

# Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done

By *David Allen*


Download now

Read Online 

## Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen

In his bestselling first book, **Getting Things Done**, veteran coach and management consultant David Allen presented his breakthrough methods to increase efficiency. Now “the personal productivity guru” (**Fast Company**) shows readers how to increase their ability to work better, not harder—every day. Based on Allen’s highly popular e-newsletter, **Ready for Anything** offers readers 52 ways to immediately clear your head for creativity, focus your attention, create structures that work, and take action to get things moving.

With wit, inspiration, and know-how, Allen shows readers how to make things happen—with less effort and stress, and lots more energy, creativity, and effectiveness. **Ready for Anything** is the perfect book for anyone wanting to work and live at his or her very best.

 [Download Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles f ...pdf](#)

# Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done

*By David Allen*

## Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen

In his bestselling first book, **Getting Things Done**, veteran coach and management consultant David Allen presented his breakthrough methods to increase efficiency. Now “the personal productivity guru” (**Fast Company**) shows readers how to increase their ability to work better, not harder—every day. Based on Allen’s highly popular e-newsletter, **Ready for Anything** offers readers 52 ways to immediately clear your head for creativity, focus your attention, create structures that work, and take action to get things moving.

With wit, inspiration, and know-how, Allen shows readers how to make things happen—with less effort and stress, and lots more energy, creativity, and effectiveness. **Ready for Anything** is the perfect book for anyone wanting to work and live at his or her very best.

## Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #311256 in eBooks
- Published on: 2004-12-28
- Released on: 2004-12-28
- Format: Kindle eBook

 [Download Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles f ...pdf](#)

## Download and Read Free Online Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen

---

### Editorial Review

#### Review

No one makes the challenges of productivity more understandable and manageable. (Rob Johnston, President of Leader to Leader Institute) This fundamentally different look at productivity makes David's book not just a good read, but something [to] truly live by. (Keith Yamashita, author of "Unstuck: A Tool For Yourself, Your Team, and Your World") These powerful and practical pointers for living a more productive life are as subtle and rich as they are simple. (Arianna Huffington)

#### About the Author

David Allen is president of The David Allen Company and has more than twenty years experience as a consultant and executive coach for such organizations as Microsoft, the Ford Foundation, L.L.Bean, and the World Bank. His work has been featured in **Fast Company**, **Fortune**, **Atlantic Monthly**, **O**, and many other publications.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

#### **Introduction: Making It Easy to Take It Easy**

MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY is making something happen=furniture, freeways, or fun=with as little *effort* as possible. The fact that we have 8efforte at all, though, implies that we confront resistance and impediments when we want to get anything done. Improving productivity has a lot to do with dealing more effectively with the hindrances, barriers, and distractions that show up in our way=anything that opposes or weakens our forward motion. In a totally frictionless world, everything would just appear as soon as it was imagined=there would be little need to train for greater flexibility and focus or to install better systems and approaches. In the world you and I inhabit, however, to really get what we want most effectively, we have to be ready for anything. And there *are* things we can all do, anytime, that make it easier to take things in stride and stay the course.

Ifve spent more than two decades exploring the best methods to achieve a more relaxed, positive, and sustainable way to live and work. And as a management consultant and productivity coach, Ifve helped thousands of professionals implement what Ifve discovered to be the best ways to work more productively *and* get more enjoyment from what theyfre doing. When people gain a method of achieving that kind of balance in their day-to-day endeavors, no matter whatfs going on, they have easier access to more of their intuition and creativity. They become better at processing information, managing their thoughts and feelings, focusing on results, and trusting their judgments about what to do next. They have a *systematic approach* in place for dealing with themselves and their work, which is far more useful than merely relying on ad hoc, reactive behaviors to bail them out of the pressures and crises of their world. When people know they have a process in place to handle any situation, they are more relaxed. When theyfre relaxed, everything improves. More gets done, with less effort, and a host of other wonderful side effects emerge that add to the outcomes of their efforts and the quality of their life.

The methods I teach came from the behaviors and the systems I discovered that worked the best to keep us at our best. Since the early 1980s, they have been tested and proven highly effective, from the ground up=for both individuals and organizations. The steps of this discovery and this process were described in my first book, *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*. Its success around the world indicated that people across a wide spectrum of cultures and careers seemed ready for this information and eager for

change. They were tired of feeling overwhelmed by their jobs and the business of life. They wanted to regain lost opportunities for creative thinking and playing. They were looking for a new approach, a *system* that could be counted on, no matter what kind of job they had or what kind of day they were having. They wanted a structure—but a natural one that matched their complex lifestyles and created more freedom, not more constraint.

While I was uncovering and implementing the details of the what, when, and how that made up the heart of my programs, I started doing something else: I began writing about the *why* behind these steps. Why did they work so well? Why did they consistently help people function at a higher capacity and feel better? Was something deeper at work here? What was the foundation behind this success? There seemed to be underlying principles that wove themselves in and through the methodology—factors that held true no matter when, where, or with whom they were applied.

A person can be an excellent race-car driver without knowing anything about gravity, even though gravity is the underlying force affecting everything one does behind the wheel. To win races, the driver needs only to master the steering, the speed on the straightaways, and the technique of the turns, and to remember to keep the car under control at all times. You do your job, and gravity will do its job. Manage yourself, and the automobile will be fine. But what if driving fast isn't enough after a while? What if you want to know more about why your skills work so well and how they keep you from crashing and burning? What if you want to get closer to the secrets behind your own successes? And what if understanding those secrets leads to more tools for productivity and even greater achievements?

In 1997, I began exploring these questions by compiling a set of principles that seemed to lie at the foundation of productive behavior and writing informal essays about the implications and applications of those truths in everyday life. I started to enlarge on my core premise that one's ability to be productive was directly proportional to one's ability to relax. I dug further into four main areas of productive behavior:

1. Capturing and corralling all our internal and external loose ends to regain clarity and energy.
2. Consciously managing our focus within the multiple levels of outcomes and responsibilities to which we are committed.
3. Creating trusted structures and consistent usage of them to trigger the appropriate focus and reminders as necessary.
4. Grounding it all with flexible, forward motion at the physical-action level.

I discovered that people didn't need more discipline as such—they needed a disciplined approach. They didn't need to work harder—they needed to define their work better at multiple levels of detail and stay focused on all of them simultaneously.

Behind all this lay the *mind like water* concept, an image I'd come across years ago while studying karate. When you throw a pebble into a pond, what does the water do? It responds with total appropriateness to the force and mass of the rock. It does nothing more and nothing less. It doesn't overreact or underreact. It doesn't react at all. It simply interacts with whatever comes to it and then returns to its natural state. The water can do that only by design. A human being can act this way only if he or she has a conscious system in place and if that system is built on principles that can withstand chaos and stress. Those principles must be aligned with something deeper in our nature.

Two years after I began writing the essays, I decided to write and distribute a newsletter to those who were becoming familiar with my methods. My hope was to galvanize a network of practitioners and to build a community of people dedicated to doing good work, sharing their best practices, and celebrating life. Each newsletter was intended to reinforce and expand the ideas behind relaxed control and performance.

excellence. I wondered if people would respond.

My answer soon exceeded my expectations. Within two years, our readership had grown tenfold, from two thousand to twenty thousand subscribers. A year later it had reached thirty thousand and was still gathering momentum. People were sending out the newsletters through their own online networks. They were being e-mailed across the country and around the globe. Other folks were printing, stapling, and binding hard copies and distributing them to their friends and colleagues. Still others were posting them in elevators at work. They were showing up everywhere. Some of the essays leaned more toward practical advice, and others delved below the surface. All were developing and growing my understanding of the 8why,e and all were adding value to what had come before.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive=people seemed hungry for reinforcement of the basics, exploration of the subtleties, and the adventure of the surprises produced by some of the simplest techniques, tools, and awarenesses. These were hardly people in the Remedial Living class either=the most profound rewards from using this material have been reported by some of the best and brightest people on the planet, many already in the top percentiles of productivity, by anyone's standards.

It was time to put this material together into a book of its own.

The following principles, commentaries, and essays form a body of thought that I believe offers more than just tips or tricks. Whether or not people implemented the complete method of best practices I delineated in *Getting Things Done*, there were still things everyone could do more and more consistently, anytime, that would improve their productivity and well-being. These are the elements you will find validated and reinforced in these principles and essays.

The writings have been sorted into the four major areas of productive behavior they support: completion, focus, structure, and action. The principles and essays grouped as such are meant not to be limited to these headings or to give an exhaustive exposition of those topics but rather to stimulate your own thinking and validations of better ways to handle things.

There are times when individuals (and groups) will get the most leverage out of completing old stuff and clearing the decks (Part I). Other times a focus on the right focus is the primary key (Part II). Still other situations will call for structures and systems as most important for growth (Part III). And others will require simply letting go of trying to get it perfect and just get going (Part IV). All these aspects are important, but often one specifically will be the trigger point for busting through into a next level of productivity. Part V offers checklists as reference and reminders of the core practices for staying on top of the flow.

You will notice that the essays are not precise expositions of the principles they follow but rather food-for-thought spins on the topics.\* And the concluding 8By the way...e questions are merely catalysts for your own reflection about possible applications 8back at the ranch.e Human behavior and awareness can be at the same time really simple, really complex, and infinitely explorable, and Ifve tried not to nail down anything too hard. But you'll find at least hints as to how work functions at higher levels, how we function, and how the world functions. As you digest and put these principles into practice, there is a good chance you will contribute more to your job and to your life as a whole. Reading them will likely reinforce subtle changes in your perceptions, which lead to changes in behavior. A change in behavior leads to a change in action *and* in results. Things spiral outward in larger and larger ways. Change occurs, and a positive shift happens. It's most often the small things, done consistently in strategic places, that make the most difference.

As I said, you probably don't need to work harder. You also may not feel you have to institute the step-by-step system with all the parts and processes that *Getting Things Done* provided. But at times you still may need to manage incompletions better, be more creative and expansive, be more focused in your thinking,

access your intuition, have better structures, be more flexible and relaxed, or just get moving on next steps. Any or all of the above will make you more productive. This book provides important perspectives in all of those areas and may have just the key you need to kick-start yourself into rewarding new levels of expression.

You will probably find something familiar about this material. Not that you've read it anywhere else, but that you will recognize it as something you already know, intuitively. To gain value from this content does not require new skills or learning a complex body of new information. This writing will likely validate much of what you already know and do that works. But it will also challenge you to apply that awareness in a much more conscious and consistent manner—and that's where the real power lies. This is a compilation of effective perspectives and behaviors, applicable anywhere, anytime. Though each has merit by itself, as a whole they will provide a rich contextual experience greater than the sum of its parts. Whether you approach it ad hoc or straight through, I invite you to allow the bigger picture of a dynamic, positive readiness for life to emerge as you turn the pages.

I continue to be surprised with the seemingly infinite ways the principles of personal effectiveness can be examined and experienced. Our journeys always return to the same basic truths, but our explorations lead us back to those awarenesses in new and more profound ways. The thinking captured in this book will no doubt open more doorways and lead to further discoveries. One layer of meaning will give way to another and then another and another. The spiral will continue to expand. It's as interesting and inspiring to me to think about what's not yet in this book as of what is. I hope you will find it, as I have, a doorway instead of a final act.

The steady state of the martial artist is not a passive, reactive, or finite one. It is totally dynamic, alive, creative, and expansive. But it's not free. It is enabled by increasingly refined training and experience with work and life. May these principles serve as road signs and guideposts along your way.

*\*These principles are numbered sequentially for this book, not as they were in the newsletters (the initial numberings were arbitrary, as well). Also, some essays have been paired with different principles than those they were matched with originally.*

1.

### **Cleaning up creates new directions.**

Completion of open loops, whether they be major projects or boxes of old stuff we've yet to purge and organize, prepares the ground for cleaner, clearer, and more complete energy for whatever shows up. We're often not sure what's next or what to tackle. At that point, just clean or complete something—something obvious and in front of you, right away. Soon you'll have the energy and clarity to know what's next, and you'll have cleared the decks for more effective responsiveness on every front. Process your in-basket, purge your e-mails, or clean your center desk drawer. You've got to do it sometime anyway.

### **Prepared for the Unknown?**

SOMETHING IS COMING—probably within a few days—that's going to change your world. You don't see it yet. You don't know what it's about. But it's there, rolling inexorably forward, destined to throw you a curve that you do not expect. It could show up sooner or later—but it *will* show up. Trust me.

Write down these words exactly four weeks from today on your calendar: 8David Allen said a month ago that something was coming I couldn't foresee that would affect me significantly. Prove me wrong.

Are you ready? Is that unexpected event or input going to add insult to injury by making you feel more out of control? Or are you going to see it as the next creative opportunity that takes you to a new level of expression

and contribution? How are you preparing for the surprises that the new experience will invariably throw your way?

I think there are basically two levels to handle for any unforeseen opportunity:

1. The spiritual. If God is all, and you're part of that, just relax.
2. All the rest. For this you must get your act together, so you can shift gears as required.

An old Asian proverb says, "The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war." The military model is not a bad one—in the armed forces, if you're not fighting, you're training. Most people get ready for change a few days before a long vacation, when they divorce and have to sell everything they own and move, or when some other major life event causes them to rethink it all and get some clarity around their commitments and their stuff. They're cleaning up, closing up, and renegotiating all their agreements with themselves and others.

I suggest you do that weekly. And get yourself organized enough so that when a staff meeting is late to start, you're processing your in-basket or cranking down your FYI-to-read stack. Or when you're waiting for your spouse to get ready (like, *actually* ready), you're checking to see if there's a phone call you could make. I know very few people on the planet who care enough about their time and what they're doing, every minute, to maximize those kinds of windows. If you weren't taking advantage of your time that way, I'd ask yourself, Why not?

When's the last time you updated your projects list (those things that take more than one action to complete) and brought it current, with next actions for each one placed in your system? The degree to which you haven't done that is the degree to which you are enduring unnecessary stress.

And if you don't have one yet, get a ubiquitous idea-capturing tool. Something to write or record things on, whenever they occur to you. You need something that's always with you—on the beach, in the health club, at your desk, out for dinner. It's very helpful if you can tie it in with your wallet or purse, which is already in that category for you. The older, wiser, and more sophisticated you get, personally and professionally, the more your best ideas about something happen somewhere they can't be implemented at that moment.

You might understand intellectually that you should get everything out of your head that has potential future value or represents potential agreements with yourself and others. But you have to put that into practice by writing it down when it pops in. If you are getting any thing to do out of reading this, where are you recording that? Pocket notebooks, three-by-five cards, miniature recorders—whatever.

Get your ubiquitous capture tool in place and functioning as a standard life accessory. Going somewhere without it should feel as weird as going out without shoes on. It'll take you to a whole new level of creative thinking and doing.

All intellectual improvement arises from leisure.  
=SAMUEL JOHNSON

It is the act of forgiveness that opens up the only possible way to think creatively about the future at all.  
=FATHER DESMOND WILSON

When you know everything, you are like a dark sky. Sometimes a flashing will come through the dark sky. After it passes, you forget all about it, and there is nothing left but the dark sky. The key is never being surprised when all of a sudden a thunderbolt breaks through. And when the lightning does flash, a wonderful sight may be seen. When we have emptiness, we are always prepared for watching the flashing.  
=SHUNRYU SUZUKI

By the way...

mWhere are your potential cleanup areas?

mWhatfs the next one to tackle, when youfre not sure what else to be doing?

mWhat could you forgive today?

"

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Mitchell Diaz:**

The book Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done can give more knowledge and information about everything you want. So just why must we leave the good thing like a book Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done? A few of you have a different opinion about guide. But one aim that book can give many information for us. It is absolutely correct. Right now, try to closer together with your book. Knowledge or data that you take for that, you can give for each other; you may share all of these. Book Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done has simple shape but the truth is know: it has great and big function for you. You can look the enormous world by start and read a guide. So it is very wonderful.

#### **Allan Nguyen:**

The publication untitled Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done is the guide that recommended to you to study. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to an individual. The language that article author use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The author was did a lot of analysis when write the book, so the information that they share to you personally is absolutely accurate. You also will get the e-book of Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done from the publisher to make you more enjoy free time.

#### **Cody Smith:**

Do you have something that that suits you such as book? The guide lovers usually prefer to pick book like comic, short story and the biggest an example may be novel. Now, why not attempting Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done that give your satisfaction preference will be satisfied through reading this book. Reading practice all over the world can be said as the opportunity for people to know world much better then how they react in the direction of the world. It can't be claimed constantly that reading addiction only for the geeky man but for all of you who wants to end up being success person. So , for every you who want to start looking at as your good habit, you may pick Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done become your personal starter.

#### **George Walker:**

Do you like reading a e-book? Confuse to looking for your preferred book? Or your book ended up being rare? Why so many problem for the book? But virtually any people feel that they enjoy with regard to



reading. Some people likes examining, not only science book but in addition novel and Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done or maybe others sources were given knowledge for you. After you know how the truly amazing a book, you feel need to read more and more. Science book was created for teacher or even students especially. Those books are helping them to include their knowledge. In other case, beside science book, any other book likes Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done to make your spare time much more colorful. Many types of book like this one.

**Download and Read Online Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen  
#V41TNW3DLPB**

# **Read Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen for online ebook**

Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen Free PDF download, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen books to read online.

## **Online Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen ebook PDF download**

**Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen Doc**

**Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen Mobipocket**

**Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen EPub**

**V41TNW3DLPB: Ready for Anything: 52 Productivity Principles for Getting Things Done By David Allen**