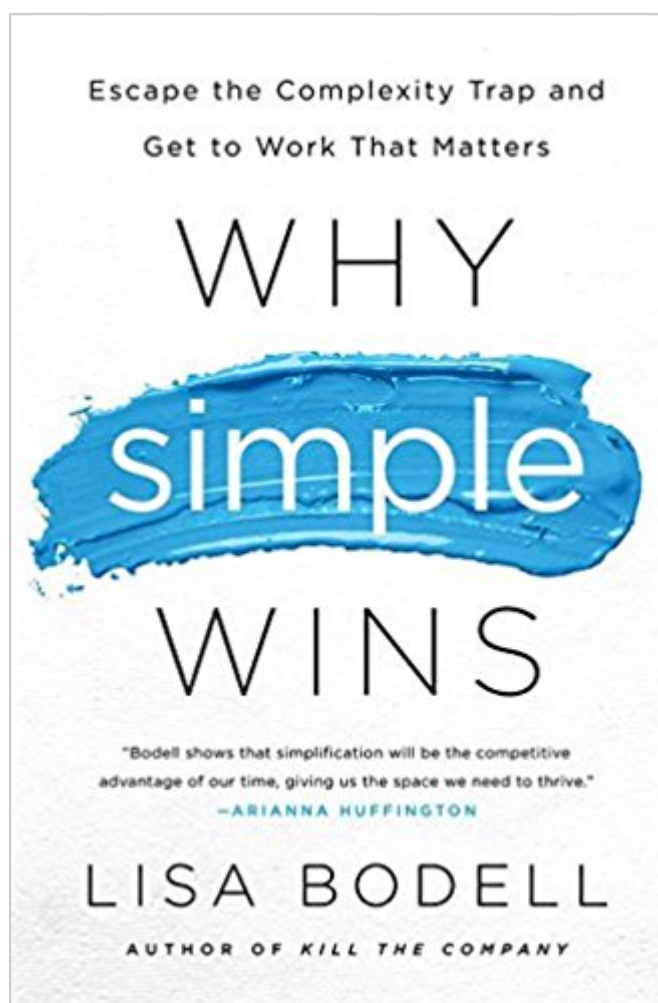


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# Why Simple Wins: Escape The Complexity Trap And Get To Work That Matters



## Synopsis

Imagine what you could do with the time you spend writing emails every day. Complexity is killing companies' ability to innovate and adapt, and simplicity is fast becoming the competitive advantage of our time. *Why Simple Wins* helps leaders and their teams move beyond the feelings of frustration and futility that come with so much unproductive work in today's corporate world to create a corporate culture where valuable, essential, meaningful work is the norm. By learning how to eliminate redundancies, communicate with clarity, and make simplification a habit, individuals and companies can begin to recognize which activities are time-sucks and which create lasting value. Lisa Bodell's simplification method has several unique principles: Simplification is a skill that's available to us all, yet very few leaders use it. Simplification is the right thing to do--for our customers, for our company, and for each other. Operating with simplification as our core business model will make it easier to be respectful of each other's time. Simplification drives culture, and culture in turn drives employee engagement, customer relations, and overall productivity. This book is inspired by Bodell's passion for eliminating barriers to innovation and productivity. In it, she explains why change and innovation are so hard to achieve--and it's not what you might expect. The reality is this: we spend our days drowning in mundane tasks like meetings, emails, and reports. These are often self-created complexities that prevent us from getting to the meaningful work that truly matters. Using simple stories and techniques, *Why Simple Wins* shows that by using simplicity as an operating principle, we can eliminate the busy work that puts a chokehold on us every day, and instead spend time on the work that we value.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Why Simple Wins makes a compelling case against the scourge of complexity. Lisa Bodell shows that simplification can be the competitive advantage of our time, helping us to be more innovative, more adaptable, and better positioned to thrive and truly have an impact." -- Arianna Huffington, Author of Thrive and The Sleep Revolution

"There are two ways to achieve simplicity: ignorance and elegance. Lisa Bodell empowers us to move toward the elegant, delivering practical tools for reducing time wasted on low-value tasks so we can free up energy for innovative thinking." -- Adam Grant, Wharton professor and New York Times bestselling author of Originals and Give and Take

"Americans work among the longest hours of any advanced economy. We're time starved, busy, burned out and disengaged at work. But far from throwing up her hands in despair, Lisa Bodell uses compelling real world stories, eye-popping statistics and practical hands-on tools to show how work itself has become too complex, and how simplifying can help reclaim what's gotten lost: time for work that matters. Why simple Wins is a must-read for 21st century workplaces." -- Brigid Schulte, award-winning journalist and author of the New York Times bestselling Overwhelmed: Work, Love & Play when No One has the Time and director of the Better Life Lab at New America

"Complexity is at the center of the world's most significant challenges. Lisa Bodell shines a bright light on the single most significant leadership priority of this era. We need to simplify everything!" -- Bill McDermott, Chief Executive Officer, SAP

"Through Why Simple Wins, Lisa Bodell demonstrates that simplification is more than another buzzword. It must become our new way of working." -- Frank Brown, Managing Director and COO, General Atlantic, and Former Dean of INSEAD

"Lisa Bodell unearths the root of complexity: the fears, need for control, and risk aversion of human beings. She also shows us the path toward simplicity, where removing layers of process and bureaucracy becomes an ethical imperative." -- Joel Klein, Chief Policy & Strategy Officer, Oscar Insurance; former Chancellor, New York City Public Schools

"For anyone who feels buried in unanswered emails, unproductive meetings, and endless to-do lists, Bodell's book is a must-read. She explains why complexity often gets the best of our companies and lives--and she provides practical methods and tools that can yield much-needed simplicity." -- Warren Berger, Bestselling author of A More Beautiful Question

"Once again, Bodell hits the bullseye; this time with Why Simple Wins. She presents a compelling case that complexity is killing organizations--backed up with stone-cold data--and then delivers practical and effective tools to enable leaders to make simplification a habit. True to her message, Bodell conveys it all through

the use of storytelling." - Camille Mirshokrai, Managing Director Leadership Development and Succession Planning, Accenture "The most successful people I know are not the most busy: they're the ones who can cut through the clutter and focus their energies on what really matters. Knowing why and how to do that is essential for all us. In *Why Simple Wins* Lisa Bodell shines a bright light on how too often we create and collude in the frustrating, time wasting systems we rail against. In doing so, she makes a compelling - and simple - case for making simplification a habit, and she gives us the practical tools to do just that. If you think you don't have time to read this book, you may need to more than you know." -- Sir Ken Robinson, educator and New York Times Best Selling Author, *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything* "Why Simple Wins makes a compelling case against the scourge of complexity. Lisa Bodell shows that simplification can be the competitive advantage of our time, helping us to be more innovative, more adaptable, and better positioned to thrive and truly have an impact." -- Arianna Huffington, Author of *Thrive* and *The Sleep Revolution* "There are two ways to achieve simplicity: ignorance and elegance. Lisa Bodell empowers us to move toward the elegant, delivering practical tools for reducing time wasted on low-value tasks so we can free up energy for innovative thinking." -- Adam Grant, Wharton professor and New York Times bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take* "Americans work among the longest hours of any advanced economy. We're time starved, busy, burned out and disengaged at work. But far from throwing up her hands in despair, Lisa Bodell uses compelling real world stories, eye-popping statistics and practical hands-on tools to show how work itself has become too complex, and how simplifying can help reclaim what's gotten lost: time for work that matters. *Why simple Wins* is a must-read for 21st century workplaces." -Brigid Schulte, award-winning journalist and author of the New York Times bestselling *Overwhelmed: Work, Love & Play When No One Has the Time* and director of the Better Life Lab at New America "Complexity is at the center of the world's most significant challenges. Lisa Bodell shines a bright light on the single most significant leadership priority of this era. We need to simplify everything!" - Bill McDermott, Chief Executive Officer, SAP "Through *Why Simple Wins*, Lisa Bodell demonstrates that simplification is more than another buzzword. It must become our new way of working." - Frank Brown, Managing Director and COO, General Atlantic, and Former Dean of INSEAD "Lisa Bodell unearths the root of complexity: the fears, need for control, and risk aversion of human beings. She also shows us the path toward simplicity, where removing layers of process and bureaucracy becomes an ethical imperative." -Joel Klein, Chief Policy & Strategy Officer, Oscar Insurance; former Chancellor, New York City Public Schools "For anyone who feels buried in unanswered emails, unproductive meetings, and endless to-do lists,

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-Sir Ken Robinson, educator and New York Times Best Selling Author, *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything* "Lisa Bodell has created the definitive guide for halting complexity--and owning up to our individual roles in creating it. This book empowers us to stop valuing more, more, more and instead focus our efforts on what matters for success." -Seth Godin, author

Lisa Bodell believes in the power of simplification. She is the founder and CEO of futurethink, a company that uses simple techniques to help organizations embrace change and increase their capability for innovation. She brings her compelling message to over 100,000 people a year, showing them how to eliminate mundane and unnecessary tasks from their everyday routine so that they have more time for work that matters. Bodell has transformed teams within organizations like Google, Novartis, Accenture, and more. Drawing on her practical Midwestern upbringing and entrepreneurial background, she has used the power of simplification to launch three successful businesses, write two books (*Kill the Company* and *Why Simple Wins*), travel to over 40 countries and 48 states, and sit on boards such as Novartis Diversity and Inclusion Board and the Global Advisory Council for the World Economic Forum.

Lisa Bodell has filled a huge gap by giving us tools we can action immediately without a formal program and big budgets to eliminate complexity and meaningless tasks and free us up to do more meaningful work.

## Good pointers

Why *Simple Wins* is an engaging read and terrific primer on simplification by renowned futurist Lisa Bodell. If you are not already aware of the increasing complexity that bedevils every aspect of our modern lives, from work to home life, Lisa Bodell's book will humorously and gently open your eyes to the myriad ways that we and our organizations are our own worst enemies. This is no dull, pessimistic b-school tome. Lisa Bodell's writing is appealing, her anecdotes are poignant, and her analysis is spot-on. Better yet, she goes further and offers straightforward tools to dare I say SIMPLE? -- tools for self-analysis and an action plan for improvement. This should be required reading for managers of government agencies and large corporations everywhere, who are drowning their employees in overly complex regulations, low-yield meetings and excessive email. "Each day, more than one hundred billion emails are sent and received, but fewer than a seventh of them are actually important. Holy cow! The book offers meaningful help to smaller organizations, including the family unit, as well. I plan to apply Lisa Bodell's toolkit to my professional and home life. As she notes, "Simplification isn't just a series of actions to take; it's a mindset. And getting simplification right helps everyone win.

Just an average book, I was disappointed based on her pedigree

Lisa Bodell has produced another essential read for people interested in improving the performance of their organisation, or their department, or even themselves. The message? Cut out the work that adds no value so that you can spend time doing stuff that matters. By simplifying you will increase efficiency, productivity, innovation and engagement. The book helps you with this by giving heaps of great examples from companies of all sizes and shapes, and Lisa backs up her ideas with plenty of research. The complexity problem really is relevant to all of us. She also delivers in this book some very practical guidelines to help you simplify - A diagnostic tool to help you work out where the complexity problems lie in your organisation, key questions to help you refine your thinking, specific tools to identify and eliminate excess baggage, and even ways to strategically alter your organisation so that you can stay on top of the complexity problem. If you think your organisation might have one or two processes that could be simplified a little, I'd recommend having a look at this book. I think you'll uncover a whole lot more.

Time wasters beware: Lisa Bodell's latest book is a breath of fresh air in the crowded business book market. Her pithy phrases and anecdotes taken from real life success stories make this book a satisfying read. Simplicity is a powerful weapon in business, and as a small business owner I take Lisa's "simplicity mindset" to heart. Words to live by, and most importantly, words that help you get to the work that matters.

I've been trying to break Shingo's guidelines for the last 10 years and they just work. We have lost focus of easy in our quest for quality/speed/cost. Please end the flawed assumption: complexity = quality. If it is hard, requires expertise, or is expensive, it must be good, right? Toss that thinking, now. Lisa's book rings true, let's take a closer look. In general: Chapter 1-3 = Problem -- Why Chapter 4-5 = Solution *ÃfÂçÃ â -Ã â œ* What Chapter 6-8 = Process & Tools -- How A few keys: \* Simplify for the SYSTEM benefit -- Sometimes an effectively run, 5-minute stand-up is better than emails / phone / blog / twitter or vica versa. Team communication, decisions and actions are the need -- simplify for what works best. \* Avoid starting another initiative -- instead lead by example and message/train/coach simplicity in all change work. \* To simplify you must have deep understanding -- you can make work easier while reducing quality, and you can add complexity to minimally increase quality. The challenge is to keep focus on the most important and avoid the lure of knowledge -- just because you can, does not mean you should. \* Complexity = Waste of Inventory and Waste of Over-Processing and the dreaded, Waste of Over-Production -- less done right is more! \* Simplification = 5S: Sort & Set in Order and Error-Proof: Elimination -- use the tools you already know that drive simplicity. \* Look in the Mirror & Look Hard -- everyone suffers from complexity disease. Find & kill it. Get page 151 -- Simplification Code of Conduct tattoos. Make the world better through your actions. Overall a great, easy read -- I picked up a few new ideas and reinforced the most important ones that get lost in the over-production of other leadership, communication, and change books. Enjoy!

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