



Ever get to the end of a busy day wondering what the heck you got done?

Working so hard and getting nowhere just feels so darned frustrating.

It doesn't have to be.

Yes, running your business can be a demanding, exhausting and gruelling affair.

It can also be (and should be) a rewarding, worthwhile, valuable, meaningful and enjoyable part of your life, where you can see and feel progress towards the vision you have for your business.

Just like steering a dinghy in fast moving water, you can only steer the boat if the boat is going faster than the torrent – you can only steer your business if you work on improving your business.

Just going with the flow (however fast it is) results in danger and death! In business, just doing the urgent day-to-day jobs, and none of the important jobs, keeps you busy but doesn't get you what you want.



In a nutshell

Do one important thing every day that takes you towards the business you'd be proud to own and run.

Size doesn't matter...

Whether your business is small or large, there are lots of jobs need doing – cash flow, customer care, sales, marketing, wages, recruiting, doing what your customers have paid you for, getting customers to pay,

Here's a proven solution for your business...

Get clear on what you want your business to look like or where you want your business to go.

Then work out what one thing you must do every day so that you get there.

paying suppliers.

The list of jobs is almost endless. And the flow of these jobs is like a river, it never stops.

It's hardly surprising that you're forced to put off the 'important' vision-focused jobs just to get all the urgent jobs done:

- A call from a customer takes you away from training a colleague
- Chasing cash takes you away from an important joint venture deal
- A customer mix-up stops you planning your new product launch

But if all you ever do is the day-to-day work every day, all you'll ever get is more of the same day-to-day work tomorrow. Why not get better?

Just like John Bytheway, best selling author and speaker, says:

"Inch by inch, life's a cinch. Yard by yard, life's hard"



Ed Sheeran smashes it by working inch by inch...

Contrast 2017 with 2009.

During 2009, sleeping rough or sofa surfing, Ed Sheeran played more than 300 gigs at small venues and open mic nights...

Every day moved Sheeran towards the goal he had as a teenager.

He honed his talent day in, day out, to be better at his one thing – working a crowd with his guitar and a loop pedal.

It worked.

In 2015 Sheeran sold out 3 nights at Wembley Stadium.

In March 2017 Sheeran released his third album, 'Divide'. Within a week, all 16 songs were in the Top 20.

What if every daily action gets you a 50% increase?

Would you be more committed to taking daily action if every day got you a 50% better result? We would be.

In 1983, a scientist called Lorne Whitehead showed that one toy domino can topple another domino 50% bigger than itself.

This means if you start a domino run with a 5cm domino, the 10th domino will be taller than Neil Fingleton – the tallest man ever in Europe at 7ft 7inches. The 24th domino will be taller than The Shard in London!

“When one thing, the right thing, is set in motion, it can topple many things.” – Gary Keller, The One Thing

Check out the tools to see a video proving this and see how the amazing maths works in a graph! You can read about Sheeran's grand plan too.

For sure Sheeran didn't see a 50% audience increase at each gig but his skills grew one gig (domino) at a time.

Real-life business success also shows the power of daily steps...

Ed Sheeran's progress is very like the real-life progress great businesses make. As shown by the Jim Collins' research in his book 'Good To Great'.

The Jim Collins study showed how 11 great businesses exceeded market growth by more than 3 times the norm (one attained 18 x the market growth).

All 11 great businesses made lots of little steps. Little regular steps that resulted, eventually, in rapid and sustainable success (for 15 years).

Collins called this the 'flywheel' effect – regular action builds momentum and eventually the wheel starts flying. Many days pass without much obvious progress or success.

A bit like Ed Sheeran's daily grind in 2009 resulting in very little, until he got massive success in 2015 and 2017.

What's your daily 'get-up-and-get-going' driver?

To keep driving whilst seeing little or no progress can be demoralising.

It's easier to give up than keep going.

Ed Sheeran didn't give up. He stuck to his daily gig-a-day grind. He knew what he wanted, he was a driven man.

For you to be driven to take action every day towards your goal, you better be passionate about your goal.

It worked for Jim Collins' 11 'Good To Great' businesses, they focused on what was deeply passionate to them.

Working out what their deep passion was helped show them which domino run to start. And which domino run to keep going. And which domino runs to avoid.

Jim Collins points to the need for a Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) – this is the big, ultimate domino at the end of the run. What does it look like? Know this and you'll be driven and you'll know which daily actions (smaller dominos) to take...

The 3 keys to your BHAG...

“All business people want productivity and profit, but too many fail to realise that the best path to attaining them is through purpose-driven priority”

Like Gary Keller points out – your purpose sets your priority and your priority determines the productivity your daily actions produce.

Working on purpose...

“No matter our motivations, most of what we do in life is ultimately meant to make us happy”

Keller points to the findings of a pre-eminent psychologist, Dr. Martin Seligman,

who suggests 5 factors that contribute to our happiness - **our 5 sources of happiness:**

1. Positive emotion & pleasure
2. Achievement
3. Relationships
4. Engagement
5. Meaning

Which one of these is your main driver?

What Big Hairy Audacious Goal for your business connects with your main driver?

Clear and present priority...

Once you are clear on your purpose (your BHAG) setting your priority for the next 5 years, the next year, this month, this week, today, gets easier.

Keller provides a focus question to help you work out your priority in each time frame. To work, it must influence your daily actions (dominos):

“What's the one thing I can do today such that by doing it, everything else becomes easier or unnecessary?”

– Gary Keller, The One Thing

What's the domino you can knock over today that gets you one step closer to the BHAG or ultimate domino?

You'll find more on this focus question in the download tools.

Productivity power...

If you struggle to answer the focus question above, it's possibly because you've had a challenging day and your brain has run out of juice, just like a battery does, just like your other muscles do when you work them hard. You might also struggle because you're distracted by other things.

✓ **Distraction** is productivity enemy number one

✓ Enemy number two is **brain fatigue**

Keller points to research proving that to be productive on your BHAG, you should block off distraction-free (domino) time. This time should be when your brain is at its freshest and most powerful (in the morning before everything else kicks off!).

Set your dominos running

Pick your BHAG, block off daily distraction-free time, and go knock your first domino over...

TIME TO DISAGREE

“I can’t just focus on my ‘one thing’ every day – my business needs me to do lots of other stuff daily”

Yes your business needs you to do lots of things every day for your business to exist.

But if you want your business to more than just ‘exist’ why not allow yourself 30 minutes of distraction-free time every morning? Or an hour once a week? And knock a domino over towards your BHAG.

You’ll then get to every Friday feeling that you have moved towards what you want, towards your BHAG. You’ll be working your flywheel of success.

Success is sequential, not simultaneous. One small step every day or every week. Worth a try?

“I’m busy enough just doing what I can to keep my business going and earning a crust. Thinking about my purpose or BHAG is not for me.”

If your BHAG is unclear why not simply use a little distraction-free time when you’re at your freshest?

Use the time to work out **what you’d like your business to look like in 5 years time**. Or work out which of the 5 sources of happiness would best motivate you and how that would work in your business.

Use the Business Bitesize Support Tools And Resources

to help you make the most of this edition of Business Bitesize – go here: www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands

If you prefer why not come and have a cup of coffee with us and we’ll talk it through with you?

“My daily to-do list still needs action every day, they’re not distractions”

Getting your daily work done is necessary and can’t be ignored.

Similarly you shouldn’t ignore working on your business’s BHAG. Is it too much to invest 30 minutes a day or 60 minutes a week moving your business forward?

One question that could help you reduce your daily grind is:

“Who else should be doing this for me?”

This can point to delegating work or outsourcing jobs that are not the best use of your valuable time.

“Please tell me more”



Two inspired references for your success in this Bitesize edition:

1. Keller’s ‘The One Thing’ gives practical, research-based insight for personal productivity and success
2. Collins’s ‘Good To Great’ shows the paths 11 uber-successful businesses took

Both books are connected in many ways, which further suggests the ideas are worthy of your attention.

You’ll also get more insights, exercises and resources by checking out the downloadable tools here...

Get Your Bitesize Support Tools Now

Your feedback is important to us.

We’d love to know what you think of this edition of Business Bitesize and how you use it or plan to use it. Also we’d welcome your suggestions for future editions of Business Bitesize. To give us your thoughts please use the simple feedback form here: www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands



4 helping hands for you...

Small daily or weekly steps towards your goal will get you there like it did Ed Sheeran.

A single focus worked for the great businesses in Jim Collins’ research too.

1. Work out your long term Big Hairy Audacious Goal, one you can be passionate about
2. Use Keller’s focus question to help work out your ‘one thing’ focus for the year, the quarter, month, week and today
3. Block off distraction-free time in your diary, however small, to do your most important ‘one thing’ work
4. Do your ‘one thing’ work when you’re at your freshest and most energised – every morning

ULTIMATE ARGUMENT:

“How do I know that a BHAG or ‘one thing’ focus will work for my business?”

Take no action on your one big hairy audacious goal (BHAG) and you’ll stand still.

Spread yourself thin across many actions and many distractions and you’ll make slow frustrating progress.

Do one thing every day towards your one goal (without distraction) and you start a domino run towards your success.

STOP being busy doing all the urgent jobs for a short time every day

START doing one important thing every morning towards your one goal



Your next steps:

Doing one thing every day (or every week) that drives you to achieve the success you seek makes sense, don't you think?

Yes, it can be tough to do this in with the daily grind of running your business.

Start by treating yourself to daily distraction-free time...

If all you ever do is the daily grind then you'll struggle to advance your business.

Set aside distraction-free time either every day or every week – even if you have to hide in your favourite coffee shop or hotel foyer.

Use this time to take action on your Big Hairy Audacious Goal. You'll then be mirroring what Ed Sheeran did and what the 'Good To Great' businesses did too.

More tools and information for you:

As well as the steps on this page, use the extra insights, stories and tools by downloading the supporting resources at the URL link below.

Distraction-free time every day, working on your 'one thing' every day, gets you success...

It's so easy to let the many and varied day-to-day jobs of running your business dominate your working life.

Only when you take daily action on the jobs that improve the future of your business will you be like Ed Sheeran! You'll also be like the 11 'Good To Great' businesses that outperform their competitors by up to 18 times.

1. Work out your long-term Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG), one you can be passionate about, one that has you jumping out of bed every morning to get started.

Make sure your BHAG is connected to what genuinely makes you happy

2. Use Keller's focus question to help work out your 'one thing' (domino) focus for the next 12 months, the quarter, the month, the week and today

"What's the one thing I can do today such that by doing it, everything else becomes easier or unnecessary?"

3. Block off distraction-free time in your diary, however small, to do your most important 'one thing' work

This is you using the domino effect in your calendar, every day or at the very least every week, so you make progress towards your BHAG

4. Do your 'one thing' work when you're at your freshest and most energised – every morning

Your brain, like all your muscles, gets fatigued through use.

Schedule quality time when you're fresh on your daily BHAG actions – the morning is best!

YOUR SUPPORT TOOLS ARE HERE: Go to the link below and you'll find a selection of practical support tools to help you get clear on your BHAG, put the domino effect and 'the one thing' to work for you and your business.

Find the support tools to help you here - www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands

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Ever get to the end of a busy day wondering what the heck you got done?

Start by asking yourself:

What's the one thing you can do *today* such that by doing it, everything else becomes easier or unnecessary?

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STOP being busy doing all the urgent jobs for a short time every day

START doing one important thing every morning towards your one goal

1. The one ‘Single-Minded Success’ question you must ask yourself if you want to achieve the goals you have for your business...

What’s the one thing you can do today such that by doing it, everything else becomes easier or unnecessary?

Where is the value in this question?

To start, you’ll adjust the time frame of the question – **today** – to better suit your business priorities.

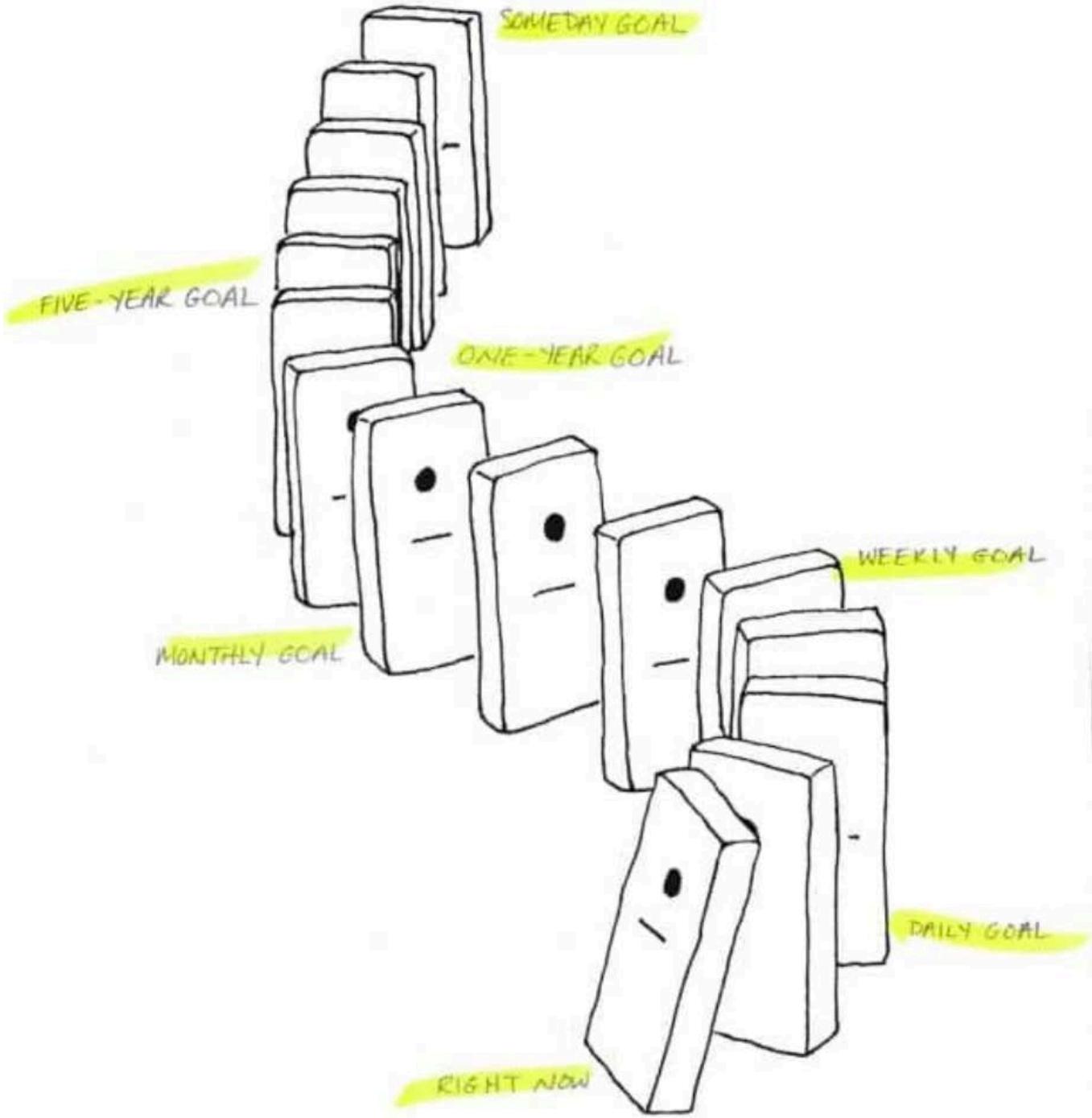
You may choose **this week** or **this month**. You may choose **this year** or you may choose **in the next 3 years** to suit your needs, your priorities or what matters most to you and your business.

Once you have the time frame nailed, the value of the question lies here...

- a) ... **What’s the ONE Thing I can do...** The first part of this Focusing Question is about taking action... it’s not the ONE thing you “should do”, or “could do”, or “would do” — but the ONE Thing you CAN do. The word “can” implies ACTION, as opposed to others, which imply intention.
- b) ... **such that by doing it...** This part of the question lets you know you’re about to get specific. It means that you’re about to take action on something that actually has real purpose.
- c) ... **everything else will be easier or unnecessary?...** This final part of the Focusing Question is about LEVERAGE. It says that when you do this ONE Thing, everything else you could do to accomplish your goal will now be either do-able with less effort or no longer even necessary. For example: hiring an assistant to handle your calls and emails is a leveraged action that frees up the time you used to put into calls and emails, thus making it easier for you to focus on growing your business.

IMPORTANT: The question is about priorities. The question is about action. And the question is about a big result but small actions.

Check out the image on the next page to see how the same question applied to different time frames can help you and your business and steer your actions every day.



WHAT'S MY ONE THING
RIGHT NOW?

2. Ed Sheeran's Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG)...

If ever there was a man with a plan (and a vision) it was Ed Sheeran.

Whether you love his music or not there's no doubting what Sheeran's 'One Thing' is and what his Big Hairy Audacious goal is...

"I want to be the biggest male artist in the world"

This article gives you all the details:

<http://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/ed-sheeran-new-album-divide>

This quote from the article captures the essence of Ed Sheeran's approach:

There has never been a wannabe pop superstar who's planned so far ahead from day one.

Sheeran has been plotting since he was 13; he's 25 now and as unjaded and unrelenting as ever.

"It's a 15-record plan," he tells me.

"The first five EPs then the first album + [Plus], then x [Multiply] and now ÷ [Divide]. There'll be two more in this series of five albums and then five more after that..."

3. Ed Sheeran's 'One Thing' every day...

It's one thing to work out and commit to your BHAG.

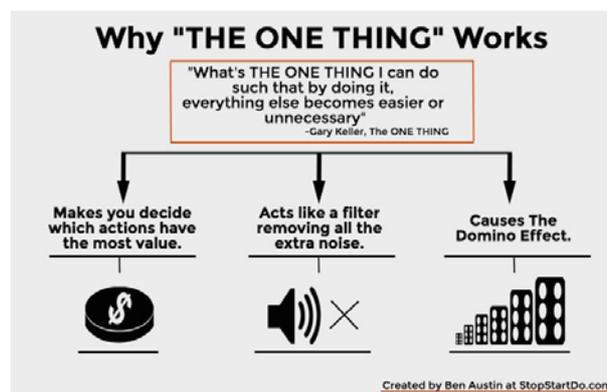
It's another to turn your BHAG into a daily action (domino) on the journey towards your BHAG.

Sheeran's attitude to every day, from the article, looks like this:

"...any day in which he did not practice, perform or write a song was a day wasted"

Like Sheeran you can be encouraged to take action every day by both the flywheel effect and the domino effect.

Ed Sheeran applied the principles at play in 'The One Thing':



4. THE FLYWHEEL EFFECT: Build the energy and impact of regular action

In his book ‘Good To Great’ Jim Collins showed how 11 great businesses exceeded market growth by more than 3 times the norm (one attained 18 x the market growth).

Rather than one big transformational step all 11 great businesses were found to have made lots of little steps. Little regular steps that resulted, eventually, in rapid and sustainable success (the sustainable success lasted for 15 years back to back or they didn’t make the list of 11 great businesses).

Collins called this the ‘flywheel’ effect – regular, consistent action builds momentum and eventually the wheel starts flying. Many days pass without much obvious progress or success.

Check out this article from Jim Collins’ website which describes how businesses apply the flywheel effect... <http://www.jimcollins.com/tools/How-does-your-flywheel-turn.pdf>

You’ll discover how Amazon and Intel have applied the flywheel to such global success.

A bit like Ed Sheeran’s daily grind in 2009 resulting in very little, until he got massive success in 2015 and 2017.

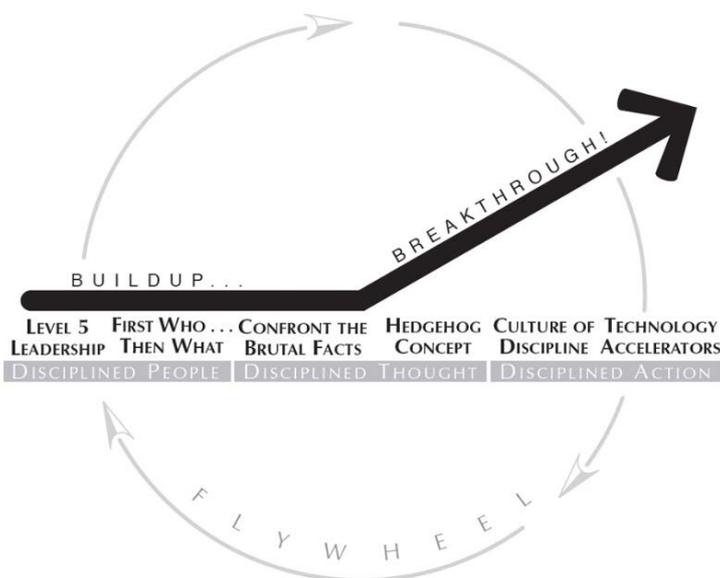
And watch Jim Collins [here](#) describe the flywheel effect in just 60 seconds if only to hear his last sentence!!!



And investigate more about the ‘Good To Great’ businesses in Collins’ great book.

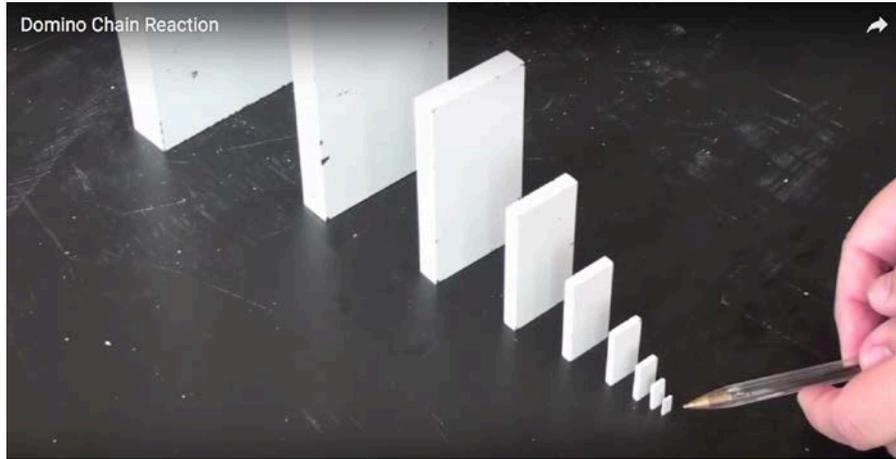
‘Good To Great’ the book and the flywheel effect is summarised in this image.

NB *This edition of Business Bitesize and these support tools have focused on the build-up phase you see in this image. It’s the consistent actions daily focused on your BHAG that brings you the success you seek.*



5. THE DOMINO EFFECT: Build the energy and impact of regular action

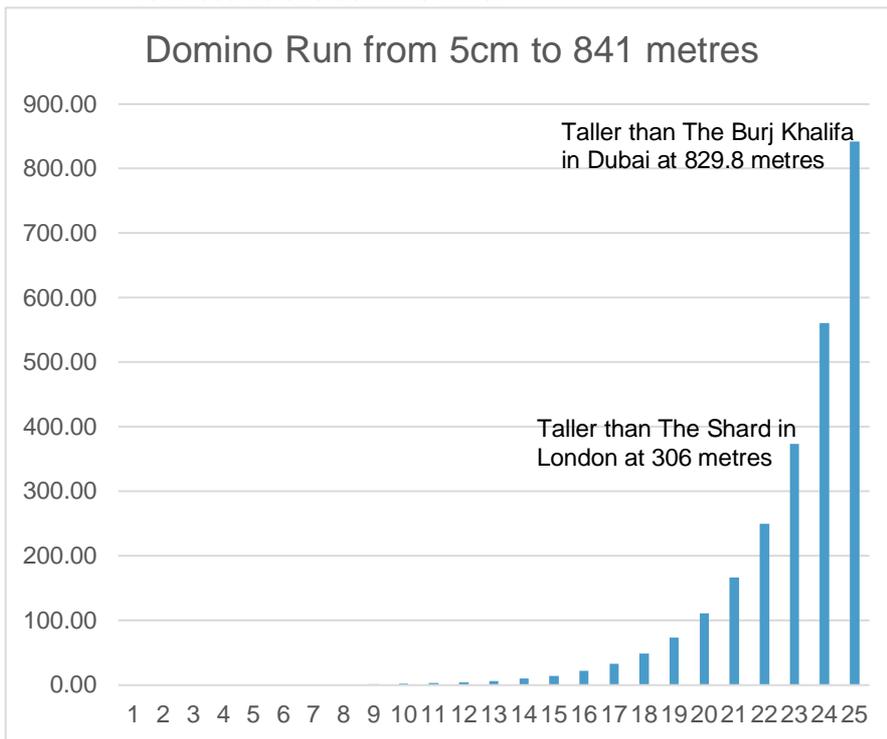
Check out this video to see in just a couple of minutes how the power builds in a domino run.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y97rBdSYbkg>

The video shows how you can release **2 billion times more energy** from tipping domino 1 by the time you get to domino 13.

The science behind the domino effect lies in the amplification of energy that's eventually released as the domino falls.



By taking action every day or every working day you amplify the effect so that it pays off like daily action paid off for Ed Sheeran.

So, one domino, one day, one 30 minute action – repeated daily – takes you to the BHAG you seek.

It pays to keep on keeping on, especially if every day amplifies the impact on your BHAG like it does on the domino run.

Here's how the (x 1.5) impact scales from a 5cm domino to a domino higher than the tallest building in the world (The Burj Khalifa in Dubai at 829.8 metres).

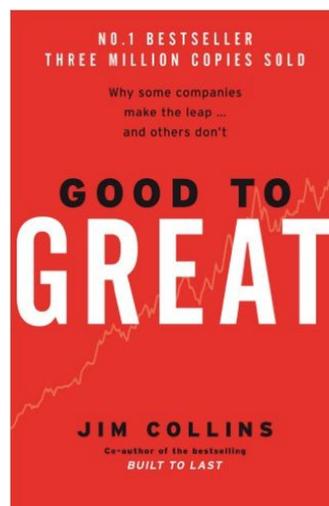
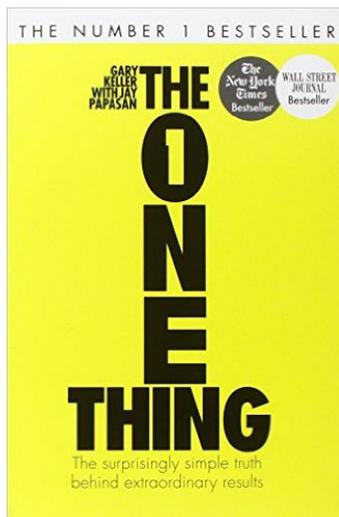
6. Four steps to make your dose of daily domino time happen every day...

Here's the questions you can ask yourself so that you knock over one domino a day to get what you want for yourself, your business and your life. Answer the questions and take the four steps...

- a) What's your daily diary commitment that takes you one domino (day) towards your BHAG?
 - Are you going for 30 minutes a day or 60 minutes a day or do you need to keep it small for now and make it 15 minutes a day?
- b) What time of day can you give yourself uninterrupted time for your time and action commitment to your 'One Thing'?
- c) What space, place or room will best enable you to do what needs to be done in your 15, 30 or 60 minutes a day?
- d) What sort of prompt, reminder or trigger can you set up to remind you that you need to go to your chosen place for your daily 'One Thing' activity?

7. The two books worthy of your attention...

Two sources of wholehearted inspiration and insight:



The One Thing gives you a personal perspective on applying distraction free time to the One Thing you want to achieve in your business life.

Good To Great gives you a company perspective on achieving greatness, one consistent daily step at a time.

Time to knock some dominoes over?