

Max-Performance – Ten Steps to Extraordinary Personal Performance

Every year, many well-intentioned people make resolutions to end bad habits and start healthy ones. Fitness centers swell to capacity in January and are back to the same dedicated few by March. What activates the dedicated few to be so determined? What helps them commit to being their best and to maximizing their performance? They define and live a plan – a max-performance plan.

We are in a period of massive change as we move from our previous industrial age (where we made things) to today's intellectual and networked age (where we provide service). Service is a relationship business; success is based on the quality of the relationships we build with customers. Great relationships happen when we know how to be fully present, connect with others and understand ourselves. These are the same requirements to be successful in life. It is therefore critical to our success that we develop a max-performance plan – a plan to achieve our personal and professional best. Use the following ten steps to develop your max-performance plan.

1. **Define and develop your talents and strengths.** Learn what you are intrinsically good at and what activates your energy, spirit and interest. Not everyone is good at everything. Critical to creating and achieving a max-performance plan will be to identify and develop those areas in which you have talents – those areas in which you have a performance advantage. Define your areas of greatness (use a talent assessment tool), develop them and play to them to make your greatest impact.
2. **Define your personal vision and authentic purpose; live openly and honestly about who you are and what you believe.** The greatest way to maximize your performance is to clearly define what you believe, support and live. Your most powerful performance will be in an authentic approach to life – living the life you are meant to live. This requires courage and clarity to understand and define what is true for you. Each of us must do our own work to define ourselves, independent of the expectations and requirements of others. We must learn to understand our purpose, define it and build a personal and professional life that supports it. This encourages us to live in the greatest possible way.
3. **Create and live a daily plan.** Max-performance is based on fully living each day with a plan created and designed for each day. Creating and living a daily plan helps to establish priorities, define expectations, live a healthy life and order the chaos that surrounds us. Planning helps direct and achieve, instead of react and respond.
4. **Surround yourself with information and diverse perspectives.** The advent of technology has made the world smaller. You now have access to information, perspectives and ideas that can expand your sense of self and augment your performance plan. The more you spend time with ideas and perspectives that are different than yours, the more you expand your thinking and amplify your performance. The goal is to become your best; it is through constantly searching that you find information and answers to your purpose, talents and place at work, at home and in the world.
5. **Allow yourself time each day to think and connect.** An hour of reading should be followed by an hour of thinking. Thinking allows time for the mind to assess and retain ideas, new information and new perspectives. Allowing time allows the mind to draw

- correlations, understandings and meaning from events, reading and communication. Carve out time each day to realign, think and modify your daily plan; this will insure your plan is always the most current and you are maximizing all performance opportunities.
6. **Invest in and manage your (complete) health.** Value your mental, physical, spiritual and emotional health. Eat well. Sleep well. Be honest with your feelings. Develop your faith. Laugh. Care. Trust. The more balanced your health, the more energy you have to keep moving on your max-performance plan and making the most out of every day.
 7. **Know your value and measure your impact.** Everyone needs to be aware of the value they provide – in work and at home. We find energy and support knowing that we make a difference and in how we impact others. Learn how to quantify your impact at work – to arm yourself for your annual review. Know the impact you have on your family, community and with others; this positively affects your self-esteem and the confidence to keep moving on your max performance plan.
 8. **Live like your name and behavior has been published in the newspaper.** In an age of overt greed and selfishness, reconnect to a sense of honor and ethical behavior. Be proud enough of what you do and who you are that you, your family, friends and colleagues could see you written about in print. Commit to personal and professional excellence, honor and contribution.
 9. **Make time to give back.** In a world of shortages and misfortune, many are in significant need of help. This help may be in resources, time, ideas or effort. Connecting with others and sharing of yourself shows you how you can make a difference, eliminate a need, reduce some suffering and connect to a larger community. We become less full of ourselves when we see and respond to others whose situations are less fortunate. We see that we are all interrelated and a broader and more powerful understanding of ourselves results.
 10. **Make your performance noble – make the world a better place.** Whatever you do, commit to doing it well. Whatever you are, be a great one. Commit to a level of performance that inspires others, makes a difference and values the world and community around you. Commit to a profession that builds others, improves their worlds and becomes an inspiration to others. Be proud of what you do and the difference you make.

Our lives are not a dress rehearsal; we have but one opportunity to do our best and live the greatest life possible. Max-performance is about creating a powerful life – at work and at home. It is up to each of us to define and direct our lives. We first start by knowing our talents, values and interests, then by developing a plan that maximizes our ability to contribute, make an impact and raise the quality of life for those around us. Commit to a max-performance plan – live life in the greatest way possible. Then, feel confident that you have lived your purpose and made the impact you were destined to make – at work and at home.

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