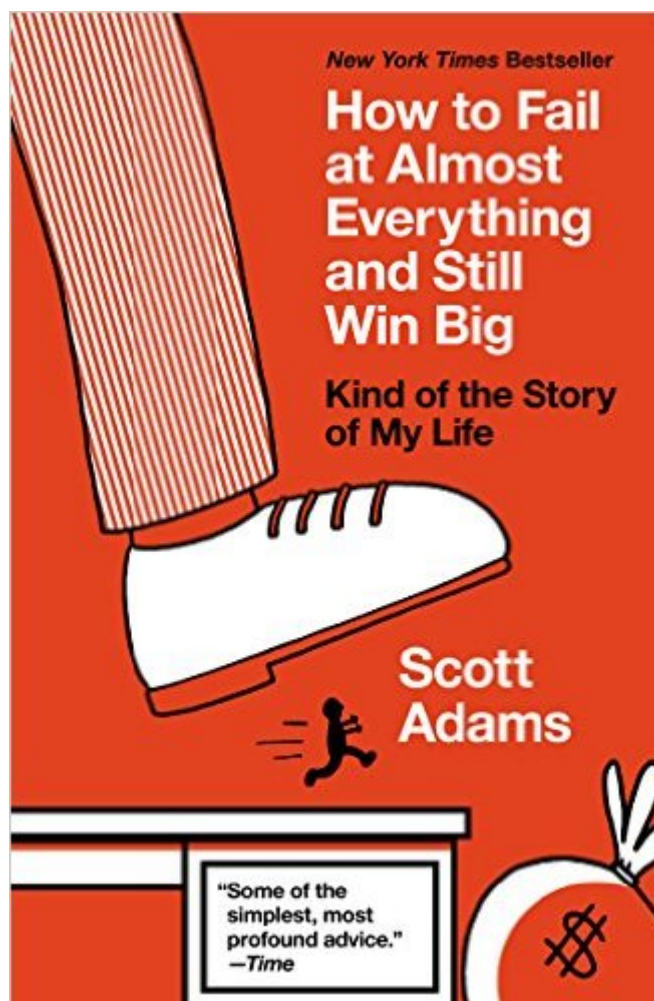


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# How To Fail At Almost Everything And Still Win Big: Kind Of The Story Of My Life



## Synopsis

Everything you want out of life is in that bubbling vat of failure. The trick is to get the good stuff out. Scott Adams has likely failed at more things than anyone you've ever met, including his corporate career, his inventions, his investments, and two restaurants. So how did he go from hapless office worker to the creator of Dilbert, one of the world's most famous syndicated comic strips, in just a few years? In this funny yet serious book full of personal stories, Adams shares the strategies he has used to invite failure in, embrace it, then pick its pocket. Among his contrarian lessons:  Goals are for losers. Systems are for winners.  A combination of mediocre skills can make you surprisingly valuable.  You can manage your odds in a way that makes you look lucky to others.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I had this pre-ordered after reading the WSJ article. It came yesterday around noon and I finished it at 4:00 AM this morning, with few breaks within that time frame. It wasn't the plan for my day, but I don't regret changing my day around to read this book. I would say any book that holds my interest like that deserves a 5-star rating, though there are a few things that I'd tweak to get it closer to perfection. My official score, being a tough grader, is a 4.6/5.0 and I wouldn't resell it for twice what I paid ... especially now that it's fully highlighted and sticky-noted throughout (which makes the book more valuable to me now because I've identified the portions that spoke directly to me and my own experiences). I really enjoyed Scott's independent thinking and challenges of conventional wisdom throughout this book, especially as it contrasts with other self-help, goal-setting or business advice

books. For instance, choosing an opportunity for which one has some sort of inherent advantage rather than blindly prescribing "you can do whatever you want" appeals to my pragmatic mind. I have wrestled with this exact conclusion within the past year as I work through my own list of new ideas and opportunities, so I enjoyed that perspective as it resonates with my own thinking. I really enjoyed the thinking on pg. 40, which is fully highlighted, less perhaps a couple sentences. This is where Scott talks about his mental model of not wanting to sell his time due to limited upside and finding a product that is infinitely scalable. I appreciated this candidness, which allows the reader to better understand the later "luck" and apparent rapid success of Dilbert.

Scott Adams's *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big: Kind of the Story of My Life* is almost a success. In it Adams tells us about he succeeded and offers his readers his advice on how to be both successful and happy. Adams is at his best when he writes about figuring out how things work and what is important. Readers of his popular blog will recognize such topics as the moist robot, the single most important metric to measure, the five most important factors for happiness, how to thrive without using freewill, and other such topics. One of his key principles is to distinguish goals from systems. Generally, it's better to pursue a system to get what you want rather than to pursue a goal. Goals are generally bad things as they focus you on what you have not accomplished and therefore feel negative. Unfortunately his discussion of the difference between goals and systems is confused and unclear. He seems to be saying that the reader's goal should be to come with a system that works. I do appreciate that Adams consistently urges the reader to experiment, to be open minded, and not to follow the advice of cartoonists. The focus should be on what works for you. His humility is a welcome relief from much of the Success literature. Some parts of the book, especially in the middle chapters, read like annotated lists constructed quickly from Internet searches. Other parts of the book are much better and many of Adams's insights are interesting, captivating, and even brilliant.

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