



Ten Simple Truths

about simplicity,
doing less,
and still
accomplishing more

from Bill Jensen's *Simplicity Survival Handbook*



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Why these ten truths are so damned important



Much of what you've been told and sold about simplicity is a lie — or at best, misinformed. Making things simple isn't about KISS or dumbing things down or even staying focused on just one or two things.

Making things simple is about power.

The simpler something is to understand, the easier it is to push back when things just don't make sense.

The simpler something is to apply, the less someone needs to be managed or needs a manager.

The simpler something is to measure at line-level, the more line people can track their own success.

Making things simpler is about making it easier for each individual to make informed, independent, empowered decisions.

Making things simpler is about making implementation easier, not just making it easier to manage and control things. (Which is how most senior execs currently define simplicity.)

Making things simpler is about empathy — always looking at everything from the other person's perspective.

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1 Simplicity is about power

(The power to do less of what *doesn't matter* and more of *what does*.)
Which means, like all sources of power throughout human history,
it brings out the best and worst in people

2 Simplicity in the workplace is the disciplined practice of empathy and common sense

It is based on human nature and common sense, not corporate logic.
It is the practice of working backwards from the needs of those
doing the work

3 There are three basic reasons for doing less at work...

- "Work is important, but it is not life.
I want to focus on all that life outside of work has to offer."
- "I want to make a difference. The work I do must matter.
So I focus only on what I believe matters."
- "I want to be the best I can be.
So I focus on what excites me and helps me grow."

Which means:

- Doing less and laziness are not the same thing
- Each individual must decide why s/he wants to do less,
and live every day according to that decision

4 In most of today's workplaces:

Work = Figuring out what to do with finite time and attention,
and infinite information and choices

5 You have a lot more control over your workload than you think you do.

It comes down to where and how you choose to focus your time
and attention. No one but you controls those things.

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- 6** It is no longer acceptable to say that there's work and there's life and it's up to employees to balance the two

Everything an employer does and asks of you uses a portion of your life
- 7** To build better workplaces, we must first see how the design of work impacts the quality of our lives

Employers ask you to invest your assets — time, attention, ideas, knowledge, passion, energy, and social networks — to make their companies go. We all must examine how well, or poorly, companies use your assets
- 8** R-E-S-P-E-C-T now includes how well, or poorly, your company, your manager, and your teammates use the finite time you have available every day.

(And how well, or poorly, you use theirs!)
- 9** We live in the Attention Economy;
Every project is about bartering for someone's time and attention

Employees may tolerate management's logic, but act on their own conclusions of what deserves their time and attention
- 10** Plan and manage and change all you want.
Just know that execution travels at the speed of sense-making

Create less clutter and more clarity, or make help everyone make sense of it faster than the competition, and you win

THE BIO OF

A Simpleton



Some people see things that are
and ask, Why?

Some people dream of things that
never were and ask, Why not?

Some people have to go to work
and don't have time for all that...

George Carlin



ABOUT THE FOOL BEHIND THE TOOLS

Harvard Business Review, CNBC and *Fast Company* have called **Bill Jensen** today's foremost expert on work complexity and cutting through clutter to what really matters.

He has spent the past two decades studying how work gets done.
(Much of what he's found horrifies him.)

He is an internationally-acclaimed author and speaker who is known for provocative ideas, extremely useful content, and his passion for making it easier for everyone to work smarter.

- His first book, *Simplicity*, was the Number 5 Leadership/Management book on Amazon in 2000.
- His latest best-seller is *Simplicity Survival Handbook: 32 Ways to Do Less and Accomplish More*.
- His new book, *What is Your Life's Work?*, captures the intimate exchanges between mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and caring teammates, all talking about what matters at work, and in life.

Bill holds degrees in Communication Design and Organizational Development. He's CEO of The Jensen Group, whose mission is: To make it easier to get stuff done. Among the Jensen Group's clients are GE, Bank of America, Genentech, Pfizer, Johnson&Johnson, NASA, Walt Disney World, American Express, the US Navy SEALs, the government of Ontario, Singapore Institute of Management, Guangzhou China Development District, and the Swedish Post Office.

Bill's personal life fantasy is to bicycle around the globe via breweries.

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