

**BE BAD FIRST: GET GOOD AT THINGS
FAST TO STAY READY FOR THE FUTURE
BY ERIKA ANDERSEN**

**BE BAD
FIRST**



Get Good at Things *FAST*
to Stay Ready for the Future

Erika Andersen

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BE BAD FIRST: GET GOOD AT THINGS FAST TO STAY READY FOR THE FUTURE BY ERIKA ANDERSEN PDF

We are operating in a world defined by constant connection, rapid change, and abundant choices. News that once took months, even years, to spread now reaches across the globe in seconds. Advances in medicine and science are pushing boundaries with gene therapy and stem cell transplants. And decisions about where and how to work and live are nearly endless.

As new knowledge - and the possibilities that arise from that knowledge - propels us forward, leadership readiness expert and renowned author Erika Andersen suggests that success in today's world requires the ability to acquire new knowledge and skills quickly and continuously - in spite of our mixed feelings about being a novice.

In her newest book, *Be Bad First*, Erika explores how we can become masters of mastery, proficient in the kind of high-payoff learning that's needed today. She encourages listeners to embrace being bad on the way to being great - to be novices over and over again as we seek to learn and acquire the new skills that will allow us to thrive in this fast-changing world.

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- Published on: 2016-02-23
- Format: Unabridged
- Original language: English
- Running time: 367 minutes

Most helpful customer reviews

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” Aristotle

By Robert Morris

Frankly, I dislike terms such as “bad” and “failure” when discussing efforts to improve. They tend to be self-defeating. That said, here’s the basic premise of this book: To improve at being or doing whatever, it is necessary to be “bad” during the process of becoming better.

As Erika Andersen explains, “we have to learn to be okay with being continuously uncomfortable in a way that no one in a previous generation has had to do...we have to learn to be ‘comfortable with being uncomfortable’...What I’ll be doing with you here is supporting you in building a few key habits of mind and action — mental skills that will allow you to acquire new capabilities quickly and continuously. This is an essential ability in our world.” I agree.

Time Out. I cannot recall a prior time in my life when a larger percentage of the people I know had more “crutches” than they do now. Self-justifications fill the air like arrows at Agincourt. So many people refuse to take ownership of the consequences of decisions they made. Personal accountability is as rare as a

unicorn. Let's be crystal clear: What Andersen recommends will require patience as well as persistence, focus as well as mindfulness, and courage as well as passion. Her mission in life is to help as many people as she can to become the best person each can be. Oscar Wilde advises, "Be yourself. Everyone else is taken." Andersen takes it a step further: "Be the very best person you can be and never stop improving yourself. Never. And I'll help you do that. That's why I wrote this book."

These are among the several dozen passages of greatest interest and value to me, also listed to suggest the scope of Andersen's coverage in Chapters 1-5:

- o Why Being Bad First Is So Essential (Pages 4-8)
- o Three Generations: As Change Accelerates (8-11)
- o But Not Knowing Things Feels So...Bad (13-16)
- o Mastery Makes Us Feel Good, and, Mastery and Survival (19-21)
- o Another Lucky Break (21-24)
- o Aspiration (35-38)
- o Neutral Self-Awareness (38-41)
- o Endless Curiosity (41-43)
- o Completely Within Your Control, and, First, Some Self-Assessment (46-49)
- o So: We Do What We Want Most (54-56)
- o How Aspiration Looks (57-58)
- o Imagining a Possible World (61-66)
- o Why [Improvement] Matters (69-70)
- o How Neutral Self-Awareness Looks (71-74)
- o Managing Your Self-Talk (74-78)
- o Becoming Your Own Fair Witness 79-82)
- o The Power of a Mirror (84-85)
- o Setting the Stage for Honesty (86-90)

The book's subtitle refers to getting good at things FAST and staying ready for the future. I think that claim is overcooked. Improvement in some areas requires more time and attention than it does in other areas. Becoming a much better listener, for example, or earning an introverted colleague's trust. Keep in mind this sound advice from ancient Rome: *festina lente*. When appropriate, "make haste slowly." The point is, getting better is — or at least should be — a never-ending process, not an ultimate destination. As for "staying ready for the future," Peter Drucker insists that much of it is already here and William Gibson agrees, adding that "it's just not evenly distributed." Whatever awaits, it seems prudent to prepare for the most likely contingencies.

Andersen is a world-class expert on personal growth and personal development. The information, insights, and counsel she provides in this volume has been gained from hundreds (if not thousands) of her personal as well as professional relationships. With all due respect to the potential value of the material in the book, however, it is essentially worthless unless and until readers apply it effectively in their lives. So I urge each of those who read my brief commentary to embrace this opportunity to embark with Andersen on a journey of personal discovery. Establish with her help the routines and habits on which success (however defined) depends. I presume to add that a best effort — obviously — offers no guarantee of achieving success. That said...

Here's what Helen Keller suggests: "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing." I say go for it. With Erika Andersen, you will have splendid company.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

You're never too old to learn new things.

By Peter W. Mitchell

At age 78, I am not in the work force but there are still plenty of things I need to learn in order to keep up and function in today's world. I resist the computer world but here I am, writing a review on Amazon. Anderson's use of Michaelangelo as an exemplar of her method was perfect. It made each step more understandable and much more interesting. The author's voice was friendly, understanding and encouraging. I loved her descriptions of her own "being bad." The whole experience has given me the courage to try the things I've been putting off.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

The Real Thing

By Dale M

A consistent theme within Erika's previous titles is providing a clear and actionable framework for self-improvement, and this book is no exception. After reading *Be Bad First*, I was struck by how I could relate the concepts embedded in it to real life experiences. I once had the opportunity to work with a successful entrepreneur who grew a business from an idea to a large and thriving enterprise. He did this by having a clear vision of where he wanted to go, being aware of changes that he needed to make to get there, continually questioning the next move, and having the tenacity to overcome a few false starts along the way. This lines up well with what is covered in the book.

Most often books of this type fail my personal litmus test by being somewhat "cushy", but this book is definitely not one of those.

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