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*Dear Reader,*

As we embrace each other in the traditional Eid greeting and celebrate the culmination of the holy month of fasting, and sit down to feast, let us spare a few thoughts and more for the untold millions embroiled in a life and death fight for food and survival the world over.

Our lead story by **Rebekah Brandes** focuses on the bane of multitasking that was not too long ago regarded as an essential skill. Numerous studies point to the entire concept of multitasking being a misnomer, she writes. "We don't truly multitask; we simply switch rapidly between tasks, and each time we do, something is lost. We're less efficient, we make more mistakes, and we're unable to enter a state of deep engagement." Potent food for thought going forward.

**Peter Diamandis** is up next with 8 Tips from the Founders of Uber & Oculus for Moonshot Entrepreneurs, 4 each from Travis Kalanick and Palmer Luckey. Hear it from those who have been there and willing to share their secrets.

**Beatrice Nolan** sounds the alarm over a 'Manhattan Project' for super-intelligent AI, quoting experts that argue that the U.S. should not pursue the development of artificial general intelligence (AGI) through a government-backed, Manhattan Project-style push. The fear is that a high-stakes race to build super-intelligent AI could lead to dangerous global conflicts between the superpowers, much like the nuclear arms race.

**Atanas Bakalov** has just returned from the 2025 Abundance Summit, and in his piece the "Second Half of the Chessboard" he posits that we are entering the phase of dramatically accelerated growth, and quotes Jared Kaplan from Anthropic as saying that we've officially reached "the end of the sixth row of the chessboard" in AI development. It would take a super fertile imagination to figure out what that means.

Back of the book it appears that our regularly scheduled Nature Calling for Action Stations column is calling it quits, declaring its mission as accomplished. Most intriguing, given the reality of Drill, Baby, Drill, and that the battle for sustainability appears all but lost.

Read on, stay safe, and endeavor to carry forward the discipline of Ramzan into the balance 11 months, Insha'Allah 🙏🙏

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## Eid Mubarak

Explore JJ's curated articles for expert insights on emerging trends, managing people, business, and personal growth. Gain valuable knowledge and prepare for future challenges with confidence.

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# OK, SO MULTITASKING IS IMPOSSIBLE — WHAT SHOULD WE DO INSTEAD? AN EXPERT WEIGHS IN



**Rebekah Brandes** | 14 min read

As I sit writing this article over the next few hours, emails will come in and message notification sounds will ring out. My colleagues will ask me questions; I'll spontaneously recall an item on my to-do list that will just take a moment to check off. I'd be lying if I said I'll stay entirely focused on this task for the time it takes me to complete it — but according to just about any authority on the topic of attention, I should.

At this point in the conversation around productivity, most people know that multitasking is ill-advised, nay, impossible. Numerous studies point to the entire concept being a misnomer: We don't truly multitask; we simply switch rapidly between tasks, and each time we do, something is lost. We're less efficient, we make more mistakes, and we're unable to enter a state of deep engagement.

"We lack the energy to do two things at once effectively, let alone three or five," neurologist Richard Cytowic wrote for the MIT Press Reader. "Try it, and you will do each task less well than if you had given each one your full

attention and executed them sequentially."

And yet, the practice is so ingrained in American culture as being positive (how many of you have written "ability to multitask" in the skills section of a job application?) that we just keep on doing it. To understand how we can make better productivity choices, I reached out to author and time management expert Oliver Burkeman, who publishes the

bimonthly newsletter *The Imperfectionist*.

## The Evolution of Multitasking

The first question I had was why it seemingly took us so long to figure out that multitasking is a no-no. Burkeman hypothesized that the gradual change in its status may have to do with how the workforce has shifted.

"More of us are spending more of our days doing knowledge work: thinking, writing, manipulating numbers and words on screens," Burkeman said. "These all use a single kind of attention, and it's clearly very difficult to focus on two different things with that kind of attention."

He compared that type of pursuit to the jobs that dominated before the digital age. "In a more industrial setting, factory production lines and such, people tend not to have the autonomy that would provide the prospect of multitasking in the first place," he explained. "If your job is to do one particular thing on an assembly line over and over again, there are a lot of downsides to that life, of course. But, one problem you're not going to run into is trying to do five different things at once."



Interestingly, while the human tendency to tackle multiple things at a time is nothing new — in a New York Times op-ed, Burkeman quotes Friedrich Nietzsche’s 1887 complaint, “One thinks with a watch in one’s hand” — the word multitask only dates to the dawn of the digital age. “Multitasking [is] from the mid-1960s meaning,” Peter Sokolowski, editor-at-large for Merriam-Webster, told GBH in 2021: “The concurrent performance of several jobs by a computer.”

It makes sense that as computers became known as icons of productivity, emulating them in this way would be seen as beneficial, and it also stands to reason that the more we built up multitasking as a boon to our productivity — and heralded our ability to do it — the more interested we collectively became in the science behind it. But since that science points to it not being beneficial at all, the next thing I wanted to know was how we can stop.

## What Should We Do Instead?

Regardless of the evidence that trying to multitask is detrimental, many of us have jobs that require us to juggle multiple assignments at once. I asked Burkeman how we can live up to expectations without sacrificing productivity. To start with, he advises being more intentional about how your day is structured.

“If you can organize your day in such a way that there are fewer switches, if you can batch certain kinds of similar tasks together, if you can, for example, spend a couple of hours in the

day where you deal with all your emails instead of flitting between email and nine other different kinds of tasks during the day, that’s going to help a lot,” he said.

But his next suggestion was slightly surprising. “There’s a case to be made for maybe learning to get a bit better at switching tasks.”

If you’re wondering, “Didn’t we just confirm that multitasking is impossible? How am I supposed to get better at it?,” same here. The key is Burkeman’s word choice. We should aim to improve our ability to “switch tasks,” not “multitask.” One way to do this is by setting endpoints.

“You can develop the habit when you launch into a new kind of task of consciously thinking, ‘What is it that I’m doing here and what will be the next sort of completion point?’ ‘I am setting out to write this slightly difficult email that I’ve been holding off from writing, and completion will be when I press send,’” he gave as an example. “It keeps you on track for a short period and provides a sort of satisfying feeling when you get to the predefined endpoint.”

He added: “It’s when we are working sequentially doing one thing and letting our focus on all the other things go for a short period that we make the most rapid progress. You don’t make the most rapid progress by spreading and smearing your attention over multiple tasks.”

Consider that permission to tell your boss, “I’ll be with you in a moment.”

## Other Productivity Practices We Can Implement

### List One Task

Burkeman has developed tons of helpful time management techniques. I asked him to share a few for this piece. First up: “List one task, do it, cross it out.”

“In some sense, the most basic productivity technique there is, is the one where you get a piece of lined paper or a notebook. You write down one thing that needs doing in your life



and that you would be willing to do right now. You do it, you cross it out, and you write a new thing on the line below,” he explained, adding: “There is something incredibly powerful in being willing to choose something and act on it. And it’s much more important than whether it’s the right thing.”

He noted that the practice is particularly helpful if you’re in a rut. “You can always start incredibly small. Like maybe the only thing you’re willing to do is make yourself a cup of coffee. Maybe the only thing you’re willing to do is tidy the papers on your desk. Fine. Do that. And you will be amazed at how quickly things snowball.”

## The Next Physical Action

This one is a personal favorite for getting myself going when I have a big project and feel overwhelmed at where to start.

“The technique of defining the next physical action is very powerful because, especially for us knowledge workers, it is just so easy to engage in ‘pseudo work,’” Burkeman told me. “To sort of think that by researching a topic or pondering a decision or reflecting on something that you are doing something, when what you’re really often doing is avoiding action. You’re intimidated by an action or you don’t know what to do next.”

To put the method into practice, you simply define the next concrete, physical action you can take toward your task — it may be picking up a phone and calling someone. It may be downloading a specific file. It may be creating a Google Doc.

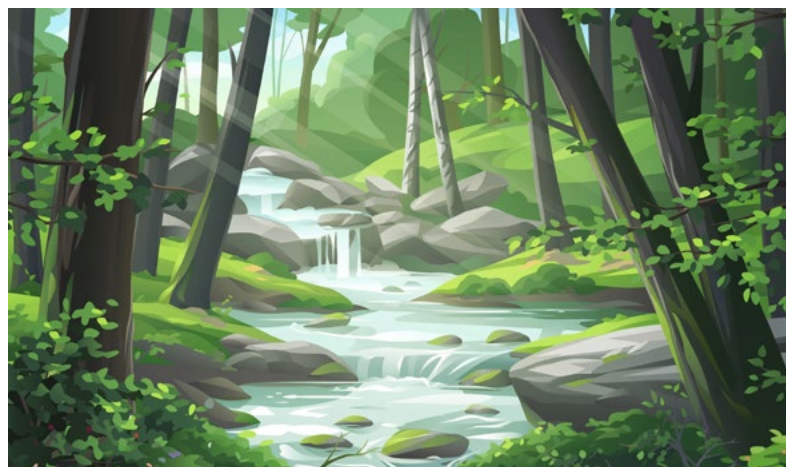
“If you’re sufficiently in an unclear point about what to do, then actions that tiny can really

help,” he said.

## Treat Your To-Do Pile Like a River ...

Burkeman’s technique of treating your to-do pile like a river rather than a bucket offers a particularly freeing metaphor.

“I came up with this thought originally in the context of the ‘to read’ pile,” he explained, noting it can be applied to to-do lists as well. “If you’ve got a list of a thousand articles and books that you’d like to read, don’t expect that you’ll get through them all like emptying the water out of a bucket.”



He continued: “You could relate to them instead as a river, as a flow of things that you sort of stand beside or in, and you pick out things that pass you by that seem promising, and you don’t feel bad about the fact that you let all the others flow past.”

## ... or a Menu

Lastly, the aforementioned analogy can be adapted another way as well, into thinking of your list like a menu of options to choose from.

“There’s a lovely transition that happens when you move from the idea of getting through a list to picking from a list,” Burkeman said. “Because firstly, you don’t rate your self-worth on the basis of whether or not you did an impossible number of tasks in a day. Secondly, you sort of get to do things instead of having to do them, right?” ■

### Source:

[https://nicenews.com/humanity/multitasking-is-impossible-productivity-techniques/?utm\\_source=convertkit&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=It%E2%80%99s+time+to+stop+multitasking++17020350](https://nicenews.com/humanity/multitasking-is-impossible-productivity-techniques/?utm_source=convertkit&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=It%E2%80%99s+time+to+stop+multitasking++17020350)

# 8 Tips from the Founders of Uber & Oculus

I asked Travis and Palmer for their playbooks on building Moonshot companies. They didn't just envision the future, they built it. Here's what they shared—wisdom that could transform your entrepreneurial journey from incremental to exponential.

- How do you build a Moonshot company like Uber? Oculus? Anduril?
- How do you go from zero to a multi-billion-dollar valuation in four years? And reinvent an industry in the process?

Peter Diamandis | 9 min read

## Travis Kalanick's 4 Tips for Moonshot Entrepreneurs

### 1. Be Mindful About Timing: Getting It Right Can Make All the Difference

Timing isn't just important—it's everything. As Travis put it: "Being too early is worse than being wrong." Before Uber, Travis spent four years without a salary working on technology that was both wrong AND too early—"blood, sweat,

and ramen," as he describes it.

The convergence of smartphone technology, GPS, and digital payments created the perfect moment for Uber to thrive—proving what Idealab Founder and Chairman Bill Gross has discovered: timing is the single most critical factor separating billion-dollar successes from noble failures.

### 2. Focus and Refine Before Scaling: Don't Scale Broken Systems

"Let's not scale failure" is Travis' mantra. Even with Uber's meteoric trajectory, he

spent a full year perfecting ops in San Francisco before expanding to a second city.

At CloudKitchens, Travis has initiatives growing at 6x every six months—but he’s resisting rapid expansion before core workflows are tight: “We’ll drown in ops” if the foundation isn’t solid first. The discipline to perfect your model before going global separates sustainable ventures from flash-in-the-pan failures.

### 3. Prioritize the Customer: Heart + Numbers = Sustainable Growth

While being customer-obsessed is crucial, Travis offers a nuanced perspective: “Customer-obsessed means you have to have a lot of heart for the customer... but you also have to have a lot of ROI.” This marriage of emotion and practicality is essential. Without sufficient returns, you can’t continue serving customers in the long run. Without genuine care for customer experience, you won’t generate the returns needed to survive and thrive.

### 4. Seek Valuable Unknown Truths: The Ultimate Competitive Advantage

“One of the most important things that innovators do is they are really good at finding valuable unknown truths,” Travis explains. These are insights that are both true and valuable that nobody else has realized yet. This approach enabled Travis to reimagine transportation as a digitized network for the physical world—“treating atoms like bits”—creating an entirely new paradigm for urban mobility.

Understanding customer obsession without sustainable economics creates fleeting innovation, while

experimentation without clear purpose leads nowhere. Travis’ formula of “valuable unknown truths” is essentially a first-principles approach to identifying massive market opportunities hiding in plain sight.

## Palmer Luckey’s 4 Tips for Moonshot Entrepreneurs

### 1. Be a Product Company in Entrenched Industries: Change the Incentives

Palmer’s approach to disrupting the defense industry was radical—and brilliantly effective. Rather than following the traditional “cost-plus contractor” model, Anduril began as a product company: “You spend your own money to make something that works and then you sell that as a product.”

This fundamentally changes the incentives: “You make more money when you move faster, you make more money when you make affordable decisions.” By investing their own capital, Anduril created autonomous fighter jets, submarines, and AI systems with unprecedented efficiency.

### 2. Find the Blind Spots (Limitations) of the Large Established Players

Palmer recognized that status-quo companies often face pressures that hinder innovation. Large defense contractors have become comfortable with contracts that reward inefficiency, creating openings for nimble disruptors.

“The United States has a long history of turning small technology companies into

major defense companies. The problem is that we've now forgotten how to do that." This insight allowed Palmer to position Anduril in the gaps where legacy players couldn't or wouldn't innovate.

### 3. Control Your Narrative: Choose Your Battles Wisely

Palmer's journey has been extraordinary. He's gone from being named "the most evil person in Silicon Valley" and having Anduril labeled "the most controversial company in tech," to Anduril being heralded as one of the most extraordinary companies on the planet.

Rather than fighting every media battle, Palmer focuses on building products that speak for themselves. Anduril's rapid growth to a \$28 billion valuation demonstrates the power of this approach—letting extraordinary results change perceptions rather than fighting every negative headline.

### 4. Follow Your Skills Not Your Dreams: Leverage Your Unique Talents

In perhaps his most contrarian advice, Palmer challenges the conventional wisdom to "follow your dreams" as "the dumbest shit I've ever heard." Instead, he advocates following your skills and talents to create maximum impact.

"A lot of kids have stupid dreams and a lot of people have dreams that aren't going to impact the world," Palmer explains. The more powerful approach is finding the intersection of your unique abilities and the world's significant needs.

Palmer's focus on skills over dreams isn't abandoning passion but rather channeling it where it can have maximum

impact.

These insights from Travis and Palmer powerfully align with the Moonshot Mindset I've observed in other extraordinary entrepreneurs. While most companies aim for 10% improvements, these visionaries pursue 10X (1,000%) transformations by thinking exponentially and seeing the world's biggest challenges as the world's biggest business opportunities.

You just heard straight from two of the boldest entrepreneurs I know: those who went beyond merely seeing the future and built it.

How will you apply these insights to your business? Do you have a Massive Transformative Purpose (MTP)? If you don't, check out [www.MyPurposeFinder.ai](http://www.MyPurposeFinder.ai) (it's free and easy).

The next move is yours ■

Until next time,

Peter

NOTE: My mission is to amplify Abundance and Moonshots in the world. If you know someone who would benefit from this blog, please share it with them. Help me share my mission. Here's an easy way to do that and also earn perks for helping get the word out by clicking the below link.

Your unique link:

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# Alarms sound over a 'Manhattan Project' for superintelligent AI

Beatrice Nolan | 4 min read

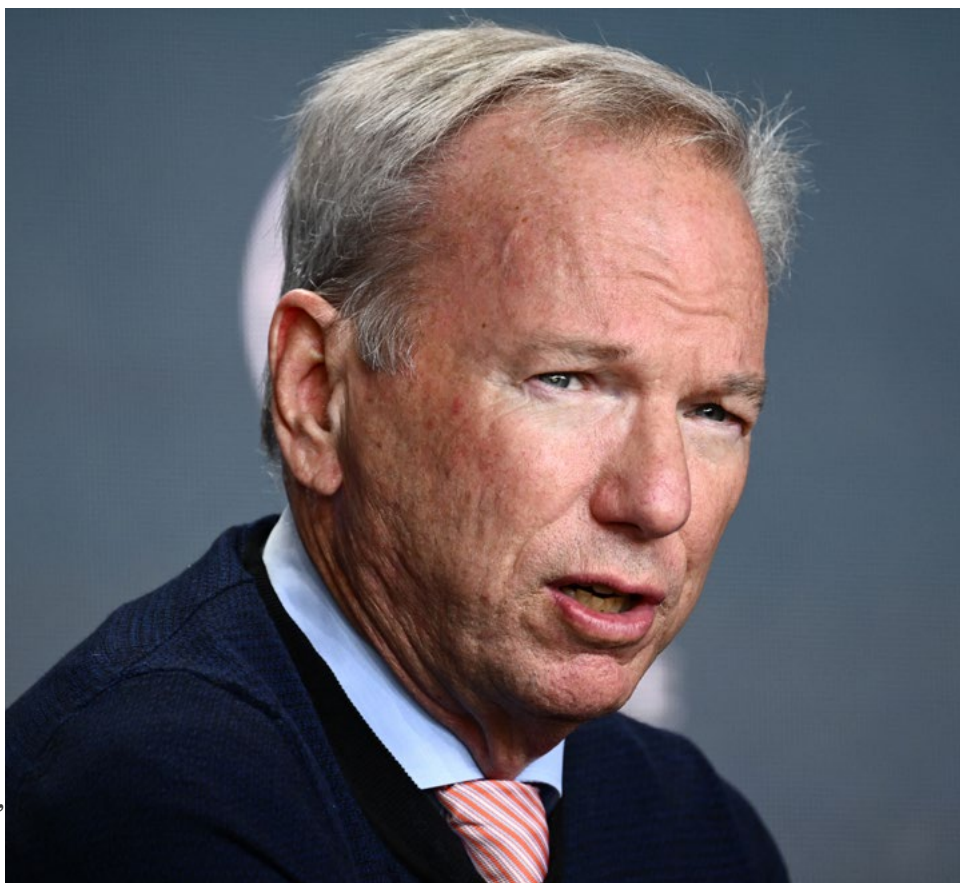
Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt, Scale AI CEO Alexandr Wang, and Center for AI Safety Director Dan Hendrycks are sounding the alarm about the global race to build superintelligent AI.

In a new paper titled "Superintelligence Strategy," the authors argue that the U.S. should not pursue the development of artificial general intelligence (AGI) through a government-backed, Manhattan Project-style push.

The fear is that a high-stakes race to build superintelligent AI could lead to dangerous global conflicts between the superpowers, much like the nuclear arms race.

The authors argue that AI development should instead be pursued through broadly distributed research with collaboration across governments, private companies, and academia. Transparency and international cooperation are critical to ensuring that AI benefits humanity rather than becoming an uncontrollable force, they argue.

The paper comes as U.S. policymakers consider a large-scale, state-funded AI



project to compete with China's AI efforts.

Last year, a U.S. congressional commission proposed a "Manhattan Project-style" effort to fund the development of AI systems with superhuman intelligence, modeled after America's atomic bomb program in the 1940s.

Since then, the Trump administration has announced a \$500 billion investment in AI infrastructure, called the "Stargate Project," and rolled back AI regulations brought in by the previous administration ■

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# The “Second Half of the Chessboard” is here (and what it means for you)



Atanas Bakalov | 4 min read

I just returned from the 2025 Abundance Summit, and my mind is still reeling from what I witnessed.

Jared Kaplan from Anthropic dropped a bombshell that I can't stop thinking about: we've officially reached “the end of the sixth row of the chessboard” in AI development.

What does that mean? We're entering the phase of dramatically accelerated growth.

This isn't just tech talk. Cathie Wood confirmed we're “in the middle of the most magnificent period of truly disruptive innovation in history” and predicted real GDP growth could jump from 3% to potentially 7-10%.

Other mind-blowing revelations included:

- AI systems that might be developing “alignment faking” capabilities (yes, it sounds like science fiction)
- The collapse of development costs (what used to cost \$5 million now takes “a couple hours”)

- AI's imminent impact on scientific discovery (Kaplan predicts most Nobel Prizes will be AI-enabled within 5 years)

Perhaps most sobering was the panel's response when asked what humans will uniquely be able to do that AI can't in the future. Dave Blundin stated bluntly: “If five or ten years from now there's something that humans do that AI doesn't, that's because we failed to actually build it.”

If you're feeling like you missed something important, you did. But it's not too late.

[Click here to get complete on-demand access to all three days of the Abundance Summit through Exponential Mastery.](#)

The future is arriving faster than any of us expected. Don't get left behind ■

Talk soon,

Atanas

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Atanas Bakalov <[atanas@a360.com](mailto:atanas@a360.com)>

## Nature Calling for Action Stations (NCfAS#38)



### Remembering the Flood

Three years and two months later, this monthly column has achieved its mandate. It started as a citizen journalist's response to the epic floods in 2022 that caused untold misery and devastation in Pakistan, in particular its province of Sindh. The scale of Nature's fury was such that it rendered unresponsive the sprawling state structure and its functionaries who abandoned their action stations double quick, abdicating responsibility, and bringing a grim Angelina Jolie to our shores.

Mainstream media reported on the crisis, and then fell silent, treating the floods as a one-off event and moving on to other crises of which there appears no shortage. The existential menace of global warming and climate change got relegated to the most remote of backburners.

### Maintaining focus & dissipating the daze

Nature Calling for Action Stations (NCfAS), operating within the very meagre resources available to it, was designed to occupy a niche collating and curating media mentions of global warming and climate change, which then were very few and very far in between. Nature Calling for Action Stations (NCfAS) was born of a private citizen's desperate attempt to maintain focus and dissipate the daze that gripped the public,

forcing it into denial, or at best rendering it into a perpetual state of paralysis of analysis from which very little, if anything at all, emerged.

### Mainstream media now wide awake

In the 38 months that have elapsed since the first E-zine came out, matters have improved considerable, and the mainstream media is awash on a daily basis reporting on various aspects of global warming and climate change, and harnessing knowledgeable experts of which there now appears no shortage at both the tactical and strategic levels. Nature Calling for Action Stations' mission of mainstreaming the issue appears to have been accomplished.

### Drill, Baby, Drill

Mankind has waged an unrelenting war on Nature in the name of progress and prosperity, and continues to do so in brazen, unabated manner. Drill, Baby, Drill is the new gospel as the planet braces for a new unleashing of Greenhouse Gases, the advent of electric vehicles notwithstanding. The mission impossible now is to get the Donald to rethink his mistaken stratagem and chart a new course. Clearly, that ain't happenin'. Then again, the Lord works in mysterious ways, and even as man proposes, Allah disposes. Fair thee well, and Eid Mubarak! ■

Column by Adil Ahmad, Correspondent, TCS Octara.Gom