will help you better understand:

- Why good works are not just rare and special things like going to Africa, but anything you do in faith even tying your shoes.
- How to create a mission statement for your life that actually works.
- How to delegate to people in a way that actually empowers them.
- How to overcome time killers like procrastination, interruptions, and multitasking by turning them around and making them work for you.
- How to process workflow efficiently and get your email inbox to zero every day.
- How your work and life can transform the world socially, economically, and spiritually, and connect to God's global purposes.

By anchoring your understanding of productivity in God's purposes and plan, What's Best Next will give you a practical approach for increasing your effectiveness in everything you do. This expanded edition includes a new chapter on productivity in a fallen world and a new appendix on being more productive with work that requires creative thinking.

## Book Information

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Zondervan; Enlarged ed. edition (September 13, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0310533988

ISBN-13: 978-0310533986

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 206 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #46,955 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #61 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Leadership #67 in Books > Business & Money

## Customer Reviews

"This book is simply extraordinary.... I doubt there is a person on the planet who knows both theological issues and time management literature to the depth and extent Matt Perman does."--John Piper, founder and teacher, [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org); author, *Don't Waste Your Life* "...a Christian companion to *Getting Things Done*."Â --Hugh Whelchel, Executive Director, Institute for Faith, Work & Economics; author, *How Then Should We Work?*"In this amazing volume, Matt Perman offers a wealth of practical, real-world productivity solutions, all framed within the context of the Gospel. He provides the know-how and the know-Who we need to be faithful stewards over the gifts we have been given."--Michael Hyatt, New York Times bestselling author of *Platform*; [MichaelHyatt.com](http://MichaelHyatt.com)"A refreshing, lively, remarkably insightful, deeply God-centered approach to productivity. I kept taking notes about ideas that I wanted to implement in my own life. Everyone from any walk of life who reads this book will be helped and encouraged by it."--Wayne Grudem, Research Professor of Theology and Biblical StudiesÂ Phoenix Seminary; author, *The Poverty of Nations: A Sustainable Solution*"Love your neighbor at work! That's the ultimate message of Matt's book *What's Best Next*. He shows you not only why you need to do this, but also how. Without getting lost in the details, Matt gives a comprehensive framework for identifying the most important things in your work and life and then putting them first. No matter who you are or what your work is, this is a reliable, exciting, and encouraging guidebook on making things happen and getting things done, from a God-centered perspective."--Brad Lomenick, President of Catalyst; author, *The Catalyst Leader*"As Christians, we are called by God to work with all our heart, because our work is--or should be--directly for the Lord. But beyond platitudes no one has really approached being productive at working, until now. Matt Perman approaches the task not only from his personal experience, but from a Christian worldview. Follow his model to align what you do with God's purpose in your life--and in particular in your work."--B. Joseph Pine II, co-author, *The Experience Economy and Infinite Possibility* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"I have been learning from Matt Perman for nearly twenty years, and I am eager for leaders around the world to benefit from his work the way that I have. To my knowledge, there is no one writing today who has thought more deeply about the relationship between the gospel and productivity. You will find in these pages a unique and remarkable combination of theological insight, biblical

instruction, and practical counsel that would change the world if put into practice. I could not recommend it more highly." --Justin Taylor, Managing Editor, ESV Study Bible; blogger, "Between Two Worlds

**MY REVIEW:**Perman does a great job of building upon popular productivity principles and presents them in a gospel-centered framework. Perhaps you have tried adopting principles, patterns and methods from other productivity books but have got burned out using them and found that they just don't translate well for you. This book is different! If you want to live a life of purpose this book will help you become a better steward of the time God has entrusted to you by helping you define what is productivity, what things are truly productive, and how they fit into your life.**MY TOP**

**TAKEAWAYS:**Here are the top 12 Myths this book will help the reader overcome in regards to a gospel-centered view of productivity:**Myth #1:** Productivity is about getting more done faster.**Truth:** Productivity is about effectiveness first, not efficiency.**Myth #2:** The way to be productive is to have the right techniques and tools.**Truth:** Productivity comes first from character , not techniques. The only way to make the right decisions is first to be the right kind of person (Rom. 12: 1 - 2; 2 Peter 5: 1 - 8).**Myth #3:** It is not essential to give consideration to what God has to say about productivity.**Truth:** We cannot be truly productive unless all our activity stems from love for God and the acknowledgment that he is sovereign over all our plans.**Myth #4:** It is not essential to make the gospel central in our view of productivity.**Truth:** The only way to be productive is to realize that you don't have to be productive.**Myth #5:** The way to be productive is to tightly manage yourself (and others!).**Truth:** Productivity comes from engagement, not tight control; when we are motivated, we don't need to tightly control ourselves (or others).**Myth #6:** The aim of time management should be our peace of mind.**Truth:** Productivity is first about doing good for others to the glory of God.**Myth #7:** The way to succeed is to put yourself first.**Truth:** We become most productive by putting others first, not ourselves.**Myth #8:** We will have peace of mind if we can get everything under control.**Truth:** Basing our peace of mind on our ability to control everything will never work.**Myth #9:** To-do lists are enough.**Truth:** Time is like space, and we need to see lists as support material for our activity zones, not as sufficient in themselves to keep track of what we have to do.**Myth #10:** Productivity is best defined by tangible outcomes.**Truth:** The greatest evidence of productivity comes from intangibles, not tangibles. More and more, productivity is about intangibles - relationships developed, connections made, and things learned. We need to incorporate intangibles into our definition of productivity or we will short-change ourselves by thinking that sitting at our desks for a certain number of hours equals a productive day. **Truth:** The greatest evidence of

productivity comes from intangibles, not tangibles. Myth #11: The time we spend working is a good measure of our productivity. Truth: We need to measure productivity by results, not by time spent working. Deadlines work well for execution tasks (the realm of personal management), but they do not work well for creative tasks and ambiguity (the realm of personal leadership). Myth #12 : Having to work really hard or even suffer in our work means our priorities are screwed up or we are doing something wrong. Truth: We will (sometimes) suffer from our work, and it is not sin.

Disclosure: Matthew Perman generously provided an advance PDF copy of this book. I'm so very happy he did! Perman candidly testifies that his hope of achieving a "mind like water" was very rarely ever achieved through GTD practices. Instead, he found his state of mind of being one of "mind like a tsunami" (15). Mine, too. "Getting Things Done" (GTD, Allen), "Zen to Done" (ZTD, Babauta), and "Getting Results the Agile Way" (GRAW, Meier) are brilliant and practical authors whose methodologies have helped me in becoming more efficient and productive. Yet, too many good things have been left undone, too many people have not been loved and served as I would want to be loved and served, and too many opportunities to do great things of eternal impact have been wasted. These facts have left me heartsick. What have I been doing wrong in implementation? Was there a better tool than OmniFocus that I needed to find? Should I switch from Moleskine to Rhodia? Was there no hope? I'm a full-time pastor of a small but thriving country church in rural Washington. My wife's chronic, debilitating and incurable disease is ever worsening. My own recently diagnosed Polycystic Kidney and Liver disease, according to the exceedingly caring and thorough docs at the VA, will continue to degrade my energy level. Could it ever be true that there was a system that would adapt to not only a "mind like tsunami" but a "life like tsunami"? Brother Matthew has helped me to see that I've been first looking for a system that would enable productivity when I should have been first looking for a person--the Savior! Perman writes, "Productivity is specifically about doing 'the will of the Lord.' It's about specifically orienting our lives and decisions around God's will. We are to ultimately be Christ-centered, not just principle-centered....It makes productivity personal in the fullest sense, and makes our whole lives one of fellowship with God, rather than a following of principles. It gives us even more guidance than simply being principle-centered, for God is a living being" (56). This is good news! Further good news, and hope, is offered when Matt writes, "I mentioned earlier that effectiveness must be learned. Here's the good news: Drucker found that everyone who worked at becoming effective succeeded" (42). In the pages of this book you will find foundational concepts and practical helps toward becoming a hope-filled knowledge worker who can expect to succeed as you continue

working "at becoming effective" while living out a loving life of good works that brings you abiding joy and magnifies God's glory through Jesus. Daniel Burrow, Pastor for Preaching, Open Heart Baptist Church, Selah, WA

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