

Getting to Peak Performance

By
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Many people have a desire to consistently live their lives at "peak performance" level. This means that whether you are working, taking time for yourself or enjoying activities with family and friends, you want to use the time that you have in the most effective way.

One step to beginning that process is to create the habit of consistently asking yourself the following question, "What is the highest and best use of my time, energy and talents?"

Whether you are a corporate employee, business manager, entrepreneur or stay-at-home parent, it is easy to get caught up in distractions and activities that do not fall into the category of "the highest and best use" of your time. There are a myriad of items that can, and will, get in the way of you accomplishing everything that you set out to do on any given day. (Every single person that reads this will have a different definition or meaning of "highest and best use." There is no definitive answer to this. It is up to you to decide what that phrase means for you and your life.)

If you don't get to this on a daily basis, at a minimum do it weekly. Take time at the beginning of your week to reflect upon what you accomplished in the previous week as well as write down what you hope to do for the week ahead. Figure out the activities that are of your "highest and best use."

A second step is to learn how to harness and utilize the energy that you have towards increasing your productivity. This goes hand-in-hand with step number one. One of the primary keys to accomplishing whatever it is that you want to accomplish in your life; amazingly enough, is also one of the most overlooked techniques.

Whether you realize it or not, you all have peak energy times, throughout every 24 hours of the day that you are given. Work on understanding what those times are for you. Be cognizant of how you feel at different times throughout the day. Do you awake with unlimited energy for the day ahead? Are you at peak performance level mid-morning? Are you a night-owl? When do you feel you have the most energy to tackle the tasks that lie ahead?

Then, the key is to, act on that information. Adjust your activities in accordance with your energy level. If you're a morning person, do your most creative work then and leave the mundane for later in the afternoon. Likewise, if you're a night-owl, do the reverse; get the mundane out of the way in the morning and save the best for the end of the day. Regardless of your chosen career there are a multitude of tasks that must be accomplished. Why not bundle those tasks, to the best of your ability, and structure your day around them?

One challenge, though, comes into play with this and that is, what if you are one of those people that doesn't ever feel at peak energy level? What if you can't remember what it was like to feel energetic about the day ahead of you? Well, you are not alone. The National Sleep Foundation, as reported by the Associated Press on March 27,

2001, discovered that Americans are sleep-deprived workaholics, with only about a third of us sleeping the recommended eight hours a night. About 40 percent of Americans say they have trouble staying awake on the job.

Getting enough sleep is crucial to peak performance. Richard L. Gelula, the foundation's executive director, said "...the bad news is far too many adults still sacrifice sleep, which is unhealthy and counterproductive...A good night's sleep is a necessity, not a luxury."

See what can be done about allowing yourself to get the amount of rest that you need. Take time to discover your energy levels throughout the day. Make some adjustments, if needed, to align your activities with that energy level. Figure out the highest and best use of that energy and before you know it, you will be accomplishing more in a shorter time frame...which will allow you to get more rest or relaxation or have fun with the people that are important to you...which, in my opinion, is what makes life worth living.

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