

EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Phil Cooke is a media consultant and Hollywood producer with a Ph.D. in Theology.

One Big Thing

THE NUTSHELL

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You are facing two big questions: *What am I supposed to do with my life? In a hyper-competitive, cluttered, and distracted world, how do I get noticed?* The intersection of those two questions is what this book is about.

Who's Painting the Portrait of Your Life?

Recently I was in a museum looking at the portraits of political, artistic, social, and military leaders, and I was gripped by a distinct sense of "intention" in their faces. These were leaders from another century who lived strategically, and with purpose. They had serious ambition, and lived lives of intentionality. I wondered about the place of ambition in my own life. What would have happened had I lived my life more *intentionally*?

Do We Really Have a Destiny?

Your destiny is a moving target, and that's why I prefer to use the word *purpose* or your "One Big Thing." Your purpose is bigger than any obstacles, limitations, or failures. Nothing can change the fact that you have a unique reason for being here, and there's still time for it to play out. It took me years wandering down many blind alleys before I started noticing the connections, honestly facing up to what I was *actually* good at doing versus what I *wanted* to do.

One Big Thing

Why One Big Thing?

Are you going to continue trying a little of this and a little of that, being unremarkable at a lot of things? Or are you going to find out what your One Big Thing is, let go of everything else, and pursue that with all your passion? *When it comes to your career, calling, or dream, understand that you won't get noticed for being pretty good at everything.*

The Power of One Big Thing

The most important thing you can possibly accomplish with your life is a legacy of influence. Whom do you want to influence? Start thinking about the answer to that question now because it will help you focus on your OBT.

The Power of Perception

Your *one big thing* is your purpose for living, while your *brand* involves your perception surrounding that thing. In other words, what do people think of when they think of you? I define *brand* as "a compelling story that surrounds a product, person, or organization." I believe God made everyone unique, and finding that distinctive combination is the key to understanding your One Big Thing.

The Power of Values

I would say that most unsuccessful people are unsuccessful because they either can't or won't decide on the important priorities in their lives. The secret to understanding your priorities is values. Values determine what's important and help determine your daily decisions. Your ability to change your life is directly connected to your ability to make choices and to take responsibility for those choices.

What's your One Big Thing?

Begin looking for ways to focus more on your strengths and less on your weaknesses. I spent years thinking I was capable of roles totally outside my zone, and it wasn't until I realized my real strengths and weaknesses that I was free to let go of the things that were holding me back.

The Map of Your Future

Your One Big Thing is really the quest for what you were put on the earth to accomplish. Start by considering what comes easy in life for you. Consider what you have done that made people notice. Another important signpost is discovering a cause you love. On the other hand, the thing you hate the most could be the problem you were born to fix.

Become a Force to be Reckoned With

In a digital culture, only the messages that actually *connect* will make an impact. In a sea of competition, the quickest way to get noticed is to be completely original. Stop trying to be like someone else and start looking deep into your life for what makes your message, story, or project unique and different.

One Big Thing

Just When You Thought It Would Be Easy

I'm convinced a significant number of people fail not because they aren't talented, determined, or passionate, but simply because they get distracted. Stop doing what other people think is urgent, and start focusing on what matters to you.

It's Never Too Late

It's never too late to discover your one big thing. Perhaps you've read this book and even though you're good at your job, perhaps even brilliant, you've also realized you're on the wrong path. What do you do? Uproot, change everything, and step into the unknown, or turn away from what you know is the truth, and carry on as usual?

Discovering your OBT and then stepping out to pursue its reality will be the greatest adventure of your life. When that happens, work becomes passion, and you will join the ranks of the very few who have accepted the risk, calculated the peril, and leaped off the ledge.