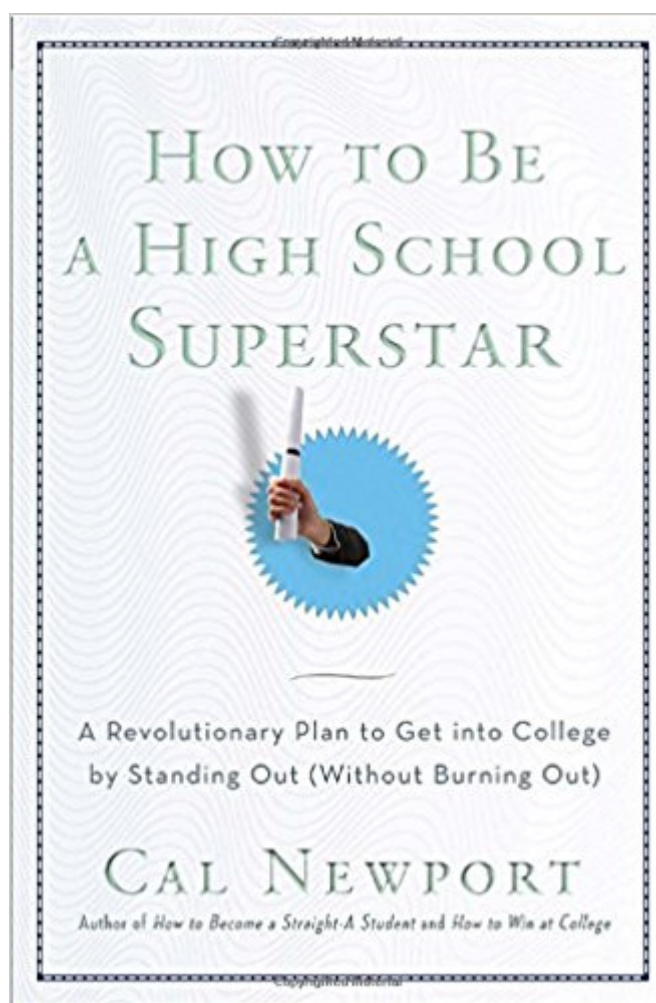


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# How To Be A High School Superstar: A Revolutionary Plan To Get Into College By Standing Out (Without Burning Out)



## Synopsis

Do Less, Live More, Get Accepted

What if getting into your reach schools didn't require four years of excessive A.P.-taking, overwhelming activity schedules, and constant stress? In *How to Be a High School Superstar*, Cal Newport explores the world of relaxed superstars—students who scored spots at the nation's top colleges by leading uncluttered, low stress, and authentic lives. Drawing from extensive interviews and cutting-edge science, Newport explains the surprising truths behind these superstars' mixture of happiness and admissions success, including:

- Why doing less is the foundation for becoming more impressive.
- Why demonstrating passion is meaningless, but being interesting is crucial.
- Why accomplishments that are hard to explain are better than accomplishments that are hard to do.

These insights are accompanied by step-by-step instructions to help any student adopt the relaxed superstar lifestyle—proving that getting into college doesn't have to be a chore to survive, but instead can be the reward for living a genuinely interesting life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"As a former Ivy League admissions officer, I was overjoyed to see a book that hit the nail on the head regarding selective college admissions and how to take the process in stride. Students will find his book extremely useful and admissions officers will be relieved to see applicants who

escape the cookie-cutter syndrome. — Dr. Michele Hernandez, author of *A Is for Admission* and president of Hernandez College Consulting and Application Boot Camp — “Disguised as a peppy college-admission guide, Newport’s book is actually a profound, life-affirming manifesto for ambitious high school students. Forgo the sleepless and cynical path to college acceptance. Instead, blaze your trail to the Ivy League by living a full life and immersing yourself in things that matter. Relax. Find meaning. Be you. — David Shenk, author of *The Genius in All of Us* — “This book should be on the shelf of every student who wonders how to stand out in the increasingly competitive race to get into a top college. His approach will not only help you win the admissions race, it will keep you sane while you run the marathon. — Joie Jager-Hyman, author of *Fat Envelope Frenzy*

CAL NEWPORT is the author of *How to Win at College* and *How to Become a Straight-A Student*. He graduated from Dartmouth College and earned a Ph.D. from MIT. His writing has appeared in national publications, and he is the founder of Study Hacks, the Web’s most popular student advice blog. — [www.calnewport.com](http://www.calnewport.com)

\*\*\*THE BOTTOM LINE\*\*\* I definitely recommend this book. It has good, unconventional advice on how to succeed as a high school student without being a social reject. This advice will probably NOT be common sense to the type-A students out there who have been raised thinking the successful students do homework from 6p-12a every night. If you know a student who wants to get into an elite university, this book provides evidenced techniques for succeeding toward that end. \*\*\*A FULLER REVIEW\*\*\* I picked this book up for my brother, who’s in high school. Secretly, I—being a university Freshman—wanted to read it too. The book’s lessons can be life-changing if you listen and have faith in Newport’s advice. I was the opposite of relaxed in high-school. I was stressed, involved in service clubs I didn’t care about, and taking 6 AP courses each semester my senior year. I got a 30 on my ACT, which was certainly nothing spectacular in the eyes of most elite schools. Not surprisingly, my laundry list of unremarkable endeavors, A average in AP courses, and mediocre standardized test scores did NOT get me into Harvard, MIT, Yale, Dartmouth, Columbia...(seriously, the list of elite schools to which I applied and was rejected is embarrassingly long). This book explains, in explicit detail, why my attempt at getting into the elite universities was flawed, and it also explains the optimal way to try to get into elite universities. For high-school students, the book gives excellent advice for lowering stress (e.g. stop working at a certain time each day, do some thinking/reading in solitude, don’t give up your entire life for school, etc.). The book also gives

excellent advice for improving grades (i.e. note-taking methods, studying strategies, etc.) and advice for doing interesting things outside the classroom. It is a very balanced approach to high-school life that, when executed correctly, will make a student more impressive AND leave her with more free time than the alternative (i.e. my approach described above). For the general public, this book contains valuable lessons about creating a more interesting life. The rules still apply, if you're creative enough to seek the applications. Not working past a certain point in the day, pursuing endeavors that are innovative, and cultivating a reading habit are among the many broadly applicable tips Newport gives throughout the book. My main critique of the book is that it doesn't explicitly spell out how much of your free time should be used for interesting pursuits versus totally social activity (e.g. hanging out with friends). I suppose the author leaves it to you to discern that Friday and Saturday nights are good times to interact with other humans. This book was definitely worth the few days it took me to read through it. If you're interested in becoming interesting (and perhaps getting into an elite university), this book will spell the process out for you.

My grand-girl is a sophomore. She's taking college prep classes, and is a High-Honor Student. She has great expectations for her future. She works diligently at all of her studies. I'm sure she will find this book ON TOP OF her homework desk at all times, or in her backpack. Author Dr. Cal Newport cares about the successes of all people. If she can trap one bit of Newport's genius, and downright 'magic' .... she's a winner. I can't wait to get this book to her.

I'm about a third of the way through this book. It is easy to read and presents information in an interesting narrative, with relevant personal stories. It is geared towards students who pressure themselves to succeed. It lends a fresh perspective on the value of allowing time to simply pursue what interests them, not doing things because they hope will impress college admissions officers. Many very bright students with loads of extracurriculars compete for select colleges, but this book says that it is the student who is the interesting person, who has found an area that excites them, which can only be found if the student is not overscheduled, who will catch the interest of admissions officers reviewing hundreds of applications.

"Do Less, Live More, Get Accepted" is the main mantra of Cal Newport's novel. He stresses the value of under-scheduling, which allows for students to "Live More" and discover their interests. Newport emphasizes that the new interest(s) should be something that is hard to simulate, therefore being impressive to the admissions officers. This method may not have been useful 5 years ago,

but due to the overwhelming influx of 4.0 GPA, 2400 SAT students, he believes that there must be something that makes one unique. I enjoyed his clear instructions and would recommend this book to any stressed high school student.

This book is Very insightful and helpful. My son is 8 years old. He is so free minded and not a structural type of boy. I have been overwhelmed by his friends' activities ..... sports, foreign languages , music, art ..... I am trying not to force my son, but I am afraid he is not able to stand out in this highly competitive society. This book really comforts me and guides me to another direction for nurturing my son.

This book has AMAZING advice for the current generation that wants to get into Ivy league schools. If only I had followed this book when high school started... my life would be so much better. Although it has great advice, if one does not follow it, one will not accomplish anything. I still believe someone can change their life if they put their mind into it.

I'm already out of college for a few years and still find the book worth reading. The book's main suggestions seems to be able to work well in my post-education life.

I found this to be very helpful. It helps remind parents (me) not to be over zealous in scheduling activities. Also helps to remind parents to help their children to seek out mindful downtime. And maybe they will find a passion. That passion will help them more than anything.

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