

Planning Secrets of the Masters

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Choice

1. If you think you are making choices when you are merely discovering preferences, your attempts to choose will change nothing.
2. The Art of Choosing is not Choice itself but the discovery of creative and compelling reasons that will drive Choice. If you forget this, your choices are nothing more than lottery tickets; exercises in hope, guesswork, and despair.
3. If you forget to think first of the role of virtue and non-virtue in your choices, your choices may be driven, without your knowledge, by non-virtue.
4. If you succumb to the temptation to solve multiple problems with a single choice, you will solve none of them well.
5. Why make a single specific Choice when you can make a Policy Choice instead? It will save you from thousands of meaningless Choices.
6. The glamour of Choice is seductive but under the covers Choice is weak and sexless. It is the deliberate un-choosing of all but a single option that generates passion and power.
7. If you forget to weigh the risks and the potential rewards associated with a Choice, you will almost certainly increase the risk and miss the reward.
8. If you make a Choice without also Choosing your Timing, you will eventually be left with no Choice and no time.
9. If you give your system of making Choices too much power, it will you give back only the illusion of Choosing.
10. If you consider only the easy choices first, then the easy choices are the only ones you will effectively make.
11. If you try to create a single machine for churning out choices, it will turn out the same one each time.
12. If you forget that you have seven distinct areas in life in which choices are needed each day, other forces will be happy to make your choices for you. (Hint, the only things about which we have choice are: Place, People, Directing Force, Time, Attention/Intent, Presence, and State of Being.)
13. The bottom line in all the Art of Choice is this: If you get lazy about creativity, creativity will get lazy about you. No organized system can save you from this error.

Total Functionality

14. If you start believing in the possibility that you can be functional in all key areas in your life, you start believing in your life. (You can reasonably expect Total Functionality if you pursue this with help and with effort.)
15. Don't forget that if even one key area in your life doesn't work, none of them work
16. To seek the sublime at the outset of your journey is to miss the point; the path of each human begins with resolute focus on the mundane, boring, and ordinary until all key machinery supporting life has been brought at least to a minimum working order. (In life design and planning, your first task is to make all key areas functional to a minimum standard of sustainability.)

Skills

17. If you forget to invest in your planning skills, investments in your plans will yield the same old returns. .
18. You can either increase all your skills at once by increasing your planning capacity or you can improve yourself slowly, one skill at a time. (Planning skill is the central and primary skill underlying all human skills.)
19. You can radically improve a given skill simply by increasing your ability to plan well in relation to that skill.

Planning and Design

20. Apply in your personal life the same standards of planning that a professional would apply in business life.
21. Apply in your business life the same Life Design and Statement of Context that you would apply to choices in your personal life. (Your business choices must connect to the broadest and most immediate issues of your personal life.)
22. If you settle for your existing planning skills, the only thing new your plans are likely to produce are previously unimagined levels of mediocrity.

Context

23. If you forget that understanding Context is the source of power in Choice, you may as well forget Choice as well. (This process of Stating Context should be given unlimited time and attention and never rushed to premature completion.)