



**LAWYER TO LAWYER MENTORING PROGRAM
WORKSHEET K
INTRODUCTION TO CAREER SATISFACTION**

Worksheet K is intended to facilitate a discussion about balancing career and personal life, putting daily pressures into perspective, reconciling job expectations with actual experience, and maximizing career satisfaction.

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- Share with the new lawyer techniques to create and maintain balance between personal and professional life. Share your own experiences, including successes and failures, in finding balance between your personal life and career.

- Discuss strategies to achieve the following components to balancing personal and professional life:
 - How to create expectations for your employer and clients that are compatible with a healthy and balanced lifestyle.
 - How to give your all at work while saving energy and emotion for family.
 - How to plan for personal time.
 - How to maintain physical health with a busy schedule and how doing so contributes to your productivity and success.
 - How to make nutritious choices at home, at work or on the road and how doing so maximizes performance and energy levels.
 - How to plan ahead for the challenges of caring for children or aging parents.
 - How to develop and maintain friendships or other relationships when time seems to be in critically short supply.
 - How to foster professional relationships.
 - How to be efficient and productive at work, as well as how to prioritize and delegate tasks.
 - How to set limits at work in order to prevent burn-out.



- Share stress management techniques. Discuss the attached article. Pat McHenry Sullivan, *You Can Find Time to De-Stress*, LAW PRACTICE TODAY, Feb. 2006.
- Discuss how to reconcile job expectations with the actual experience at work. Discuss the new lawyer's expectations for his or her job, identify the aspects of his or her job which do not meet those expectations, determine together whether the expectations are realistic, and discuss ways to make changes which will positively affect the work experience.
- Discuss ways to maintain a positive attitude at work and create a positive work environment to maximize enjoyment of work.
- Discuss the importance of identifying an individual in the work setting who can help answer questions about the culture of the office and how to balance your career and personal life. If mentoring in-house, help the new lawyer identify that person (if it is not the mentor).
- Discuss ways to positively deal with the criticism of employers and clients.
- Discuss how pro bono work may contribute to having balance in a new lawyer's life.
- Share with the new lawyer tips for succeeding in the practice of law. Discuss the suggestions made in the attached articles. David J. Levy, *Surviving Your "Junioring" Years*, LAW PRACTICE TODAY, March 2005. Dennis Kennedy, *Twenty Lessons for Lawyers Starting Their Careers*, LAW PRACTICE TODAY, March 2005.
- Discuss how to endure the sustained demands for high achievement that accompany the practice of law. Discuss this attached article's relevancy to the practice of law - Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, *The Making of a Corporate Athlete*, Harvard Business Review, January 2001.
- Discuss the "do's" and "don'ts" of leaving a job because of job dissatisfaction, including the following tips:
 - Do work hard until you leave. If you are in the process of looking for another job, it will be easier to find one while you still have one.
 - Don't burn bridges by leaving on bad terms. You never know when and how you will have to interact with a member of your old firm in the future, or whether you will want to come back to your old firm.
 - Do be careful about the reasons you say you are leaving. To keep the relationships you have built in tact, keep your reasons for leaving focused on the



positive growth you expect by moving on rather than the negative experience you had which caused you to want to leave.

- Don't forget to mend difficult relationships before you go. Find something nice to say and shake hands with those you had problems with at your old employer so that you will be remembered as pleasantly as possible.
- Do stay in touch with your old employer. Maintain the good relationships you built because an old employer always has influence over your career and your reputation.

RESOURCES

Life in the Balance: Achieving Equilibrium in Professional and Personal Life, American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division 2002-2003 Members Service Project
<http://www.abanet.org/yld/about/writtenguide03.pdf>

Sharon Meit Abrahams, *100 Plus Pointers for New Lawyers on Adjusting to Your Job*, A.B.A. Publishing (August, 2004)

Kathy Morris et. al., *Ask the Career Counselors...Answers for Lawyers on Their Lives and Life's Work*, A.B.A. Publishing (2003)

Kathy Morris et. al., *Direct Examination...A Workbook for Lawyer Career Satisfaction*, A.B.A. Publishing (2001)

M. Diane Vogt et. al., *Keeping Good Lawyers: Best Practices to Create Career Satisfaction*, A.B.A. Publishing (Nov. 2000)

George W. Kaufman, *Lawyer's Guide to Balancing Life and Work: Taking the Stress Out of Success*, 2nd Edition, A.B.A. Publishing (June 2006)

[CLICK HERE TO RETURN TO PREVIOUS PAGE](#)

You Can Find Time to De-Stress

[✉ E-mail This Article](#)[🖨 Print This Article](#)by [Pat McHenry Sullivan](#)

February 2006

We spend the majority of our waking hours either preparing for work, working, or recovering from work. Being at work often feels like being Steven Covey's proverbial woodsman with a dull saw. Once we take the time to sharpen the saw, we'll work more efficiently. But how can we get away from the ever-growing workpile long enough to sharpen our tools or our wits?

"Every time I take a break," said a nurse, "Work is more satisfying and I'm better able to serve my patients. But we're so short staffed that there's always something urgent that needs attention right now."

Fortunately, it's possible to find wisdom for work without abandoning your responsibilities, even in the midst of whatever chaos confronts you right now:

Breathe deeply and with awareness. Under stress, it's easy to repress your breath. When your breathing is shallow, your energy level, your mental alertness and your confidence all drop. Conversely, when you breathe deeply, you become more alive. As you breathe consciously, you naturally trade concerns about the past and future for awareness of the present.

The connection between breath and vitality is honored in most of the world's religions. The Hindu physical yoga tradition teaches many different breathing exercises to increase physical and spiritual alertness. The ancient Greek word "pneuma" and the Latin "spiritus" both can be translated as breath or spirit. Throughout the Hebrew Bible are verses reminding us that without breath or spirit, we are dead; with it, we come alive.

Challenge the legal "dragons." It's as if the legal world is under the spell of two wisdom- and energy-draining dragons. The fire-breathing one's message is "hurry up, there's always more to be done." The one with the paralyzing breath warns, "Be careful. Everything you do could be wrong."

There's only one way to handle the dragons. Face them, and admit the truth of what they say. There is always more we can do, and everything we do could be wrong. But when we accept this reality of human existence *and* commit to doing our best, we can tap our wisest, most efficient self.

Challenge all your beliefs about work and discern which tasks are essential and which are not. Underlying a workaholic schedule may be repressed longings to feel appreciated or important. Much potentially productive time is wasted complaining about how overworked we are, or bragging about how hard we work.

In an effort to demonstrate loyalty to his firm, a senior partner in one firm said he had missed the births of all four of his children. Upon hearing that, another partner could no longer ignore the gnawing career dissatisfaction that until then she had kept at bay by being busy. Not long afterward, she found work that allowed her to have a satisfying life while she made a satisfying living.

[Back to Top](#)

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Law Practice TODAY

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MANAGEMENT

Surviving Your “Junioring” Years

by [David J. Levy](#)

March 2005

Being an associate is not easy, particularly in your first year or two of practice. Law School and the Bar Admission Course provide you with limited preparation, expectations are high and the demands are great. While the learning curve is steep, and some growing pains are inevitable, the following guidelines should make your experience more enjoyable and more successful.

1. Work Hard

This surely goes without saying, but hard work is the cornerstone of any associate’s success. Do not think you are doing anything particularly novel if you work evenings and weekends. While the quality of your work is surely more important than the quantity (see number 3 below), the number of hours worked will never be overlooked by your employer.

2. Take Initiative

Sitting back, doing only what is asked of you and generally “flying under the radar” may help you manage your time, but it is not going to advance your career. You need to take some initiative to get the experience you’ll need to be successful in future years. For example, in a litigation practice, you may research the law for a motion, prepare an Affidavit of Documents before a discovery, or draft a pre-trial or mediation memorandum. You will doubtless be familiar with the file, but this knowledge is somewhat wasted if you do not also attend on the motion, discovery, mediation or pre-trial. While your supervising lawyer should try to get you involved in these events, he or she will not always think of it, and it is up to you to ask. Sometimes it won’t be possible due to scheduling conflicts, other commitments, etc., but take every opportunity to assist more experienced counsel at significant file events. You may be able to do something substantive, or your role may be strictly as a spectator. Either way, you will benefit from experiencing the “big picture,” and you will be better prepared to handle these events on your own when the time comes.

3. Stress Quality Over Quantity

As a junior lawyer, it will take you longer than a more experienced colleague to complete any given task. Accept that fact, recognize that it will mean that you will be putting in more hours than your more experienced colleagues (see number 1 above), and ensure that the work you do is of good quality regardless of how long it takes. If your supervising lawyer has a choice of you spending two hours on a task and performing it well, or spending one hour and having it full of errors and in need of major revision, which do you think he or she will prefer?

4. Be Realistic About What You Can Achieve

While initiative is good, it is also important to be realistic. You always want to appear eager to help, and never want to say “no” for fear of appearing lazy, unmotivated, etc. However, if you are taking on work that you cannot complete, you are ultimately doing a disservice to both the firm and yourself.

5. Move Your Cases Forward

This point cannot be overemphasized. It is easy to keep busy, but there is a big difference between doing enough to fill your day, and doing constructive work that helps push cases forward to conclusion. Remember that clients are looking for results and they want them quickly. Obviously, depending on the nature of your practice, it can reasonably take months or even years to achieve those results, which most clients understand and accept. What is unacceptable, and often leads to both sub-par results and unhappy clients, is the delay that could have been avoided. To ensure that your work is being completed in a timely manner, create and continuously update a file (or assignment) list, review it regularly, and, most importantly, ensure that every time you work on a file, you do something constructive to move that file forward. What you want to avoid is the situation where you review a file and then, for whatever reason, that file goes back on the shelf without any other action. If you are unsure about what to do next, ask someone. If you become distracted by another matter, ensure that you come back to the file in the immediate future, before time passes and everything must be reviewed again. Not only is it beneficial to your firm to have cases moved forward, unnecessary delay causes nothing but prejudice to the client, who will eventually become exasperated, first with the process and then with you.

6. Be a Team Player

Everyone wants to receive credit, especially in a competitive environment like a legal practice. But you will do far better in the long run if you are known as a team player. Don't look for personal “reward,” go out of your way to accommodate those you work with, help your colleagues whenever you can, and always give others credit for their involvement, however small, in an assignment of yours. Your good work, humility, and “team” approach will all be noticed. On the other hand, your work product may be overshadowed if you develop a reputation of being interested only in promoting yourself.

7. Accept The “Joe” Jobs With A Smile

As a junior lawyer, you will inevitably get some assignments that have made their way to you because no one wants them and everyone above you has managed to avoid them. Its not always fair, and sometimes the product of nothing more than laziness on the part of more senior counsel, but it is going to happen. Just keep smiling. The lawyer who assigned you this task probably knows it is a “dog” (even if he or she won't admit it) and you will be appreciated for getting it done. Do these (and your other assignments) well, and soon your superiors will find someone else to do these unenviable tasks.

8. Do Not Be Afraid To Ask For Help

Your supervising lawyer should have an “open door” policy, and you should feel welcome to ask questions. Its part of the learning process and helps ensure that you stay “on track.” There are two caveats. First, you have to be familiar with the file you are asking about – it is not your superior's job

to brief you about background matters you could learn on your own. Second, you must have already made a reasonable effort to find the answer. You will be quite embarrassed if the answer to your question is easily found in the first place you should have looked (procedural details found in the Rules of Civil Procedure are a prime example). If you have done both these things, feel free to ask.

9. Be Nice To Your Staff

Good office staff is a valuable resource. Good staff makes your practice easier and more successful, while less worthy staff will have just the opposite effect. This is particularly true for junior lawyers who will benefit from the experience of secretaries and law clerks, some of whom have been in the industry for many years. Most junior lawyers have never had staff working for them before, and there can be a tendency to treat staff as subservient, or otherwise with a lack of respect. This is a serious mistake! Consider your staff to be valuable members of your team and treat them accordingly. You will find that the quality of their work will be higher, and their motivation to help you during those inevitable emergencies will be greater. Treat your staff with disdain, and ... you can figure out the rest.

10. Confront Your Mistakes and Accept Constructive Criticism

While nobody wants to make a mistake, it is going to happen. None of us is perfect. When something has gone wrong, whether the error is big or small, deal with it immediately! Do not bury the problem and hope that it will go away. It won't. If you confront the mistake immediately, there may still be a way to fix or at least minimize the problem. By trying to hide from it, you can rest assured that when you are ultimately required to confront the issue (and you will be) the problem will be much greater. Your delay may even prejudice your insurance coverage in some situations.

One of the inevitable consequences of making an error is that you will receive criticism, hopefully of the constructive variety. Listen to what you are being told, and learn what is expected of you so you can avoid making the same mistake again. As long as your error was not the result of laziness or total carelessness, don't be embarrassed or focus on it endlessly. Your superiors made plenty of mistakes too, perhaps the same ones you have made. Above all else, don't argue or get defensive – accept the fact that you made a mistake, fix it (if you can) and move on.

11. Keep Learning

Whatever your practice area, the law is complex and constantly developing. Make sure that you take the time to read the legal literature available to you, which should always include weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines, and seminar materials relevant to your area of practice. It is your obligation to keep up to date on changes in the law, and you will be very happy to avoid uncomfortable situations that can arise from not doing so.

This article originally appeared in the Ontario Bar Association's (www.oba.org) November 2004 Young Lawyers' Division Newsletter.

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MANAGEMENT

Twenty Lessons for Lawyers Starting Their Careers

by Dennis Kennedy

March 2005

Nobody hands you an instruction manual or a playbook when you start your legal career. Much of what you need to know is not told to you. Much of what you need to know is learned the hard way, often from making mistakes. Sometimes you are being evaluated on how well you perform when no one gives you instructions and sometimes it's just the case that no one is giving you any instructions.

In my legal career, I've been in big firms and smaller firms. I've been a summer associate, an associate and a partner. I've run a firm's summer program and I've been involved in hiring. I've seen a lot and, from time to time, I've tried to put together the lessons I've learned.

Sometimes you are not ready for the lesson. Sometimes you think you know the lesson, but you later realize that there was a different lesson that you weren't able to see until later. Some lessons are painful, but many come from other lawyer's generously sharing their experiences.

In the spirit of sharing lessons, I offer 20 lessons I now think that I have learned about starting the practice of law and, in particular, working at a law firm.

1. Learn the culture. Your most important job from the time you accept a job is to learn the culture of the organization you are joining. Although most people focus so much on getting the job that they neglect to notice much about the culture of a firm before they start, it is a good idea to make some observations about the culture of a firm even in the interviews. After you start working at firm, you want to put a lot of effort into learning the culture of the firm.

The "myths" and "legends" of the firm can help you out. If the managing partners of the firm shared a table in the library for their first few years in the firm, you'll want to hesitate before you demand new furniture. An oft-repeated tale of a female partner who called into the office within an hour of giving birth to a child can give you a clue as to what lawyers will think of your request for substantial paternity leave.

You'll want to learn what to wear, what hours you really need to work, whose opinions matter most and, especially, what major mistakes that associates who are no longer with the firm made. You will also want to start to develop a sense of what partners have in common, what made them partners and whether any of those things appeal or apply to you.

How do you do this? Talk to people and listen carefully to the stories. I recommend starting with the people who interviewed you. It's safe to assume that they liked you. Make efforts to know people outside your department. If you have to work on Saturdays, don't be afraid to stop by someone's office

and introduce yourself and ask them about themselves and what they like about the firm. Get them to tell you stories.

2. Begin the search for a mentor. The one thing that became crystal clear to me is that your success and happiness in law or any other profession depends on finding and maintaining mentor relationships. Over the long term, finding a mentor is the most important thing you can do when starting your career.

Despite books and articles that have been written about how to find mentors or, worse, how to put someone on the spot and ask him or her to be your mentor, finding a mentor is a mysterious process that takes time and often evolves organically.

In the interview process, you are likely to see people who may one day fit the bill. I wouldn't "target" them, but I would make an effort to get to know them and to work with them. There can be disappointments – people aren't what they seem, great attorneys may not be great people, and, as I found, people do die unexpectedly.

You want to find that person who can teach you not only the law, but ethics, respect for people and the law, honor and the "little" things like that. You want to hear their stories, understand their insights, and earn and experience their faith in you. In the right case, the right person will be willing to share all that. There's no more important key to your career. There's a great Eastern proverb I'm fond of: "when the student is ready, the teacher will come." Prepare yourself to be ready.

3. You get all the feedback you ask for. Feedback means different things to different people. In four years of running a summer program for my old firm, I spent a lot of time talking about "recognizing" feedback. This is another reason why learning the culture of your firm and the traits of individual attorneys is so important. Many attorneys will say nothing about your work and continue to give you more and more work. To you, this can be frustrating. In their minds, they have given you the highest form of feedback. "If I didn't like the work, I wouldn't give them more." They don't realize that most of us need to hear the words.

Even for the well-intentioned lawyer, demands get in the way of providing the kind of feedback attorneys want to give. Remember to ask. No one really minds someone who is sincere asking for a few minutes to talk about an assignment.

Don't make assumptions about the feedback you get. A hearty "great job" and no specific comments may disguise the fact someone can't believe what a poor job you did and just wants to get you moved on to someone else. I was notorious for telling people sincerely that they had done an excellent job and handing a document back to them in which it seemed I had changed something in every sentence. I was utterly sincere – they had done a great job in giving me something I could easily tailor to *my* audience. I had to work on my presentation to convey my message in a better way.

Assigning attorneys often want you to produce something that advances the process, gives them something to work with and allows them a good framework to make stylistic changes for the intended audience. I learned that it can be hard for people to hear the compliments when all they see is a sea of corrections.

A good pointer is to be persistent in asking for specifics. You need to ask why something is a good job when you can't see why it is. Learning from others about an attorney's style can be a big help.

4. Write for the right audience. Nothing gets new lawyers into more trouble than writing for the

wrong audience. An attorney who wants a 3-page memo will never be happy with a memo that looks like a law review article, no matter how good it may be. Writing for clients is an art. Unfortunately, none of this is typically learned in law school.

The key: look at models. Ask for a letter like the one you are supposed to write. Ask the assigning attorney for an example of a memo he or she liked. Talk about who the intended audience is. Then, make sure that you do what the assigning attorney tells you he or she wants.

When I ran a summer program, I gave my own independent evaluation of the summer interns' written work by taking it home the night before the review and reading it all at once with the TV on before I went to bed. I felt that that approach gave me the perspective of a typical harried, tired and distracted attorney who wanted to know what the main points are. If I could tell what the memo was about and what its main points were, I knew someone had done a great job. Be clear, concise and make it easier to find your main points and conclusions. Oh, yeah, attorneys really are looking for your conclusions. Remember to give them.

5. Learn the lines of gossip and be careful. It always amazed me that even after I warned them about revealing too much of their personal lives, I'd see summer associates and young attorneys talking about the travails of his or her love life, his or her latest hangover, and teenage indiscretions with the very staff members who were most likely to spread the story all over the place and to either distort or embellish it in the process. Use good judgment. In any firm, you should assume that the personal secrets you disclose will make the rounds of the firm quickly in a somewhat distorted form that will emphasize the scandalous aspects. That's not a comment on any person or any firm; it just happens. Let me repeat a word that you want to know and understand: JUDGMENT.

6. The first few months will be physically exhausting. The biggest surprise new attorneys have is how physically tiring it is to work. This may come as a surprise, but sitting at a desk working all day, often ten hours or more a day, will wear you out until you get accustomed to it. This happens to everyone.

You get tired in the afternoon and soon find that you are nodding off at home at 8:00 at night on a regular basis. I don't know many young attorneys who didn't think that they were getting mono after their first few months of work. You get used to it, but it takes a while. Physical exercise, going out to lunch, and walking around the office to take a break can help.

7. Be yourself . . . within reason. Everybody wants to be their own person, but you have to use common sense and good judgment.

Surprisingly, the worst mistake you can make is to try to fit yourself into what you imagine the organization's mode to be. First, you won't get it right. Second, you'll give people a sense that you are inauthentic.

Here's an example. A friend of mine and I became partners in my old firm at about the same time. The only thing we clearly had in common was that we both came in very early in the morning and there were only a few lawyers who did that. Shortly thereafter, the early morning hours were populated by bleary-eyed associates who decided that early morning hours were a key to the partnership mix. They came to their senses fairly quickly.

There are many ways to express yourself as an individual within the framework of the normal culture of the firm. You can buy many different shades of gray suits, for example. Seriously, though, a big

issue in any organization is “fit.” You do a disservice to yourself and to the firm by not being yourself.

Life is short – you don’t want to trap yourself at a place that doesn’t fit you. Remember that it is possible that you made the wrong choice of employers.

8. Attitude matters. A general rule of thumb is that an attitude of entitlement will kill your chances at most firms. Your work is just beginning – lawyers don’t really respect the work you did in law school. You are definitely back at square one and have to prove yourself all over again.

An attitude that indicates that you have made it, that you are ready to reap the benefits of your education immediately and a sense that you don’t have something else to earn, will cause you nothing but problems. You want to be self-confident, but humble, willing to learn, respectful of your position and ready to work.

Imagine two new attorneys doing the identical work on a document and the documents having identical typos and mistakes. If you have a good attitude, communicate with the assigning attorney and show a willingness to learn, I guarantee that the worst comment you’ll get is that it was a good effort. If you have a “bad” attitude, act like you know it all and that the project is beneath you, you risk someone questioning whether you even have the ability to be a lawyer.

9. Learn your place in the pecking order. I used to joke in the hiring process that we should hire military veterans because they knew that you started at the bottom and earned your way up the ladder. Resist the inclination to see yourself on a level well above paralegals, secretaries and staff.

Everyone plays a different role and the values of these roles are not determined by title. If you’ve been at a firm for a few months and get into a situation where you force a partner to choose between supporting you or the secretary he or she has had for ten years and relies on in ways you can’t even imagine (until you have a secretary you rely on for ten years), I guarantee that 100% of the time the partner will support the secretary. It’s a showdown you can’t win – don’t try to force it.

Classic mistake: a partner assigns a project to you that you know in your heart is “paralegal work.” You stew about it for a while, talk to other associates who commiserate you, and, almost inevitably, walk down to a paralegal where you all but throw the assignment on his or her desk as you “delegate” the project back to the paralegal.

In almost every case, one thing has happened and three other things will happen. The assigning attorney has already had a discussion with the paralegal and there is a reason you got the work. The second thing is that before you get back to your desk, the paralegal will be telling the assigning attorney what you did. The third thing is that you will soon get a pointed lecture on how projects given to you are meant to be done by you. The fourth thing is that the next time the paralegal has a choice of making your job easier or harder, he or she will probably let you take the more difficult route.

10. Trivial-seeming projects are given to you for a reason. Many attorneys spent their early years doing work that is now routinely done by paralegals. Trips to the court to file documents allowed them to learn procedures and make friends at the court. Recording deeds and searching land records allowed them to learn the processes involved. Trips to distant courts got them out of the office for a few hours. I have fond memories of this and it baffles me how some young attorneys seem to want to duck this type of work.

You’ll later learn that more thought than you ever imagined went into the choice of projects you were

given and that there is a training process going on. Don't get indignant that you are a lawyer and feel that above certain assignments – look for lessons to learn. There are plenty of them.

11. Make life a little easier for older attorneys. I gradually grew to realize that many older lawyers are uncomfortable with one-on-one lunches, especially with members of the opposite sex or people young enough to be their children. It's a cultural thing, but it helps to respect it. Invite a group of people or include a peer. They may well be more uncomfortable than you are.

12. Don't turn in rough drafts. Almost every attorney has a story to illustrate this point. My story is fairly common. On the last day I worked before heading off for Christmas vacation during law school, an attorney asked me to do a rush project that he had to deal with the next day. I explained my situation and he said, "That's fine. Give me whatever you find, your handwritten notes, anything, I don't care if it's typed. I'd rather that I just get your research." On my return, I found that he hadn't looked at the materials I gave him for two weeks and, when he did, complained to everyone about the unprofessional work I had done and his disbelief that I'd given him anything handwritten. Well, you live and learn. Get things polished up. With computers, hardly any young attorney ever writes anything in longhand, so this little rite of passage may be disappearing.

The moral of the story: get written work into as polished and as standard a form as you can and at least write "draft" across the top.

13. Make the IS people your friends. I can assure you that, rightly or wrongly, the technology "needs" of new associates are not at the top of any firm's technology agenda. Don't assume that someone is looking out for your technology interests. In fact, you will undoubtedly see many cases where the best technology goes to people who have the least need to use it.

Meet the IS people. Help them out. When you need some help or there's an opportunity to get better technology, you'll have a sympathetic ear and you'll be talking to the person who can help you out.

14. Learn the best ways to get to talk to individual attorneys. You have a question you need to have answered by the assigning attorney. As far as you can tell, his telephone is glued to his ear. What do you do?

You have to learn strategies. It might be e-mail. It might be a phone call. It might be hanging outside his door like a lost dog until he is off the phone and then charging in. Generally, an attorney's secretary is the best resource, but talk to others who do work for the attorney. You'll find that those in the know will have ways to get his or her attention. You need to learn how to be one of those in the know.

15. Speaking at client meetings. You see more young attorneys go up in flames in this situation than any other. Understand that the client sees you as expensive surplusage in the meeting and doesn't really want to see you there. You don't want to remind clients why they think that way. You can also cause a lot of problems in ways that you simply will not be able to understand until several years later when you are at a different firm.

Here are a few good rules:

Speak only when spoken to. I always believed that you went into the meeting with the client seeing you as the bright, young (although expensive) attorney. It's easier than you think to change that opinion for the worse.

There is no joke that you can tell that will be a guaranteed winner. Don't even think about taking the risk.

Never correct the lead attorney no matter how wrong you think he or she is. It's more likely that you are wrong. Mention it after the meeting – the attorney will make the call to the client if a correction is necessary. If you have an established relationship with an attorney, you might have ways to raise a question so that the attorney has a chance to reconsider, but be careful. If you notice that another lawyer is calling the client by the wrong name or referring to the wrong case, you might want to slip a note under his or her nose.

Most of the time, you will be invited to attend a meeting to take notes and to observe and learn how to conduct a meeting. Do that. The fact that you won the client counseling competition in law school does not give you a license to think you've learned it all.

If you are asked to summarize your research for a client, try to hit the main points and finish within a minute. If the client has further questions, he or she will ask. Almost no client will want to hear about the fascinating distinction you've found between two obscure cases on a tangential point. The client is thinking action steps and doesn't want to be reminded about how much they are paying for you to research obscure point and talk in a language he or she can't understand.

The bottom line: talk with the lead attorney about what he or she wants you to do in the meeting.

16. Report back after a few hours. If your project is taking too long, let the assigning attorney know. You'll get mixed signals on many projects. An attorney will say that the research will take about two hours, but that you have to be sure to get the right answer, no matter what. Forty hours later, you may have your answer, but when the attorney sees your time record, he or she will hit the roof.

Give a status report. Ask for more direction. Re-engage the attorney in the project. Make sure you understand what is being asked.

By the way, if the research would have taken a few minutes or hours, the attorney would have done it himself or herself. You should expect not to find easy answers. Also, it is really difficult for experienced attorneys to estimate accurately how long it will take a young attorney to do a project.

17. The two-year rule. I learned that it takes about two years of practice to feel like you're getting the hang of things. Unfortunately, about two years later, realize that you really didn't know very much two years earlier. However, it is a significant and confidence-building milestone in your career.

18. Think about Tom Peters' resume rule. In his book, *The Circle of Innovation*, Tom Peters talks about looking at your resume on a regular basis and assessing at least annually what you've added in the way of specific projects to your resume. Think of the three or four resume-enhancing projects that you've done each year and write short summaries of each of them and your role in them. It is wise to update your resume every year, even if you are not actively looking for a job. I suggest that you keep that updated resume on your home computer and not on the office network.

19. Keep developing networks. For many reasons, young lawyers change jobs frequently. Don't get so caught up in the law firm's cocoon that you neglect outside relationships that can help you if you have to leave or the firm merges or changes drastically. Bar activities and alumni networks are good ways to proceed.

20. Get involved in the firm. Part of becoming a partner in any firm is getting out of passive "I'm-just-an-employee" way of thinking. You want to be at a place where you feel like it is *your* firm. One good way to start to get involved is to help out with interviewing. Another thing is to volunteer to be part of committees. Show that you are interested in the firm. Partners like to see associates who are committed to the firm itself and don't give the sense of "just passing through."

Learning the law necessary to do your job is hard enough, but don't neglect the work you need to do to learn how to practice law. Be observant, listen carefully and test your assumptions. You will have plenty of mistakes from which you can learn many of your own lessons, but consider the lessons I learned. I hope that by teaching you some of the lessons I learned, you can have an easier time in some of those areas and concentrate your energies on some of the other areas that deserve your time and attention.

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The Making of a Corporate Athlete

Some executives thrive under pressure. Others wilt. Is the reason all in their heads? Hardly. Sustained high achievement demands physical and emotional strength as well as a sharp intellect. To bring mind, body, and spirit to peak condition, executives need to learn what world-class athletes already know: recovering energy is as important as expending it.

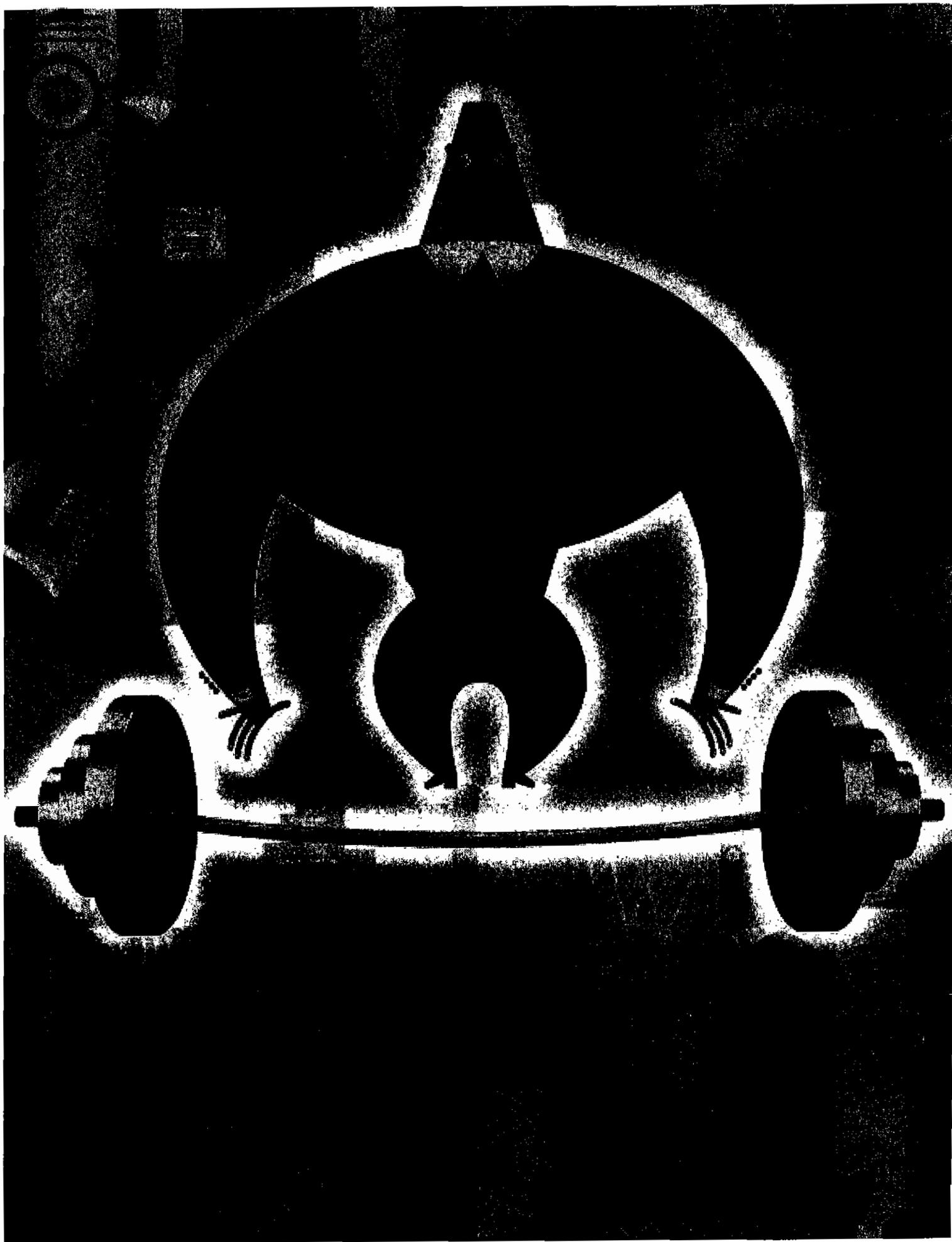
by Jim Loehr and
Tony Schwartz

IF THERE IS ONE QUALITY THAT EXECUTIVES SEEK for themselves and their employees, it is sustained high performance in the face of ever-increasing pressure and rapid change. But the source of such performance is as elusive as the fountain of youth. Management theorists have long sought to identify precisely what makes some people flourish under pressure and others fold. We maintain that they have come up with only partial answers: rich material rewards, the right culture, management by objectives.

The problem with most approaches, we believe, is that they deal with people only from the neck up, connecting high performance primarily with cognitive capacity. In recent years there has been a growing focus on the relationship between emotional intelligence and high performance. A few theorists have addressed the spiritual dimension—how deeper values and a sense of purpose influence performance. Almost no one has paid any attention to the role played by physical capacities. A successful approach to sustained high performance, we have found, must pull together all of these elements and consider the person as a whole. Thus, our integrated theory of performance management addresses the body, the emotions, the mind, and the spirit. We call this hierarchy the *performance pyramid*. Each of its levels profoundly influences the others, and failure to address any one of them compromises performance.

Our approach has its roots in the two decades that Jim Loehr and his colleagues at LGE spent working with

ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL GUIDI RA



world-class athletes. Several years ago, the two of us began to develop a more comprehensive version of these techniques for executives facing unprecedented demands in the workplace. In effect, we realized, these executives are "corporate athletes." If they were to perform at high levels over the long haul, we posited, they would have to train in the same systematic, multilevel way that world-class athletes do. We have now tested our model on thousands of executives. Their dramatically improved work performance and their enhanced health and happiness confirm our initial hypothesis. In the pages that follow, we describe our approach in detail.

Ideal Performance State

In training athletes, we have never focused on their primary skills—how to hit a serve, swing a golf club, or shoot a basketball. Likewise, in business we don't address primary competencies such as public speaking, negotiating, or analyzing a balance sheet. Our efforts aim instead to help executives build their capacity for what might be called supportive or secondary competencies, among them endurance, strength, flexibility, self-control, and focus. Increasing capacity at all levels allows athletes and executives alike to bring their talents and skills to full ignition and to sustain high performance over time—a condition we call the *Ideal Performance State* (IPS). Obviously, executives can perform successfully even if they smoke, drink and weigh too much, or lack emotional skills or a higher purpose for working. But they cannot perform to their full potential or without a cost over time—to themselves, to their families, and to the corporations for which they work. Put simply, the best long-term performers tap into positive energy at all levels of the performance pyramid.

Extensive research in sports science has confirmed that the capacity to mobilize energy on demand is the foundation of IPS. Our own work has demonstrated that effective energy management has two key components. The first is the rhythmic movement between energy expenditure (stress) and energy renewal (recovery), which we term "oscillation." In the living laboratory of sports, we learned that the real enemy of high performance is not

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stress, which, paradoxical as it may seem, is actually the stimulus for growth. Rather, the problem is the absence of disciplined, intermittent recovery. Chronic stress without recovery depletes energy reserves, leads to burnout and breakdown, and ultimately undermines performance. Rituals that promote oscillation—rhythmic stress and recovery—are the second component of high performance. Repeated regularly, these highly precise, consciously developed routines become automatic over time.

The same methods that enable world-class athletes to reach IPS under pressure, we theorized, would be at least equally effective for business leaders—and perhaps even more important in their lives. The demands on executives to sustain high performance day in and day out, year in and year out, dwarf the challenges faced by any athlete we have ever trained. The average professional athlete, for example, spends most of his time practicing and only a small percentage—several hours a day, at most—actually competing. The typical executive, by contrast, devotes almost no time to training and must perform on demand ten, 12, 14 hours a day or more. Athletes enjoy several months of off-season, while most executives are fortunate to get three or four weeks of vacation a year. The career of the average professional athlete spans seven years; the average executive can expect to work 40 to 50 years.

Of course, even corporate athletes who train at all levels will have bad days and run into challenges they can't overcome. Life is tough, and for many time-starved executives, it is only getting tougher. But that is precisely our point. While it isn't always in our power to change our external conditions, we can train to better manage our inner state. We aim to help corporate athletes use the full range of their capacities to thrive in the most difficult circumstances and to emerge from stressful periods stronger, healthier, and eager for the next challenge.

Physical Capacity

Energy can be defined most simply as the capacity to do work. Our training process begins at the physical level because the body is our fundamental source of energy—the foundation of the performance pyramid. Perhaps the best paradigm for building capacity is weight lifting. Several decades of sports science research have established that the key to increasing physical strength is a phenomenon known as supercompensation—essentially the creation of balanced work-rest ratios. In weight lifting, this involves stressing a muscle to the point where its fibers literally start to break down. Given an adequate period of recovery (typically at least 48 hours), the muscle will not only heal, it will grow stronger. But persist in stressing the muscle without rest and the result will be acute and chronic damage. Conversely, failure to stress the muscle results in weakness and atrophy. (Just think of an arm in a cast for several weeks.) In both cases, the enemy is not

stress, it's linearity—the failure to oscillate between energy expenditure and recovery.

We first understood the power of rituals to prompt recovery by observing world-class tennis players in the crucible of match play. The best competitors, we discovered, use precise recovery rituals in the 15 or 20 seconds *between* points—often without even being aware of it. Their between-point routines include concentrating on the strings of their rackets to avoid distraction, assuming a confident posture, and visualizing how they want the next point to play out. These routines have startling physiological effects. When we hooked players up to heart rate monitors during their matches, the competitors with the most consistent rituals showed dramatic oscillation, their heart rates rising rapidly during play and then dropping as much as 15% to 20% between points.

The mental and emotional effects of precise between-point routines are equally significant. They allow players to avoid negative feelings, focus their minds, and prepare for the next point. By contrast, players who lack between-point rituals, or who practice them inconsistently, become linear—they expend too much energy without recovery. Regardless of their talent or level of fitness, they become more vulnerable to frustration, anxiety, and loss of concentration and far more likely to choke under pressure.

The same lesson applies to the corporate athletes we train. The problem, we explain, is not so much that their lives are increasingly stressful as that they are so relentlessly linear. Typically, they push themselves too hard mentally and emotionally and too little physically. Both forms of linearity undermine performance.

When we began working with Marilyn Clark, a managing director of Salomon Smith Barney, she had almost no oscillation in her life. Clark, who is in her late 30s, runs the firm's Cleveland office. She is also the mother of three young children, and her husband is a high-powered executive in his own right. To all appearances, Clark lives an enviable life, and she was loath to complain about it. Yet her hectic lifestyle was exacting a cost, which became clear after some probing. In the mornings, temporarily fueled by coffee and a muffin, she was alert and energetic. By the afternoon, though, her energy sagged, and she got through the rest of the day on sheer willpower. At lunchtime, when she could have taken a few quiet moments to recover, she found that she couldn't say no to employees who lined up at her office seeking counsel and support. Between the demands of her job, her colleagues, and her family, she had almost no time for herself. Her frustration quietly grew.

We began our work with Clark by taking stock of her physical capacity. While she had been a passionate athlete as a teenager and an All-American lacrosse player in college, her fitness regimen for the past several years had been limited to occasional sit-ups before bedtime. As she learned more about the relationship between energy and high performance, Clark agreed that her first priority was to get back in shape. She wanted to feel better physically, and she knew from past experience that her mood would improve if she built regular workouts into her schedule.

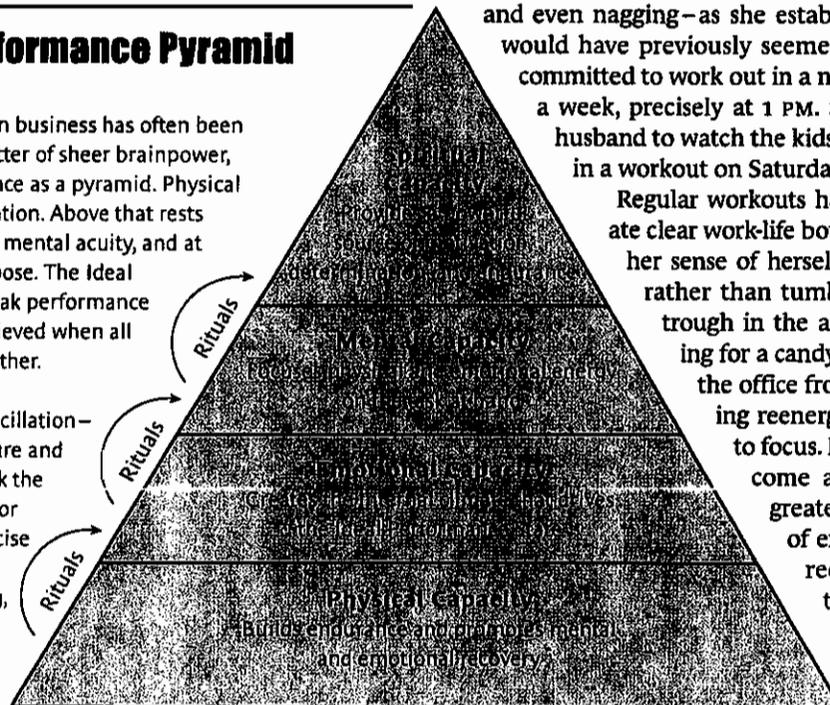
Because old habits die hard, we helped Clark establish positive rituals to replace them. Part of the work was creating a supportive environment. The colleagues with whom Clark trained became a source of cheerleading—and even nagging—as she established a routine that would have previously seemed unthinkable. Clark committed to work out in a nearby gym three days a week, precisely at 1 PM. She also enlisted her husband to watch the kids so that she could get in a workout on Saturdays and Sundays.

Regular workouts have helped Clark create clear work-life boundaries and restored her sense of herself as an athlete. Now, rather than tumbling into an energy trough in the afternoons and reaching for a candy bar, Clark returns to the office from her workouts feeling reenergized and better able to focus. Physical stress has become a source not just of greater endurance but also of emotional and mental recovery; Clark finds that she can work fewer hours and get more done. And finally, because

The High-Performance Pyramid

Peak performance in business has often been presented as a matter of sheer brainpower, but we view performance as a pyramid. Physical well-being is its foundation. Above that rests emotional health, then mental acuity, and at the top, a sense of purpose. The Ideal Performance State—peak performance under pressure—is achieved when all levels are working together.

Rituals that promote oscillation—the rhythmic expenditure and recovery of energy—link the levels of the pyramid. For instance, vigorous exercise can produce a sense of emotional well-being, clearing the way for peak mental performance.



she no longer feels chronically overburdened, she believes that she has become a better boss. “My body feels reawakened,” she says. “I’m much more relaxed, and the resentment I was feeling about all the demands on me is gone.”

Clark has inspired other members of her firm to take out health club memberships. She and several colleagues are subsidizing employees who can’t easily afford the cost. “We’re not just talking to each other about business accolades and who is covering which account,” she says. “Now it’s also about whether we got our workouts in and how well we’re recovering. We’re sharing something healthy, and that has brought people together.”

The corporate athlete doesn’t build a strong physical foundation by exercise alone, of course. Good sleeping and eating rituals are integral to effective energy management. When we first met Rudy Borneo, the vice chairman of Macy’s West, he complained of erratic energy levels, wide mood swings, and difficulty concentrating. He was also overweight. Like many executives—and most Americans—his eating habits were poor. He typically began his long, travel-crammed days by skipping breakfast—the equivalent of rolling to the start line of the Indianapolis 500 with a near-empty fuel tank. Lunch was catch-as-catch-can, and Borneo used sugary snacks to fight off his inevitable afternoon hunger pangs. These foods spiked his blood glucose levels, giving him a quick jolt of energy, but one that faded quickly. Dinner was often a rich, multicourse meal eaten late in the evening. Digesting that much food disturbed Borneo’s sleep and left him feeling sluggish and out of sorts in the mornings.

Sound familiar?

As we did with Clark, we helped Borneo replace his bad habits with positive rituals, beginning with the way he ate. We explained that by eating lightly but often, he could sustain a steady level of energy. (For a fuller account of the foundational exercise, eating, and sleep routines, see the sidebar “A Firm Foundation.”) Borneo now eats breakfast every day—typically a high-protein drink rather than coffee and a bagel. We also showed him research by chronobiologists suggesting that the body and mind need recovery every 90 to 120 minutes. Using that cycle as the basis for his eating schedule, he installed a refrigerator by his desk and began eating five or six small but nutritious meals a day and sipping water frequently. He also shifted the emphasis in his workouts to interval training, which increased his endurance and speed of recovery.

In addition to prompting weight loss and making him feel better, Borneo’s nutritional and fitness rituals have had a dramatic effect on other aspects of his life. “I now exercise for my mind as much as for my body,” he says. “At the age of 59, I have more energy than ever, and I can sustain it for a longer period of time. For me, the rituals are the holy grail. Using them to create balance has had an impact on every aspect of my life: staying more positive,

handling difficult human resource issues, dealing with change, treating people better. I really do believe that when you learn to take care of yourself, you free up energy and enthusiasm to care more for others.”

Emotional Capacity

The next building block of IPS is emotional capacity—the internal climate that supports peak performance. During our early research, we asked hundreds of athletes to describe how they felt when they were performing at their best. Invariably, they used words such as “calm,” “challenged,” “engaged,” “focused,” “optimistic,” and “confident.” As sprinter Marion Jones put it shortly after winning one of her gold medals at the Olympic Games in Sydney: “I’m out here having a ball. This is not a stressful time in my life. This is a very happy time.” When we later asked the same question of law enforcement officers, military personnel, surgeons, and corporate executives, they used remarkably similar language to describe their Ideal Performance State.

Just as positive emotions ignite the energy that drives high performance, negative emotions—frustration, impatience, anger, fear, resentment, and sadness—drain energy. Over time, these feelings can be literally toxic, elevating

A Firm Foundation

Here are our basic strategies for renewing energy at the physical level. Some of them are so familiar they’ve become background noise, easy to ignore. That’s why we’re repeating them. If any of these strategies aren’t part of your life now, their absence may help account for fatigue, irritability, lack of emotional resilience, difficulty concentrating, and even a flagging sense of purpose.

1. Actually do all those healthy things you know you ought to do. Eat five or six small meals a day; people who eat just one or two meals a day with long periods in between force their bodies into a conservation mode, which translates into slower metabolism. Always eat breakfast: eating first thing in the morning sends your body the signal that it need not slow metabolism to conserve energy. Eat a balanced diet. Despite all the conflicting nutritional research, overwhelming evidence suggests that a healthy dietary ratio is 50% to 60% complex carbohydrates, 25% to 35% protein, and 20% to 25% fat. Dramatically reduce simple sugars. In addition to representing empty calories, sugar causes energy-depleting spikes in blood glucose levels. Drink four to five 12-ounce glasses of water daily, even if you don’t feel thirsty. As much as half the population walks around with mild chronic dehydration. And finally, on the “you know you should” list: get physically active. We strongly recommend three to four 20- to 30-minute cardiovascular workouts a week, including at least two sessions of intervals—short bursts of intense exertion followed by brief recovery periods.

heart rate and blood pressure, increasing muscle tension, constricting vision, and ultimately crippling performance. Anxious, fear ridden athletes are far more likely to choke in competition, for example, while anger and frustration sabotage their capacity for calm focus.

The impact of negative emotions on business performance is subtler but no less devastating. Alan, an executive at an investment company, travels frequently, overseeing a half-dozen offices around the country. His colleagues and subordinates, we learned, considered him to be a perfectionist and an often critical boss whose frustration and impatience sometimes boiled over into angry tirades. Our work focused on helping Alan find ways to manage his emotions more effectively. His anger, we explained, was a reactive emotion, a fight-or-flight response to situations he perceived as threatening. To manage more effectively, he needed to transform his inner experience of threat under stress into one of challenge.

A regular workout regimen built Alan's endurance and gave him a way to burn off tension. But because his fierce travel schedule often got in the way of his workouts, we also helped him develop a precise five-step ritual to contain his negative emotions whenever they threatened to erupt. His initial challenge was to become more aware of signals from his body that he was on edge—physical ten-

sion, a racing heart, tightness in his chest. When he felt those sensations arise, his first step was to close his eyes and take several deep breaths. Next, he consciously relaxed the muscles in his face. Then, he made an effort to soften his voice and speak more slowly. After that, he tried to put himself in the shoes of the person who was the target of his anger—to imagine what he or she must be feeling. Finally, he focused on framing his response in positive language.

Instituting this ritual felt awkward to Alan at first, not unlike trying to learn a new golf swing. More than once he reverted to his old behavior. But within several weeks, the five-step drill had become automatic—a highly reliable way to short-circuit his reactivity. Numerous employees reported that he had become more reasonable, more approachable, and less scary. Alan himself says that he has become a far more effective manager.

Through our work with athletes, we have learned a number of other rituals that help to offset feelings of stress and restore positive energy. It's no coincidence, for example, that many athletes wear headphones as they prepare for competition. Music has powerful physiological and emotional effects. It can prompt a shift in mental activity from the rational left hemisphere of the brain to the more intuitive right hemisphere. It also provides a relief from obsessive thinking and worrying. Finally, music can be a means of directly regulating energy—raising it when the time comes to perform and lowering it when it is more appropriate to decompress.

Body language also influences emotions. In one well-known experiment, actors were asked to portray anger and then were subjected to numerous physiological tests, including heart rate, blood pressure, core temperature, galvanic skin response, and hormone levels. Next, the actors were exposed to a situation that made them genuinely angry, and the same measurements were taken. There were virtually no differences in the two profiles. Effective acting produces precisely the same physiology that real emotions do. All great athletes understand this instinctively. If they carry themselves confidently, they will eventually start to feel confident, even in highly stressful situations. That's why we train our corporate clients to "act as if"—consciously creating the look on the outside that they want to feel on the inside. "You are what you repeatedly do," said Aristotle. "Excellence is not a singular act but a habit."

Close relationships are perhaps the most powerful means for prompting positive emotions and effective recovery. Anyone who has enjoyed a happy family reunion or an evening with good friends knows the profound sense of safety and security that these relationships can induce. Such feelings are closely associated with the Ideal Performance State. Unfortunately, many of the corporate athletes we train believe that in order to perform up to expectations at work, they have no choice but to stint on

2. Go to bed early and wake up early. Night owls have a much more difficult time dealing with the demands of today's business world, because typically, they still have to get up with the early birds. They're often groggy and unfocused in the mornings, dependent on caffeine and sugary snacks to keep up their energy. You can establish new sleep rituals. Biological clocks are not fixed in our genes.

3. Maintain a consistent bedtime and wake-up time. As important as the number of hours you sleep (ideally seven to eight) is the consistency of the recovery wave you create. Regular sleep cycles help regulate your other biological clocks and increase the likelihood that the sleep you get will be deep and restful.

4. Seek recovery every 90 to 120 minutes. Chronobiologists have found that the body's hormone, glucose, and blood pressure levels drop every 90 minutes or so. By failing to seek recovery and overriding the body's natural stress-rest cycles, overall capacity is compromised. As we've learned from athletes, even short, focused breaks can promote significant recovery. We suggest five sources of restoration: eat something, hydrate, move physically, change channels mentally, and change channels emotionally.

5. Do at least two weight-training workouts a week. No form of exercise more powerfully turns back the markers of age than weight training. It increases strength, retards osteoporosis, speeds up metabolism, enhances mobility, improves posture, and dramatically increases energy.

their time with loved ones. We try to reframe the issue. By devoting more time to their most important relationships and setting clearer boundaries between work and home, we tell our clients, they will not only derive more satisfaction but will also get the recovery that they need to perform better at work.

Mental Capacity

The third level of the performance pyramid—the cognitive—is where most traditional performance-enhancement training is aimed. The usual approaches tend to focus on improving competencies by using techniques such as process reengineering and knowledge management or by learning to use more sophisticated technology. Our training aims to enhance our clients' cognitive capacities—most notably their focus, time management, and positive- and critical-thinking skills.

Focus simply means energy concentrated in the service of a particular goal. Anything that interferes with focus dissipates energy. Meditation, typically viewed as a spiritual practice, can serve as a highly practical means of training attention and promoting recovery. At this level, no guidance from a guru is required. A perfectly adequate meditation technique involves sitting quietly and breathing deeply, counting each exhalation, and starting over when you reach ten. Alternatively, you can choose a word to repeat each time you take a breath.

Practiced regularly, meditation quiets the mind, the emotions, and the body, promoting energy recovery. Numerous studies have shown, for example, that experienced meditators need considerably fewer hours of sleep than nonmeditators. Meditation and other noncognitive disciplines can also slow brain wave activity and stimulate a shift in mental activity from the left hemisphere of the brain to the right. Have you ever suddenly found the solution to a vexing problem while doing something “mindless” such as jogging, working in the garden, or singing in the shower? That's the left-brain, right-brain shift at work—the fruit of mental oscillation.

Much of our training at this level focuses on helping corporate athletes to consciously manage their time and energy. By alternating periods of stress with renewal, they learn to align their work with the body's need for breaks every 90 to 120 minutes. This can be challenging for compulsive corporate achievers. Jeffrey Sklar, 39, managing director for institutional sales at the New York investment firm Gruntal & Company, had long been accustomed to topping his competitors by brute force—pushing harder and more relentlessly than anyone else. With our help, he built a set of rituals that ensured regular recovery and also enabled him to perform at a higher level while spending fewer hours at work.

Once in the morning and again in the afternoon, Sklar retreats from the frenetic trading floor to a quiet office, where he spends 15 minutes doing deep-breathing exercises. At lunch, he leaves the office—something he once would have found unthinkable—and walks outdoors for at least 15 minutes. He also works out five or six times a week after work. At home, he and his wife, Sherry, a busy executive herself, made a pact never to talk business after 8 PM. They also swore off work on the weekends, and they have stuck to their vow for nearly two years. During each of those years, Sklar's earnings have increased by more than 65%.

For Jim Connor, the president and CEO of FootJoy, reprioritizing his time became a way not just to manage his energy better but to create more balance in his life and to revive his sense of passion. Connor had come to us saying that he felt stuck in a deep rut. “My feelings were muted so I could deal with the emotional pain of life,” he explains. “I had smoothed out all the vicissitudes in my life to such an extent that oscillation was prohibited. I was not feeling life but repetitively performing it.”

Connor had imposed on himself the stricture that he be the first person to arrive at the office each day and the last to leave. In reality, he acknowledged, no one would object if he arrived a little later or left a little earlier a couple of days a week. He realized it also made sense for him to spend one or two days a week working at a satellite plant 45 minutes nearer to his home than his main office. Doing so could boost morale at the second plant while cutting 90 minutes from his commute.

Immediately after working with us, Connor arranged to have an office cleared out at the satellite factory. He now spends at least one full day a week there, prompting a number of people at that office to comment to him about his increased availability. He began taking a golf lesson one morning a week, which also allowed for a more relaxed drive to his main office, since he commutes there after rush hour on golf days. In addition, he instituted a monthly getaway routine with his wife. In the evenings, he often leaves his office earlier in order to spend more time with his family.

Connor has also meticulously built recovery into his workdays. “What a difference these fruit and water breaks make,” he says. “I set my alarm watch for 90 minutes to prevent relapses, but I'm instinctively incorporating this routine into my life and love it. I'm far more productive

Have you ever suddenly found the solution to a vexing problem while doing something “mindless” such as jogging, working in the garden, or singing in the shower? That's the left-brain, right-brain shift at work—the fruit of mental oscillation.

as a result, and the quality of my thought process is measurably improved. I'm also doing more on the big things at work and not getting bogged down in detail. I'm pausing more to think and to take time out."

Rituals that encourage positive thinking also increase the likelihood of accessing the Ideal Performance State. Once again, our work with top athletes has taught us the power of creating specific mental rituals to sustain positive energy. Jack Nicklaus, one of the greatest pressure performers in the history of golf, seems to have an intuitive understanding of the importance of both oscillation and rituals. "I've developed a regimen that allows me to move from peaks of concentration into valleys of relaxation and back again as necessary," he wrote in *Golf Digest*. "My focus begins to sharpen as I walk onto the tee and steadily intensifies...until I hit [my drive]...I descend into a valley as I leave the tee, either through casual conversation with a fellow competitor or by letting my mind dwell on whatever happens into it."

Visualization is another ritual that produces positive energy and has palpable performance results. For example, Earl Woods taught his son Tiger—Nicklaus's heir apparent—to form a mental image of the ball rolling into the hole before each shot. The exercise does more than produce a vague feeling of optimism and well-being. Neuroscientist Ian Robertson of Trinity College, Dublin,

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author of *Mind Sculpture*, has found that visualization can literally reprogram the neural circuitry of the brain, directly improving performance. It is hard to imagine a better illustration than diver Laura Wilkinson. Six months before the summer Olympics in Sydney, Wilkinson broke three toes on her right foot while training. Unable to go in the water because of her cast, she instead spent hours a day on the diving platform, visualizing each of her dives. With only a few weeks to actually practice before the Olympics, she pulled off a huge upset, winning the gold medal on the ten-meter platform.

Visualization works just as well in the office. Sherry Sklar has a ritual to prepare for any significant event in her work life. "I always take time to sit down in advance in a quiet place and think about what I really want from the meeting," she says. "Then I visualize myself achieving

the outcome I'm after." In effect, Sklar is building mental muscles—increasing her strength, endurance, and flexibility. By doing so, she decreases the likelihood that she will be distracted by negative thoughts under pressure. "It has made me much more relaxed and confident when I go into presentations," she says.

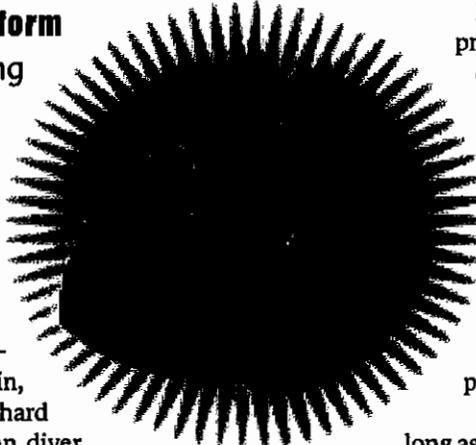
Spiritual Capacity

Most executives are wary of addressing the spiritual level of the performance pyramid in business settings, and understandably so. The word "spiritual" prompts conflicting emotions and doesn't seem immediately relevant to high performance. So let's be clear: by spiritual capacity, we simply mean the energy that is unleashed by tapping into one's deepest values and defining a strong sense of purpose. This capacity, we have found, serves as sustenance in the face of adversity and as a powerful source of motivation, focus, determination, and resilience.

Consider the case of Ann, a high-level executive at a large cosmetics company. For much of her adult life, she has tried unsuccessfully to quit smoking, blaming her failures on a lack of self-discipline. Smoking took a visible toll on her health and her productivity at work—decreased endurance from shortness of breath, more sick days than her colleagues, and nicotine cravings that distracted her during long meetings.

Four years ago, when Ann became pregnant, she was able to quit immediately and didn't touch a cigarette until the day her child was born, when she began smoking again. A year later, Ann became pregnant for a second time, and again she stopped smoking, with virtually no symptoms of withdrawal. True to her pattern, she resumed smoking when her child was born. "I don't understand it," she told us plaintively.

We offered a simple explanation. As long as Ann was able to connect the impact of smoking to a deeper purpose—the health of her unborn child—quitting was easy. She was able to make what we call a "values-based adaptation." But without a strong connection to a deeper sense of purpose, she went back to smoking—an expedient adaptation that served her short-term interests. Smoking was a sensory pleasure for Ann, as well as a way to allay her anxiety and manage social stress. Understanding cognitively that it was unhealthy, feeling guilty about it on an emotional level, and even experiencing its negative effects physically were all insufficient motivations to change her behavior. To succeed, Ann needed a more sustaining source of motivation.



Making such a connection, we have found, requires regularly stepping off the endless treadmill of deadlines and obligations to take time for reflection. The inclination for busy executives is to live in a perpetual state of triage, doing whatever seems most immediately pressing while losing sight of any bigger picture. Rituals that give people the opportunity to pause and look inside include meditation, journal writing, prayer, and service to others. Each of these activities can also serve as a source of recovery—a way to break the linearity of relentless goal-oriented activity.

Taking the time to connect to one's deepest values can be extremely rewarding. It can also be painful, as a client we'll call Richard discovered. Richard is a stockbroker who works in New York City and lives in a distant suburb, where his wife stays at home with their three young children. Between his long commute and his long hours, Richard spent little time with his family. Like so many of our clients, he typically left home before his children woke up and returned around 7:30 in the evening, feeling exhausted and in no mood to talk to anyone. He wasn't happy with his situation, but he saw no easy solution. In time, his unhappiness began to affect his work, which made him even more negative when he got home at night. It was a vicious cycle.

One evening while driving home from work, Richard found himself brooding about his life. Suddenly, he felt so overcome by emotion that he stopped his car at a park ten blocks from home to collect himself. To his astonishment, he began to weep. He felt consumed with grief about his life and filled with longing for his family. Af-

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ter ten minutes, all Richard wanted to do was get home and hug his wife and children. Accustomed to giving their dad a wide berth at the end of the day, his kids were understandably bewildered

when he walked in that evening with tears streaming down his face and wrapped them all in hugs. When his wife arrived on the scene, her first thought was that he'd been fired.

The next day, Richard again felt oddly compelled to stop at the park near his house. Sure enough, the tears returned and so did the longing. Once again, he rushed home to his family. During the subsequent two years, Richard was able to count on one hand the number of times that he failed to stop at the same location for at least ten minutes. The rush of emotion subsided over time, but his sense that he was affirming what mattered most in his life remained as strong as ever.

Richard had stumbled into a ritual that allowed him both to disengage from work and to tap into a profound source of purpose and meaning—his family. In that context, going home ceased to be a burden after a long day and became instead a source of recovery and renewal. In turn, Richard's distraction at work diminished, and he became more focused, positive, and productive—so much so that he was able to cut down on his hours. On a practical level, he created a better balance between stress and recovery. Finally, by tapping into a deeper sense of purpose, he found a powerful new source of energy for both his work and his family.

In a corporate environment that is changing at warp speed, performing consistently at high levels is more difficult and more necessary than ever. Narrow interventions simply aren't sufficient anymore. Companies can't afford to address their employees' cognitive capacities while ignoring their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. On the playing field or in the boardroom, high performance depends as much on how people renew and recover energy as on how they expend it, on how they manage their lives as much as on how they manage their work. When people feel strong and resilient—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—they perform better, with more passion, for longer. They win, their families win, and the corporations that employ them win. 

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