

Business Ground Rules

Be Great in Business

by Tony Jeary and Peter H. Thomas



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and Peter H. Thomas
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SUCCESS Points

In this book you'll learn why:

- Reflecting on your past achievements can be helpful
- You need a support team
- Clarity builds excitement
- Absolute discipline is essential to your success
- Measuring your progress and results matters

Distinguishing Traits

What successful business leaders do that other people don't

QUICK OVERVIEW

Successful entrepreneurs Tony Jeary and Peter H. Thomas pool their extensive wisdom and life experience in their new book *Business Ground Rules*. They've sorted the 100 lessons they've compiled into 12 categories: thinking, clarity, time, strategic, focus, brand, leadership, people, money, wealth, execute and health.

The comprehensive nature of the book may seem to be overwhelming at first glance. However, the reality is that the material is practical and easy to digest when consumed in the bite-sized chapters through which the authors offer it. Read straight through or used as a reference guide, *Business Ground Rules* provides inspiration and insight into the practices and attitudes of high-achieving business leaders. The goal, of course, is to help you increase your own success and take your place among the business elite.

APPLY AND ACHIEVE

Is your life guided by intention, or do you "go with the flow"? In *Business Ground Rules*, the authors make it clear that intentionality—knowing exactly what you want and the method of achieving it—is essential. Beyond having clarity and working with focused effort, measuring your progress is an integral aspect of living and working with intention.

Take some time this week to determine the metrics relevant to your goals. For example, the authors suggest that if physical fitness is your goal, relevant metrics could be your BMI, blood pressure and/or your waistline. If you're striving to reach a specific sales goal, what are the benchmarks that need to be met along the way? You may choose to track the number of calls made, the time each call was made and how long you were on the phone with the client. These figures can help you recognize patterns and improve your efficiency and results.

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In order to be successful in life, you must start with focus and clarity. If you don't have clarity on your values, goals, and dreams, you can't get focused, and you won't get what you want. We've both observed that successful people share certain traits. Unsuccessful people do too. In fact, very few people have the kind of focus needed to become wealthy and make their goals a reality.

We hope the wisdom we share with you will transform your thinking and inspire you to take action.

LESSON 1: LIVE LIFE ON PURPOSE

Sure, good things can happen by accident. We've all found something delightful and forgotten in a coat pocket or under the sofa cushion. Finding extra money is good. Finding a lost key is good. But in our daily lives, is "good" really good enough?

High achievers don't settle for good; they seek awesome. And truly awesome things—hard-won and positive accomplishments—happen on purpose, as a result of thoughtful self-reflection, strong planning, and focused effort.

Measurement matters, and reflecting on the personal accomplishments in your life every once in a while (both past and present) can be motivating and inspiring. Measurement is an important step of living your life on purpose and developing your future. Both Peter and Tony have pages and pages of literally hundreds of goals they have both set and met throughout their lifetimes. There is real power in documenting dreams and keeping an inventory of successes; life rarely happens the way you want it to by chance.

To start living your life on purpose, simply craft a list of valuable milestones you've already achieved. Whether you ran a marathon, earned a degree, met and married the partner of your dreams, established a company, or mastered juggling, begin making your list of the things you've already accomplished. Document realized educational goals, financial successes, personal accomplishments, and any other moments when your hard work has paid off.

Over time, it may become more formalized and find itself in chronological order as you meet new goals; but for now, simply take some time to look back on your undertakings, deeds, and successes. Going forward, you can organize it chronologically, by subject, or by importance. What's essential here is taking stock of how you've already lived a life of purpose, even if you weren't aware of it with this mindset. Reading through proof of your past achievements can be an important nudge when you feel stuck or uninspired. Likewise, browsing through documentation of where you've been and what you've done can be a powerful springboard for more purposeful success.

Now consider a few more questions: What do you want more of? Where would you rather be? Is there something of note you want to earn? How's the health of your bucket list? Asking yourself these kinds of introspective questions—and writing down the answers—will allow you to make smart changes and strategic decisions that will purposely propel you forward toward what you most want to accomplish, whatever the scope or size.

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Don't become sidetracked with trying to create a perfect and complete list before starting; the best way to get to work is simply to get to work! Focus on a goal you've documented. You can choose the easiest one, or maybe the most enticing—whatever best suits your motivation. Write down what needs to happen in order for that goal to be a success. Identify anyone who can, will, or should help you. And be sure to give yourself a deadline so that you create a little positive anxiety about reaching your goal. Now, get going. It really is as simple as that.

Solid accomplishments are so much better than happy accidents, and that's a distinction that truly successful people know and live—on purpose.

LESSON 20: CLARITY: GET IT AND USE IT

What do you want out of life? Your business? Your deals? Clarity, focus, and successful execution are essential pillars of entrepreneurship, and necessary tools for getting what you want. The most successful people design their own lives, and then live their lives on purpose. But the first step is clarity.

The definition of clarity is: Understanding and documenting your targets clearly and determining the "why" behind reaching them (personally and professionally). It's about developing a clear vision, outlining priorities and objectives, and tackling goals with a real sense of urgency and focus. Clarity is achieved when ideas and concepts are clearly explained and presented internally and externally; it's when we know where we are in relation to where we want to go.

Lesson 84: Be Financially Strong

Have you developed good habits that model responsible behavior, and do you have a healthy attitude about money? Are you growing toward financial strength?

Being strong financially requires making sound intentional decisions. Make calculated risks that don't leave you too exposed. It includes building net worth as well as having good cash flow. Being strong financially will get you through the tough times that are bound to come when economies change, life changes, and circumstances happen that are often beyond your control.

When you aren't financially strong, you may be forced to make short-term decisions that aren't necessarily the right ones. If you are smart, have your money work for you, and keep your personal recourse debt ratio low; you'll take a tremendous amount of pressure off of yourself. Being strong financially is something within your control. It will help weather storms and allow you to make better decisions for your future.

When clarity is lost, or never achieved in the first place, it is almost impossible to generate the kind of focus necessary to establish a dynamic organization capable of acting swiftly and deftly on a daily basis. What you're left with instead is a struggling, underperforming organization and frustrated employees eager to jump ship.

The requirements for clarity are specific with respect to three issues:

- 1. Purpose**—relates to the “why” of things, thought through and documented
- 2. Value**—relates to the real benefits that can be acquired (for all stakeholders to win)
- 3. Objectives**—relates to the premise that unless objectives are stated clearly and understood by all, the likelihood of achieving them is slim

You have to ask yourself the hard questions: “Why do I want to buy a franchise? Why do I want to be in the business I'm in?” Are you building a business to sell or are you building a family business you want to pass down? Be clear on what you want and utilize tools along the way. (Visit www.strategicacceleration.com for a free assessment and many free tools.)

When you have an authentic vision, things happen. If you have no vision, there is nothing to tie your objectives to and nothing to measure your progress or performance against. When you have clarity about your vision, you discover yourself being pulled toward it and all you have to do is follow the connecting opportunities that carry you along, allowing you to make connections faster.

Think about a time when you've been excited and regenerated at the thought of achieving a big goal. For an entrepreneur, there's nothing like the adrenaline rush of having complete clarity about what it is you want to achieve. When you have clarity, you get that excitement that builds and fuels your energy toward that dream. The results you achieve will often come faster than you may have thought possible.

Clarity and focus together form the basis of execution. So get completely clear about the things that you want and then take action.

LESSON 28: SAY “NO” OFTEN

In today's fast-paced world, we are presented with opportunities almost every waking minute. Services, messages, products, emails, phone calls, offers, meetings, and activities bombard us on a continual basis. We are possibilities people, so sometimes these things look attractive. But it is possible to have too many choices. Say no to the things that don't matter the most. That's the magical rule. It takes discipline and good thinking to a whole different level.

People don't say no because they don't know how, they don't want to miss out on anything, or they don't want to offend someone. But people-pleasers are rarely wildly successful entrepreneurs. If you don't learn how to say no, needless activities can pile up on the calendar, draining valuable moments from important projects and goals—valuable moments from your life that you'll never get back.

So many people say yes and get into messes, partnerships, deals, and relationships because they didn't say no at the right time. Most often the right time to say no is at the beginning.

Say no strategically. There are a lot of ways to say no and make people feel as if you still care. If you're an author, for instance, you can say no to a free speech opportunity and offer to send them a free case

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of your books for their group or event. If you're an entrepreneur who gets invited to participate in a deal, you can say no and send one of your colleagues to the meeting instead and to do the research.

When you say yes, you're saying no to something else. When you say yes to a client dinner, for instance, you could be saying no to dinner with your children. When you say yes to counseling someone after work, you could be saying no to counseling a family member in your own home. When you say yes to lunch with a friend, you might be saying no to an important deadline getting completed at the office. If you say yes to every activity, meeting, lunch, or volunteer opportunity, you're saying no to anything else that could have been in that time slot. It is easier to build relationships and build your business when you eliminate so many of the distractions, unwanted attention, unnecessary obligations, and meaningless meetings.

Saying no is empowering. It helps build your self-esteem, reduces stress, and gives you more time and energy. Successful businesses are not built on a feeling of obligation or a fear of saying no. Successful businesses are built when clarity, focus, and execution converge over and over again.

It also creates space. In order to create margin time, which is that extra space in your life that you very rarely have, you have to start getting good at saying no more often. Even if it's just a moment of solitude, the time you create is better than engaging in something you didn't want to be a part of in the first place.

LESSON 33: BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT EVERYTHING

Intentionality is different than clarity or focus. Intentionality comes from the root of your intention. It centers not just around thought, but action. Be intentional about who you spend time with. Hang around others who match your values. Be intentional about every action.

It all starts with clarity (see #20). When you are in tune with your values and you know the values you live by, you become intentional about every aspect of your life. In business, you should have set standards for what you want and what you don't want, well thought out and documented. If a big part of your success is the people around you, then replace those who aren't right for you with some who are.

Be intentional about how much stress you can manage, how many projects you can take on, and why. Don't do things without thinking. Think.

Be strategic, then do things fast and your energy and resources will be expended and utilized in the best way.

What we value in ourselves and what others appreciate about us often relate to our self-esteem.

Take time to identify the qualities and characteristics you like about yourself—your natural talents and strengths. When you take time to think about and identify your values, you become much more intentional.

Intentionality exists when you know exactly what you want, and everything flows from that. First, you must know what you really want. Then you can be intentional about taking action.

LESSON 62: FREEDOM COMES FROM ABSOLUTE DISCIPLINE

This one is worth repeating: Freedom comes from absolute discipline. Is there a relationship between freedom and discipline? We say yes! In fact, the great Aristotle said it first: "Through discipline comes freedom."

When you think of the word *freedom*, the word *discipline* is probably not the first thought that comes to mind. In fact, it seems like an oxymoron. Most people equate freedom to having fewer rules and being more spontaneous.

Freedom doesn't mean having no direction, responsibilities, or limitations. It is about choices and decisions you make for your life and having the discipline to do the things that support the life you really want to lead.

A part of being disciplined and gaining freedom means once you decide which things mean the most to you, you learn to say no to things that don't support your goals (see #28). Most people say yes to things far too often that end up having no value to them and take up time that could either be spent pursuing goals or could be used for downtime or family time. It's not only okay to say no but it is crucial to keeping focused on the things that matter most, and that will give you the freedom you desire.

What freedoms do you currently wish you had that you don't? What disciplines can you establish that will help you gain those freedoms? The

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more disciplined you are in staying on track and executing things that support your professional goals, the more freedom you will have to support your personal goals. You will gain time, freedom, and energy, and you will continually be able to renew and refresh yourself.

LESSON 93: MEASURE EVERYTHING— MEASUREMENT MATTERS

If you really want to perform as a leader at the top level, or in any other area of your life, you need written targets and you need to measure progress against those targets. In order for top performers to be their very best, they can start with a simple assessment centered around leadership best practices to create real focus and results that matter. Assessments can measure leadership ability, time management, meeting effectiveness, or any other objective.

Want to move to the mastery level of getting results? You need to take to heart that measurement matters. This is probably not an earth-shattering concept. Recognizing and being aware of this is one thing; really leveraging it as a tool to be your very best is something even more powerful. Challenge yourself to take one or more areas

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of your life or business that could use improvement, and figure out what measurements matter to you. If you want to improve your health, maybe you'd measure your BMI, blood pressure, or waistline. Leadership skills could be measured by how well you strategically plan, prioritize, or deploy your team. You might want to improve your financial position, so you'd examine bank balances, P&Ls, investment worksheets, or other critical success factors.

Take a few minutes and jot down where you are and where you want to be. Get your team involved, your family involved. See for yourself how much measurement matters! Real measurement over and over means real results and will bring a whole new level of focus on measuring and refining.

Tips from Lesson 100: Manage Stress

One of the major causes of disease, aging, and death is stress. Stress occurs when our mental, physical, or spiritual challenges exceed our ability to cope with them. Stress kills—literally. And it kills morale, too.

The best way to cure stress is to drill down to the source of the problem, and cut stress out before it even happens.

- Do an “audit” and make a list of the top ten most stressful things that happen on a daily basis.
- Change habits, so you can eliminate sources of stress in your life.
- Build margin time into your life. This is one of the fastest ways to eliminate stress.

You owe it to yourself to live as stress free as possible.

Visions to Reality in “Compressed Timeframes” Many Can’t Believe

- We facilitate 3-day meetings in a single day.
- We help leadership move from a group or a team of individual leaders to a High Performing Team in a single day
- We build strategic plans that take many weeks to build in a single day.
- We bring clarity and focus in a single day.

Tony Jeary International is a powerful agency that partners with aggressive, successful corporate executives and entrepreneurs to positively and uniquely help create RESULTS faster!

We’re about thinking, discipline and being intentionally strategic about everything. We believe in wisdom, including the 100 lessons we’ve shared in *Business Ground Rules*. We encourage others to expand their minds, including utilizing great works from our partners such as **SUCCESS** magazine and **SUCCESS Book Summaries**.

Please test a subscription to both.

Utilize the lessons in **Peter Thomas’s** and **Tony Jeary’s** book *Business Ground Rules*.

Reach out to us and let’s discuss your business vision and how we can help you make it a reality faster. Info@TonyJeary.com or 817.430.9422

Action Steps

Get more out of this SUCCESS Book Summary by applying what you’ve learned. Here are a few questions, thoughts and activities to get you started.

1. Start an ongoing list of goals. What do you want to do, be, have and/or experience?
2. Create a list of accomplishments—goals you’ve already achieved.
3. Identify the purpose, value and objective(s) of your immediate goal.
4. Before accepting an assignment or taking on a new responsibility, intentionally evaluate how it fits into your life plan. If it doesn’t support your goals, say no.
5. Practice being present. Whatever you’re doing at the moment, sharpen your focus and pay attention to that activity.
6. What disciplines can you develop that will give you the freedom you desire?
7. Determine what metrics or incremental steps will drive the results you desire. Then begin tracking those metrics daily.

Recommended Reading

*If you enjoyed the summary of **Business Ground Rules**, you may also want to check out:*

Strategic Acceleration by Tony Jeary

Be Great by Peter Thomas

Presenting with Style by Dr. Robert Rohm

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