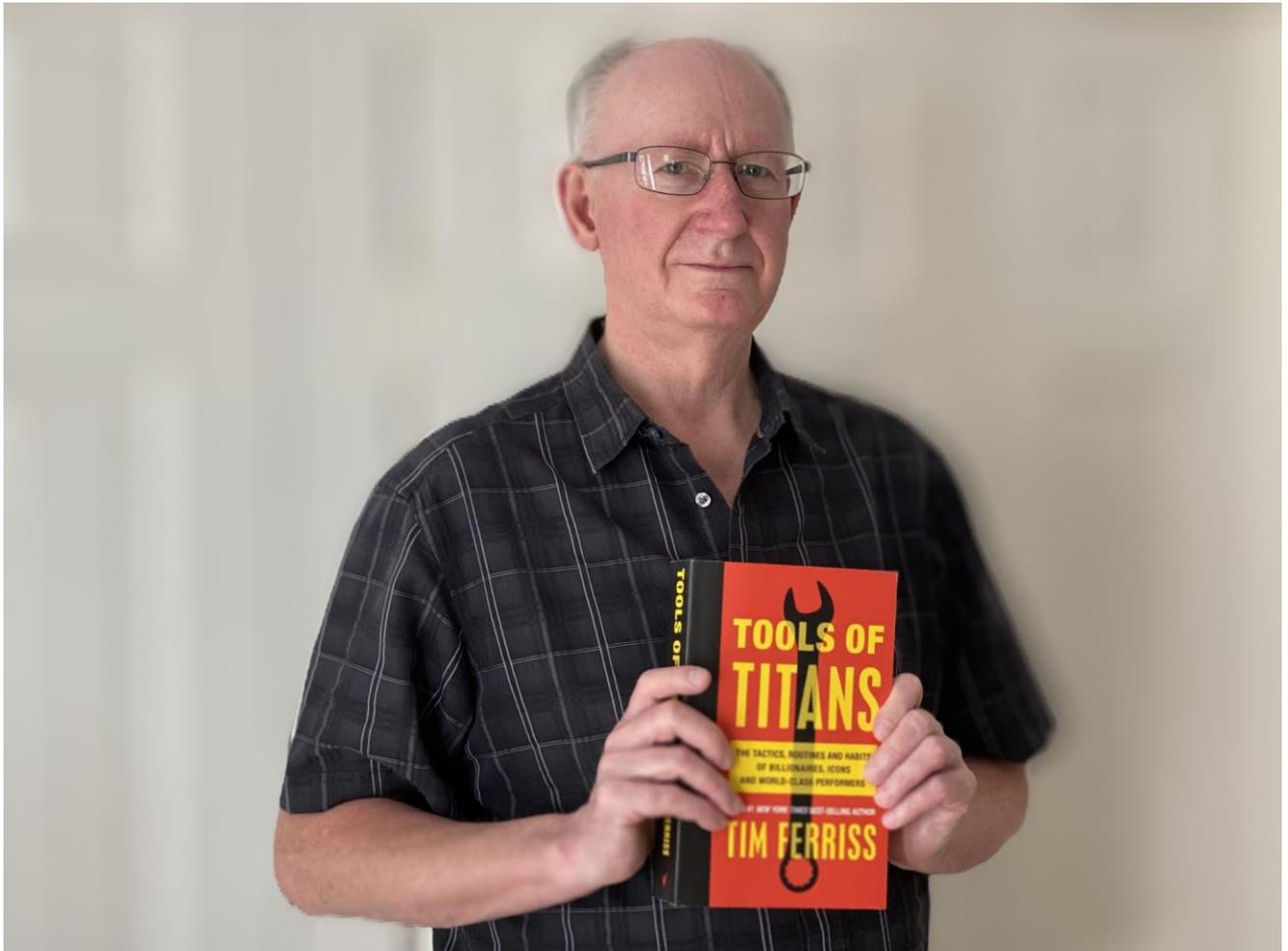


Wealden Business Group

Book Review: “Tools of Titans” by Tim Ferriss Report by Bill Ferguson, 22 June 2022

Bill Ferguson said “I know that at 674 pages, this is a big book, and I saw several raised eyebrows when I handed out the copies. “



A little bit about the author, Tim Ferriss.

His first book, *The 4 Hour Work Week* was a WBG book club choice in 2008, and since then he has kept himself busy. He has written *4 Hour Body*, *4 Hour Chef*, *Tribe of Mentors* and today's book: *Tools of Titans*.

His podcast, the *Tim Ferriss Show*, is currently up to 598 episodes, the majority being in depth interviews of over an hour. His podcast has had over 500m

downloads.

He has over 1M followers on Instagram, 1.8M on Twitter. In April 2022 the website www.thesuccessbug.com listed his net worth as \$100m.

Success

A regular question on the podcasts is “who do you think of as a successful person, or what do you consider success to be?” We are told that successful people are flawed individuals who have learned, by accident or design to optimise one or two of their strengths, and that is what they project to the outside world.

Based on that description Tim Ferriss is successful!

One of his strengths is his ability to deconstruct the methods used by high performers and share them with his followers. He wants to know how individuals became outstanding in their chosen fields and he breaks down their routines into components that can be applied by others who wish to fast track the process of getting good, quickly at something. He is good at tweaking systems to optimise their output: for example he uses social media to promote and monetise his brand; he currently makes \$108k from each show by advertising products, that he endorses. He is good at engaging socially with his guests ‘The Oprah of audio’ known as an Influencer.

There are many cross references in the book to the people he has interviewed, and suggestions for products and resources that you might want to investigate.

Tim’s notes and comments permeate the synopses of 123 podcast interviews.

This is not a ‘how to do it’ book, more a collection of anecdotes and things to try or consider.

Medical students are often told at their induction lecture that half of what they will be taught in the next four years will turn out to be wrong: the trouble is we don’t know which half!

Contradictions

There are contradictions throughout the book. Should you get up early or strive for restful prolonged sleep? Should you skip breakfast, or skip lunch, or do intermittent or prolonged fasting. Should you have the same meal every day or go for variety? And does nutrition even matter, Amelie Boone binges on pop tarts before competing

and still wins endurance events. Should you go to the gym or just meditate? Many of the interviewees meditate: is that important or just an epiphenomenon of the sophisticated high achieving community that dominate Tim's circle?

We only look at the habits of successful people, nobody asks the losers: they might do the same or something better and just be unlucky. Not everyone wants to use their body as a test laboratory for supplements and psychedelics, nor risk their health with extreme sports or training schedules. A daily routine for a marine soldier would probably injure any one of us.

How to interpret

Think of the hacks in the book as nudges in the right direction, like asking directions from a local; it seems easy until you get lost.

Remember, this book is not a narrative, it is a collection of notes and there are some hidden gems, that will be different for everybody. Sometimes you will find tips or comments that satisfy through confirmation bias. Sometimes you may experience cognitive dissonance and look for ways to justify what you think or do. And every so often you might get an 'aha' moment as you realise you have stumbled on a new way of considering something that had been on your mind.

I hope some of you followed my suggestion: just dip in, two or three times and see what you come out with. Use the book like the I Ching, mentally ask a question then open it to a random page something helpful might jump out.

How to succeed

You can of course, if you wish, read the entire book from cover to cover! To save you time and effort, if you want to become very wealthy: do these seven things.

1. Find your niche: Combine three or four things that you are rather good at, or knowledgeable about.
2. Get well known by writing insightful articles; either blogging or books.
3. Build a fan base: Find 10 people who love your product, then scale it up to 1000.
4. Give away a lot but charge a huge amount for special events, eg collectible products, one to one coaching, priority tickets, after dinner speaking etc.
5. Build a team you can trust

6. Outsource what you can
7. Manage your time: learn to say no

Some of my dips (your dips may differ)

I've picked out a few of my favourite dips:

Scott Adams (2014 book club choice *How to Fail...*): capitalism rewards things that are rare and valuable, make yourself rare by combining two or more things you are "quite good at" until no one else has your mix.

When wine tasting, have your mouth slightly open, it concentrates the smell somehow.

Roll your foot on top of a golf ball to ease your hamstrings (at last something useful I can do with a golf ball!)

Siddhartha: I can think, wait and fast. Good advice!

Chris Sacca: if you turn up uninvited at a meeting, just say you are there to take notes.