DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

HOW TO BECOME EXTRAORDINARY AND IMPACT THE WORLD AT SCALE

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WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

Many people say they want to “change the world”, but few mean it. That is, few will choose to do the actual work and pay the price. It’s more comfortable for them to broadcast their noble intentions to the world than to work hard to make it happen, isn’t it?

This book is intended for committed people who are willing to pay the price. It is for those who are more interested in making an impact than in being admired or famous. It is for those whose desire to help is stronger than their desire to be right and for those whose actions speak louder than their words. As Henry Ford said, “You can’t build a reputation on what you are going to do.”

Many people have good intentions and lofty aspirations. But, in the end, all that matters is the impact your actions actually make. Truth is, making a genuine impact is tough. Really tough.

And even if you were to impact millions of people’s lives, in the grand scheme of things, it might not make much of a difference. So why even bother? Why try to do impossible things and become extraordinary?

To learn the answer, read on.
When was the last time you did something that you thought would be impossible?

How did it make you feel?

Whenever you do “impossible” things, you challenge your limited sense of self. You remove the labels society has given you. You transform the story you’re telling yourself. And, perhaps more importantly, you feel alive.

Doing the impossible offers you a glimpse at your self—what it looks like, and what it’s capable of becoming. The more layers of fear and self-limitation you peel away, the more you realize the immensity of the power within yourself. As a result, your “sense of self” expands, and your old self gives way to a more powerful and authentic self. In other words, as you do the impossible, you release your fear. As you destroy your limitations, you begin your path toward becoming extraordinary. Now, why should you strive to do the impossible and become extraordinary? Is it to accumulate money, gain power or become famous?

No.
Choosing to become extraordinary is making a declaration of love to the person you see in the mirror. It’s committing to giving your best, not just to contribute to the world or gather accolades, but to be able to say to yourself, “I’m proud of you”—and to actually feel it and know it to be true in your heart.

Choosing to be extraordinary is refusing to be little more than an extra in the movie of your life. Instead, you can choose to become the main character. Being extraordinary is to act in a way that makes your movie worth watching. You do this by facing your fears, moving beyond your comfort zone and doing the seemingly impossible.

In the end, being extraordinary is a choice. It’s a promise you make to yourself every day. We can all choose to be extraordinary in our unique way. As you give your best, you discover the true meaning of self-esteem. Having deeper confidence, you begin to notice changes. You act differently. You speak differently. You become more convincing. You become more real. You feel more relaxed. And, as you start to love yourself more, gaining the approval of others becomes less important.

Finally, choosing to be extraordinary is accepting your gifts and expressing them to the fullest. It’s embracing your talents, skills, and personality so that you can feel good about yourself and impact the world simply by being yourself.

So, do you want to do the impossible and become extraordinary? If so, read on.
INTRODUCTION

Ever since I became a teenager, I’ve had this feeling that I would do extraordinary things. But nothing significant happened until I entered my thirties. Until that point, I felt too insecure. I wasn’t smart, disciplined, or confident enough to be the next Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi or Elon Musk. I wondered how on earth a shy, introverted guy like me could even dream of doing anything extraordinary.

But my biggest shock came when I joined an MBA program. All of a sudden, I had to confront the harsh reality that many people on the course were a great deal smarter than me. And it seemed that no amount of work would enable me to catch up with them. If anything, when everybody studied hard, the smartest people just kept increasing their lead over me. That was when I had to face my insecurities and my perceived “limitations”.

Yet even so, the idea that I was capable of doing extraordinary things still nagged away at me. So, I had a decision to make. Would I do something about my perceived failings or would I give up and coast through life?
It took me a while, but after a great deal of soul searching, I made a discovery.

Friends had often told me that I was most passionate when talking about personal development. It gave me an idea. I thought, “There is something here. I have something within myself that I don't see in others. If I commit to my vision and work relentlessly on myself, I can inspire smart people to pursue their vision and do extraordinary things.” I had what might be called an epiphany.

In that moment, I realized I didn't have to be a genius. I realized I could use my ability to inspire and motivate people to move toward their vision.

So I began to write. And I did not stop. Over time, book sales increased. One day, a Japanese publisher offered to distribute my book. Another day a Chinese publisher contacted me, and so it continued. Eventually, my books were being published in more than twenty languages.

Truth is, while trying to inspire others, I was also trying to inspire myself. Writing acted as a therapy. And it helped me discover that I was more capable than I could ever have imagined. So, I started wondering what my limits were. What could I achieve if I give it my all? Who could I become? What was the greatest possible impact I could have on the world?

But, for a while, I got lost.

I relied on my past accomplishments and stopped giving my best.

While other people were impressed by my results, I wasn't. I had forgotten the lessons I teach others: we are successful in life when we do the best we can today. Success is a process—and it never ends. Success is who we are, and we must embody it every day. So, I went back to the drawing board. I told myself that I had done nothing, that I knew nothing and that the best was yet to come. I let go of my past accomplishments and behaved as though I were penniless, unsuccessful and that I had to prove myself all over again. Most
importantly, I realized there was only one person I needed to impress: the man in the mirror.

I wanted to be able to say to myself, “I’m proud of you, Thibaut,” and to feel it deep inside my heart.

So, I came to a decision. I would become extraordinary.

In the process, I learned a key lesson. Most people are selling themselves way too short. They inhabit a tiny version of themselves, one who is filled with negative assumptions and self-imposed limitations. The writer, Steven Pressfield, wrote that, “Most of us have two lives. The life we live, and the unlived life within us.” And, unfortunately, the unlived life within us is usually far larger than the life we actually do live.

The premise of this book is simple. There are people who can impact the world at scale and help millions. This book is here to serve as a guide. It’s here to wake up the talented people who have lived way too small for way too long. It’s here to give them permission to share more of themselves instead of hiding behind fears, self-imposed limitations and excuses.

If you can relate to this intention, read this book. Then, use it to move from ordinary to extraordinary. Let go of layers of limitations and start uncovering what you’re capable of becoming. Keep impressing yourself by doing impossible things. Get a taste for what it means to expand beyond your limited sense of self.

Throughout this book, we’ll go over what you need to know to utilize your talent and skills to help you become extraordinary and impact the world at scale.

In Part I. Fundamental Assumptions and Models of Reality, I will challenge you to update your beliefs and think bigger than you’ve ever thought before. We’ll discuss what assumptions are and how they shape your life. We’ll discuss the eight principles that drive most human behavior. You’ll also learn the three laws of belief and three key beliefs (Meta-Beliefs) that will profoundly impact everything you do.
In **Part II. Applying Extreme Leverage**, we will delve into the eight different sources of leverage you must use to increase the power of your actions exponentially. This includes the size and quality of your thoughts, your thinking skills, your personal growth, technology, your focus, other people’s time, money and knowledge.

By reading this book, you will acquire the framework you need to scale your impact and make a difference. You'll discover why making a big impact is all about accumulating energy and channeling it effectively. And you'll also learn how to do so intentionally.

In truth, you have far more power than you can imagine. You would need many lifetimes to reach the limits of your capacity. Unfortunately, you only have one lifetime. Let's ensure you make the most of your lifetime by using as much of your potential as possible.

So, are you ready to embark on a journey of exponential growth, extreme scale, and massive impact? If so, keep reading.
Are you good at analyzing people? Would you say you have a solid understanding of how reality works?

To impact the world at scale, you must operate under the correct assumptions. That is, you must refine your thinking and understand human psychology and the nature of reality at the deepest level possible. This is because the quality of your thinking determines the impact your actions have on the world.

In this section, we’ll see how your assumptions rule your life. We’ll discuss how to replace ineffective assumptions with effective ones. In addition, we’ll explore what models of reality are, and we’ll give you all the tools you need to build a powerful model.
When seeking to improve the world, many well-intentioned people commit the critical mistake of wanting to change other people. As a result, they design systems, create philosophies or implement political ideas that go against human nature.

This never works.

These people may feel good about themselves for developing wonderful ideas, but these ideas are a waste of time at best and harmful at worst. It’s not unlike people who marry someone hoping they will be able to change their spouse.

This rarely works.

Understanding human psychology is one of the key aspects required for any person who wants to become more impactful. If cult leaders can amass millions of followers, there is a reason for it. They must know something you don't. To impact the world at scale, you must understand the key principles that guide most human behavior. In this section, we’re going to explore the following eight principles:

1. Energy is the currency of the world.
2. We have far more potential than we can ever imagine.
3. Incentives rule the world.
4. Fear and love are the two fundamental forces that drive human behavior.
5. Most of us want to be part of something bigger than ourselves.
6. Most of us do not know what we want (and will follow people who do know what they want).
7. We all believe we are right.
8. We are always trying to convince others of something.

Let’s review each of these principles in detail and see why they matter.

1) Energy is the currency of the world

Our world is made of energy. Understanding how it works and how to channel it effectively is key to achieving any ambitious goal.

The first thing to understand is that energy can only produce results in the real world when it is channeled effectively. Therefore, anyone who aspires to impact the world at scale must channel energy in one way or another. When scattered, energy is weakened and has little effect on anything. Imagine if every employee in a company worked toward a different goal. What would happen? The company wouldn’t be able to deliver quality products or services. For this reason, companies need to establish a clear vision and create a culture. This enables employees to know how they should behave and what they should be doing (i.e., where to channel their energy).

The same principle applies to individuals. Someone who scatters their focus and tackles too many projects at the same time will struggle to do anything significant in their life. By creating a clear vision and striving toward a specific goal, a person can channel their energy and make a decisive impact on the world.

You cannot skip this step. You must become a master at channeling both your energy and the energy of people around you. You must draw people, resources and attention toward you and your vision. This is the only way to impact the world at scale. If you want to make
an impact on the world, the key question you must ask yourself is this:

“What can I do to channel as much energy as possible toward the realization of my vision?”

Now, let’s see how energy circulates so that you can channel more of it.

A. Thoughts (potential energy)

Your thoughts are the most powerful tool you have to transform yourself and the world around you. They are the only thing you ever have (some) control over. To increase your influence, you must increase the quality of your thoughts. You must refine your thoughts and treat them with the utmost respect. You must guard your mind against the disempowering thoughts of the people around you.

However, thoughts are only potential energy. Just having the idea that you want to achieve extraordinary things or “change the world” means nothing of itself. Thoughts only gain power when given the gift of your attention. It is your repeated attention that energizes your thoughts.

B. Attention (focused energy)

Attention enables you to channel the potential energy of thoughts. When you give attention to your thoughts over and over, they will begin to permeate everything you do.

In fact, attention is the new oil in today’s economy. Everyone is fighting for your attention, and there are good reasons for this. Companies know that the more they can grab your attention, the more money they can make. This is why they invest so much money in marketing. For instance, household names like Coca-Cola spend billions every year to market their products. Why? Because they want to penetrate your mind. They want to permeate the culture and become a part of the collective consciousness. Similarly, social media companies and video streaming services try to keep you hooked for the same reason.
In short, companies hijack your attention to make money. Remember, your attention is one of the most powerful tools you have. Your ability to give your attention to what matters enables you to create the life you desire. By channeling your attention toward what you want, you can impact the world. When you lose this ability, you lose your power.

What do you think I’m trying to do with this book?

Yes, I’m trying to hook you. And I’ve been quite successful so far (otherwise you wouldn’t still be reading). Why would I do that? To make money? Sure. But also because the only way I can hope to impact your life positively is by capturing your attention. Once you’re listening, I can nudge you to do either something you want to do, or something I’d like you to do. The point is, to impact millions of people, you must both:

1. Energize your thoughts by giving them your attention consistently over a long period of time, and
2. Learn to grab the attention of people you want to impact.

C. Money (stored energy)

Few people understand what money is and how it works. Quite simply, money is stored time and energy. For instance:

- Your salary represents the amount of time and effort you have spent at work.
- Your savings are the accumulation of the time and energy you dedicated to working—that you didn’t spend on rent, food, leisure activities, et cetera.
- Your debts are the amount of time and energy you owe to someone.

Money is a time and energy saving mechanism. Without money, we wouldn’t be able to store our energy (the fruits of our labor). Retirement would be impossible, and we would be forced to work forever. Money matters because it is time/energy saved. Furthermore,
the more time and energy you possess, the more impact you can have on the world.

D. Organizations (organized energy)

There is only so much we can do by ourselves, which is why we tend to collaborate and create organizations. The purpose of an organization is to accumulate the energy of its members and use it to achieve specific goals (delivering products, funding projects, solving issues, et cetera).

To impact the world at scale, you need help. You cannot generate enough energy to impact the lives of millions of people by yourself. There are many ways to accumulate energy. It can be by building teams, by outsourcing tasks, by using technologies such as the internet or by using a combination of all three.

To conclude, energy is the currency of this world. Your ability to accumulate it over time and channel it effectively toward the realization of your vision is key. The more energy you accumulate, the more potential power you have. If you learn only one thing from this book, remember this:

You must use all the forms of leverage available to channel as much energy as you can toward your vision.

2) We have far more potential than we can ever imagine

Another fundamental truth about human beings is that we have infinitely more potential than we imagine. However, to utilize this potential, we face an irreconcilable dilemma:

Our potential is almost unlimited, but our time is highly restricted.

For this reason, the key question to keep in the back of your mind is:

“What is the best way to spend my time, energy, and resources during the limited time I am given on this planet?”

You can always acquire new skills. If you are determined enough, you can become great at almost anything you put effort into. This is true
of everyone you encounter. Therefore, to impact the world, you need to understand the following:

1. You have barely scratched the surface of what is possible for you, and

2. Countless people around you have untapped potential waiting to be activated (by you).

3) Incentives rule the world

Incentives are the oil that lubricates the world and make it run effectively. People are most likely to act when they have a good reason to do so. Remove the incentives and, soon enough, they will stop giving their best.

Making a significant impact on the world requires that you understand psychology, evolutionary biology and a whole lot of other disciplines. It demands that you see the world as it is, not as you wish it would be. If you give the right incentives to people around you, they will act in ways that support your vision. But if you fail to do so, things are likely to go wrong at some point.

As the famous investor, Charlie Munger, once said, “Show me the incentives, I’ll show you the outcome.”

This is why you must be deliberate in the way you provide incentives to people working with you. Whenever you give a specific target to employees, freelancers or contractors, their focus will be on hitting that target. If you set a good target, one that is aligned with your goal or vision, incentives will be effective. However, if you set the wrong target, people will often act in counterproductive ways, and this will lead to unintended consequences.

Put simply, people tend to do what they’re evaluated on and rewarded for. Therefore, your job is to identify the key activities and performance indicators that are most likely to produce the results you want. Then, you must assess and reward the people who work with or under you accordingly.
4) Fear and Love are the two fundamental forces driving human behavior

At any time, you are acting either out of fear or out of love. Your intention should be to act more out of love than out of fear.

When you act out of fear, you try to “get” something from people, whether it is their attention, their money or their approval. This idea of “getting” is related to the concept of ego. In other words, you attempt to feel better by attaching yourself to something external. If you can make people like you, then your ego will be satisfied. Or, if you can find the right person to love, you will be complete. In short, you live under the false idea that you can add something to the essence of who you are. Furthermore, if you add enough “stuff”, you’ll reach a point where you finally feel good enough.

This doesn’t work.

This is like adding layers of clothes and putting on make-up, hoping it will change you at your core. In truth, you cannot add anything to who you already are, you can only let go of artificial limitations, illusory fears and poor conditioning to reveal your true character and your inner potential. Now, you can certainly enjoy people’s company, things or other people’s attention, but you can’t possess anything. You can own things in the legal sense, but nothing and nobody can ever belong to you.

Conversely, when you act out of love, your focus is on giving. You give your time, your attention, your money or your unique gifts to the people around you. You express yourself and attempt to show your true personality rather than creating a persona to match the individual you think you should be. When you act out of love, you practice letting go of your desire to take, and focus instead on giving unconditionally.

Here is another way to see it.

When you act out of fear, you see the world as a zero-sum game. There isn’t enough for everybody. So, you must take as much as possible while you still can. On the other hand, when you act out of
love, you see the world as a pie that can grow. You understand that, by contributing in your unique way, you can help people tap into their potential. And by sharing more of yourself, you can increase the pie.

What you believe determines what you do and how you impact the world. If you focus on taking from others, you’ll perceive the world as a dog-eat-dog place, reinforcing that collective narrative. However, if you focus on giving to the world, you feed and grow the narrative that we can all have more if we all give more.

So, how often are you acting out of fear? That is, how often are you trying to get things from others for your selfish needs? And how often are you acting out of love? That is, how much do you express yourself and give to others whether it be your time, your money, or your attention?

Remember, at any time, you are acting either out of love or out of fear. Whenever you can, try to act a little more out of love.

5) Most people don’t know what they want (and will follow those who do know what they want)

Many people don’t know what they want. They never think of how they’d like their life to be. They lack an exciting vision to propel them forward. As a result, they wander through life, hoping for the best.

As Mark Twain said, “I can teach anybody how to get what they want out of life. The problem is that I can't find anybody who can tell me what they want.” Knowing what you want out of life is hard. Clarity isn’t something that happens spontaneously. It requires both the courage to look within yourself and the willingness to act and reflect on a regular basis. In other words, gaining clarity is a process that requires commitment.

Clarity also demands that you take action. By acting, you gather information about what you enjoy and don’t enjoy. You create new opportunities and learn more about yourself—your values, your interests and your skills—but also about the issues you need to work on. Most people lack clarity. By developing enough clarity and establishing a specific vision, you can convince people way smarter
than you to become part of that vision. See clarity as a skill to be practiced. Ask yourself what you want and take more action to obtain it.

What about you? Do you have a clear vision of where you want to be in five or ten years from now? If not, that's okay. Start building your vision today and keep refining it over time.

6) Most people want to be part of something bigger than themselves

Most people aspire to fight for a noble cause that will improve the world, but they are often scared of pursuing an ambitious vision on their own. Therefore, if your vision is exciting enough, it will inspire others to follow you. But for this to happen, you must be willing to ask for help and allow others to become part of your vision.

The bottom line is this. Show the world what your vision will look like. Infuse your unstoppable enthusiasm into people around you. Then, see who's in.

7) We all believe we are right

We all believe our way to see the world is the correct one. If we didn’t, we would change our beliefs immediately. For instance, people tend to believe that their political beliefs, religious beliefs and perception of the world is right.

This means you're probably wrong on many topics. For this reason, you must stay humble and keep upgrading your model of reality. The more you see reality as it actually is, the more power you will have to affect it. The more you align yourself with the truth, the more you can act in a way that creates tangible results. As the entrepreneur, Elon Musk, says, your goal should be to “be less wrong”. As most people think they're right, don’t expect them to buy into your vision or to agree with everything you say.

Accept the fact that we're all “right”. And, rather than trying to convince others, listen to them. Try to understand their point of view better. Active listening and sincere curiosity are the first steps toward influencing people.
People must feel as though they are being heard before they can even consider changing their minds.

Everyone is right—or so they think. Remember this principle as you're moving toward your extraordinary vision.

8) We’re always trying to convince others

Whether we know it or not, we’re in the selling business. Throughout the day, we try to convince others to act in a way beneficial to us and/or to them. For instance:

- Parents try to encourage their children to eat more vegetables,
- Spouses try to sell each other on what house they should buy, or how they should educate their kids,
- Single people try to convince their date they are a good prospect,
- CEOs try to make their employees to buy into their vision, and
- Marketers try to convince people to buy the products or services they are promoting.

The point is this. You are a salesperson. You must sell everyone around you on your vision. It requires that you gain clarity and build unshakeable belief. If you don’t sell others on your vision, they will sell you on theirs—and you’ll work on making their vision come true rather than fulfilling your vision. There’s nothing wrong with that per se, but if you’re reading this book that is probably not what you signed up for.

Once you grasp these eight principles about the human condition, your actions will have far more impact on the world around you.

Now, let’s explore what assumptions are, how they shape your reality and what you can do to make them work for you.
Action steps

Using your action guide:

- Assess how extraordinary you currently are in various areas of your life.
- Produce your own list of “impossible” things to strive for.