

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

FIRST THINGS FIRST

The Official
Edition

Interactive Edition

Stephen R. Covey

Author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

A. Roger Merrill Rebeca R. Merrill

 FranklinCovey.

Advance Praise for First Things First

*With *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey helped to focus our steering committee and, in fact, our company on the principles and values of our organization. He now has accomplished our focus on the integrity of life itself and we are grateful.*

—Horst Schulze, President and Chief Operation Officer, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company

*Time is gone forever, once spent, and is the ultimate equal opportunity employer. The Covey team gives a priceless compass and brilliant, timely directions, based upon timeless truth, as we navigate a world reeling in fast-forward. *First Things First* will last a lifetime!*

—Dr. Denis Waitley, author of *The Psychology of Winning* and *Time to Win*

Covey is the hottest self-improvement consultant to hit U.S. business since Dale Carnegie.
—USA Today

*Profound and powerful, *First Things First* shines a brilliant light into the semidarkness of time management techniques. Instead of seeing fragments of our lives, we can now see the whole picture. This book can be the lever with which you can truly change your life.*

—Scott DeGarmo, Editor-in-Chief, *Success* magazine

Any leader who wants to move from time management to personal leadership should read this book, embrace its principles, and use the excellent tools provided.

—The Honorable Hazel O'Leary, former President of Northern States Power and former Assistant Attorney General for the State of New Jersey

Covey has reached the apex with this publication. This is an important work. I can't think of anyone who wouldn't be helped by reading it.

—Larry King

*If *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* was the best personal development book of the 80s, and I believe it was, *First Things First* is my front-runner for the 90s. My graduate students are studying *The Seven Habits*. *First Things First* takes up the hard and practical questions they are now asking. It will be a great resource.*

—David Davenport, President, Pepperdine University and Immediate Past President of the American Association of Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities

*Time management gives us the tools but *First Things First* delivers to a place where we can make the right choices; fueled by a powerful vision of life lived as a legacy—a life of enduring meaning. This book is the ultimate legacy! Covey and the Merrills lovingly show us the way to create lives enriched by goals and personal vision so that we may each become living tapestries of fulfillment.*

—Melody Mackenzie, coauthor of *Managing Your Goals and President, Alec Mackenzie's Time Tactics*

Finally—a book on time management that goes beyond the simple quick fixes of behavioral engineering. A book that connects the investment of time to our deeper priorities in life. Both inspirational and practical, First Things First is a priority reading.

—Charles A. Garfield, Ph.D., author of *Peak Performers: New Heroes of American Business* and *Second to None: How Our Smartest Companies Put People First*

A universal characteristic of our aging population is the wish to leave a legacy of a better world for future generations. This book, with its emphasis on personal vision and mission, will ensure old and young alike who apply these principles as their foundations of life the opportunity to leave a rich legacy for the future.

—Kirk L. Stromberg, Director of Strategic Planning and Development, American Association of Retired Persons

*If you liked reading *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, you'll love reading *First Things First*. Steve Covey's principle-centered approach to time management does indeed provide the reader a "compass" for what is truly important in life.*

—Nolan D. Archibald, Chairman, President and CEO, The Black & Decker Corporation

*Practical, insightful wisdom at its best is Stephen Covey's newest book, *First Things First*. A must for the survival of your family!*

—Dr. Robert H. Schuller, Reverend of *Crystal Cathedral* and *Hour of Power*

Stephen Covey offers a road map toward making a thumbprint of distinction in your own life, thereby allowing those around you to see an excellent model for living a quality of life.

—Dr. Sonya Friedman, Ph.D., host of *Sonya Live*, CNN

*The best book yet on managing one's time. *First Things First* will truly unleash the "fire within" whereby living, loving, learning, and leaving a legacy are more than mere platitudes—they're valued and pursued.*

—Steve Young, Quarterback, *San Francisco Forty-Niners*, and *1992 NFL Most Valuable Player*

*I hate time management systems. Do lists, day planners, and breathing-by-objective systems give me the hives. But I love *First Things First*—Covey and the Merrills' approach to making your life meaningful and successful on purpose. The subtitle tells it all, "To Live, to Love, to Learn, to Leave a Legacy." That's making your life work instead of making work of your life. Super!*

—Ron Zemke, Senior Editor, *Training* magazine, and coauthor of *Service America* and *Sustaining Knock Your Socks Off Service*

Harder, smarter, and faster has always worked for us. The principle-centered concepts in First Things First provide a better way. We are studying, highlighting, and applying these concepts already.

—Mick Shannon, President and CEO, Joseph E. Lake, Executive Vice President and COO, Cofounders of Children's Miracle Network

Quality as defined by W. Edwards Deming is first and foremost a new way of thinking, a new way of life, that begins with each and every person. First Things First is a practical and effective way to begin the process of personal reflection and change. It is the next level of thinking in time and life management.

—Barbara B. Lawton, W. Edwards Deming Professor of Management, University of Colorado-Boulder

Trilogy: The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Principle-Centered Leadership, First Things First—

To “read” the Trilogy is “to add value to your life”;

To “understand” the Trilogy is “to develop insights for a better life”;

To “live” the Trilogy is “to be the ‘Best Individual You’ and the ‘Best Interdependent You (Teammate),’ you can be!”

—Victor N. Goulet, Chairman of the Board and CEO, Electronic Realty Associates, L.P., and Bob, Mac, Tom, and Team ERA Worldwide

In my reading, First Things First is another first for Stephen Covey and the Merrills. It is not only a culmination of a Trilogy (The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Principle-Centered Leadership, First Things First), but also takes to a higher plane of regard the dilemma of how to prioritize the many demands on one's time. I was particularly struck by Stephen, Roger, and Rebecca's ability to combine substance, form, and human values within highly readable prose.

—John R. Seffrin, Ph.D., Executive Vice President, American Cancer Society

What we stand for shapes our lives! First Things First breaks the mold in showing us how our heart guides us and how our conscience is the compass pointing us toward true success. Read this book and reignite the fire of meaning in your life!

—Anthony Robbins, author of Unlimited Power and Awaken the Giant Within

First Things First lays to rest the myths of rugged individualism and self-sufficiency by showing compelling evidence that peace of mind and spirit are achieved only by aligning our lives with governing principles. The reader is given a map into a world of principle-centered living that gives the term liberation a whole new meaning. This isn't new age philosophy. It's timeless wisdom packaged in an understandable, recognizable, and usable fashion.

—Bruce L. Christensen, former President, Public Broadcasting Service

The principles found in First Things First create a new paradigm for school leaders that will challenge them to become and remain focused on those truths that will transform education.”

—*Judy Nash, Director, NASE Programming, American Association of School Administrators*

*Highly recommended. I found this an immensely thought-provoking book. For many people, time—or being over-busy—is a dragon that they cannot figure out how to slay. Here, Stephen Covey, author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, gives them the map of the dragon's lair, and the sword, forged on the anvil of principles and priorities—just the things they need, to slay the beast.*

—*Richard Bolles, author of *What Color Is Your Parachute?**

Quadrant II is the Quadrant of Quality, and executives who become proficient at this technique can significantly improve their personal and organizational leadership.

—*N. E. Rickard, President of Xerox Business Services, and Cofounder of Quality at Xerox*

*The authors are right! In this ever-changing world, the only things we really control are the choices we make. *First Things First* guides us in that effort with understandable tools and useful metaphors. It encourages each of us to lead lives of integrity, courage, and contribution.*

—*Kathleen D. Ryan, coauthor, *Driving Fear Out of the Workplace**

*Steve Covey has done it again. Together with the Merrills he has written a thought-provoking book that makes us look at ourselves in life, and more importantly, *First Things First* gently guides us to basic principles.*

—*Ken Blanchard, Ph.D., coauthor of *The One Minute Manager**

*Becoming aware of what we really want—and then finding a way to accomplish it—is not just good time management; it is freedom. *First Things First* is about fulfillment and freedom—not through “quick fix time manipulation,” but through real lasting change.*

—*Dave Checketts, President, New York Knicks*

This book portrays the deep sense of mooring in lives and organizations based on principles and character.

—*J. McDonald Williams, President and CEO, Trammell Crow Company*