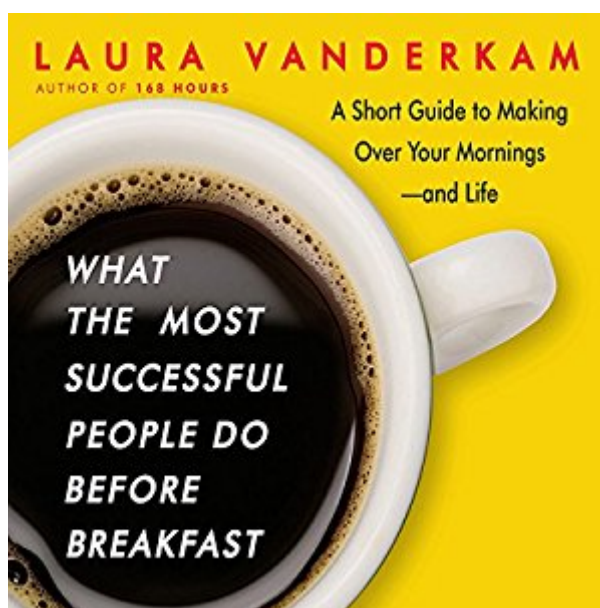


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# What The Most Successful People Do Before Breakfast: A Short Guide To Making Over Your Mornings—*and* Life



## Synopsis

Mornings are a madcap time for many of us. We wake up in a haze-often after hitting snooze a few times. Then we rush around to get ready and out the door so we can officially start the day. Before we know it, hours have slipped by without us accomplishing anything beyond downing a cup of coffee, dashing off a few emails, and dishing with our coworkers around the water cooler. By the time the workday wraps up, we're so exhausted and defeated that any motivation to accomplish something in the evening has vanished. But according to time management expert Laura Vanderkam, mornings hold the key to taking control of our schedules. If we use them wisely, we can build habits that will allow us to lead happier, more productive lives. Drawing on real-life anecdotes and scientific research that shows why the early hours of the day are so important, Vanderkam reveals how successful people use mornings to help them accomplish things that are often impossible to take care of later in the day. While many of us are still in bed, these folks are scoring daily victories to improve their health, careers, and personal lives without sacrificing their sanity. For instance, former PepsiCo chairman and CEO Steve Reinemund would rise at 5:00 a.m., run four miles, pray, and eat breakfast with his family before heading to work to run a Fortune 500 company. *What the Most Successful People Do Before Breakfast* is a fun, practical guide that will inspire you to rethink your morning routine and jump-start your life before the day has even begun.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The book was an easy read, which I finished in a couple days. The information was average there

were not any real new concepts in the book. Mostly information you probably already know. That being said I will try to be more productive in the mornings and implement some of the tips from the book. To be honest there were some things that were a bit redundant you get the point early on. I would say go ahead and buy the book. However, the current price as of this post is 2.99 its more of 99 cent kindle read. If the price goes higher than a few bucks, you might feel disappointed.

In this slim, but practical ebook, time management author and trainer Laura Vanderkam has put together some gems on how to get the most out of mornings and, as a consequence, the rest of your day. Mornings hold the key to taking control of our schedules, full stop. Drawing on anecdotes from some well-known American executives and solid scientific research Vanderkam provides a compelling case for altering the way we start our day. Studies show that most Americans, across age groups, get up at about 6 a.m. The time between waking and starting work is spent herding children towards the door for school, tidying up, personal grooming, commuting and so on. From a study of the time logs and profiles of high-achieving people Vanderkam reports that former CEO of Pepsico, Steve Reinemund is up at 5 a.m., goes for a 4-mile run, prays and eats breakfast with his family before going to run a Fortune 500 Company. James Citrin, head of Spencer Stuart is also exercising at 6:00 and then spends time in quiet time to consider the day ahead. Citrin did a survey of the morning rituals of executives he admired to find that the latest any of them was up regularly was 6 a.m. Successful people have their priorities clear and early mornings are the time when they have most control over their schedules. But that is probably true for all of us. We can divide the world up into “night people” and “morning people.” Both groups have only 168 hours each week, but not all hours are equally suited to all things. The common reason for not rising early cited by “night people” is that they do their best work then. There is little scientific evidence that this is true. Professor Roy Baumeister has spent his career studying self-discipline (I reviewed his book in this paper earlier this year,) and has found a direct correlation between fatigue and self-discipline. “Diets are broken in the evening, not the morning. The majority of impulsive crimes are committed after 11:00 p.m. Lapses in drug use, alcohol abuse, sexual misbehaviour tend to come about late in the day.” In the early hours of the day we have enough will-power and energy to tackle things that require internal motivation, and that are rarely rewarded immediately. Baumeister also proved that once something is a routine or habit, it requires very little self-discipline to continue. Applied to the argument of this book, people who turn high value tasks into morning rituals conserve their energy for later battles. What are the

best morning habits? Vanderkam's research showed that successful people use their mornings for nurturing their careers, nurturing their relationships, and nurturing themselves. Nurturing your career can take the form of doing focused work, reading in your field, and thinking strategically about your projects or company, or planning the day. One executive is quoted as saying: Every day I have a job; in the morning I think I have a career. To nurture relationships Vanderkam advised one single mother to get to bed early so she can use her early mornings for Mommy-and-me time with her daughter before beginning her commute to work. What a beautiful way to start a day, giving your child your best, not what is left over of you at the end of the day. Much is made of the value of families having dinner together for the stability and moral growth of children. This surely true of pleasant breakfasts, too. Statistics indicate that dual income couples can find only 12 minutes a day to talk to each other. Early mornings might go some way to address this relationship issue. And then there is "nurturing yourself." Most of the executives the author quotes use part of their early starts to exercise or do yoga. Examples are Xerox's Ursula Burns, Coors' van Paasschen, Rodale's Steve Murphy among others. These are incredibly busy people and they choose the mornings for their exercise routines possibly without knowing how beneficial exercise at this time of day really is. Stress hormones released on waking are counteracted by exercise, as is the blood glucose effects of high-fat diets, and so much more. People exercising in the morning are also more likely to stick to this routine with the heightened ability to apply self-discipline at this time. Spiritual practices like praying, studying scripture or meditating were also found to be popular. The inability to get to bed early enough to allow for an early rise because of the many chores that have to be done before going to bed, doesn't hold up according to Vanderkam. In the same way that dieticians tell dieters to keep a food log, Vanderkam suggests that to know how you spend your time is best seen from actually tracking it. This involves jotting down what you are doing as you are doing it so you can reflect on exactly how you spend your time. It will become evident that much of the night time activity is unnecessary and of a far lower priority than what can be gained by the early start. This is a practical guide that addresses many of the logistic and other complications that prevent one seizing the golden hours of the day. It will inspire you to rethink your morning routine and you will be so much better off for doing so. Readability Light +---- Serious Insights High --+-- Low Practical High +---- Low

Ian Mann of Gateways consults internationally on leadership and strategy

I think I misunderstood what this book was going to do for me. I was expecting ideas and tips and

what I got was almost an autobiography. I learned more about the author and her family than I did about reversing my late night/late morning habits. It was well written and I have no real complaints other than the title being misleading. It wasn't a guide at all. It was humorous but not very instructive. Also it led me to inadvertent irony in action - I stayed up late reading this book and ended up oversleeping the next day.

I read the "sample" of this book on my Kindle and thought the rest of the book would have more insights on the morning habits of well-known professionals in business, government, education, science, etc. I purchased & read the full version and found it had fewer specifics on people than I was anticipating and describes more broadly the habits some people follow to improve the effectiveness of their days. That being said, it was worth the quick read (it is a long essay), and I'll consider how to integrate some of its principles into my life.

This book is an extremely short pep talk about creating time in the early morning hours to do things for yourself. This is not a detailed "how to" book but an overview of the topic. In a nutshell, it gives brief examples of extremely successful people and how they use their mornings (e.g., exercising, meditation, family time, etc), briefly argues why using the morning hours is beneficial (e.g., you haven't yet exhausted your day's limited supply of willpower), and gives a short list of things you could do with your morning hours (e.g., exercising, crafting, eating breakfast as a family, etc). It's concise, well written, and will be motivational to those who are already thinking about doing this (I imagine anyone who's considering purchasing this book). I wish it was longer and went into more detail on the topic - I was shocked when I got to the end of the book in 15 minutes.

I enjoyed reading this book but be aware of what you're buying. It's very short and probably a bit overpriced for the length. It doesn't provide any real insights either - the entire book can really be reduced to: get up early and use that time to work on things that you consider meaningful ('important but not urgent' tasks).

I had read excerpts of this book from an article on Zite and placed it on my wishlist thinking it would be an informative and interesting read. It was for all the five minutes that it lasted. Obviously, caveat emptor and I should have anticipated this from the 2.99 price but literally, this is a FIVE MINUTE BOOK and most of the information seems to have already been disseminated elsewhere - presumably the author's intent is not so much to push the book as it is to get people to hire her

perhaps to teach some of this stuff in seminars? (not that I'm knocking it but...).If you read something about this book from an online article, chances are you already have read most of it. So, erm. don't buy the book. Unless you consider 2.99 worthwhile for an effective 10 minutes of reading.

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