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HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

# The 9 Commandments of Exceptional Progress in Your Life, Work and Health

It is no secret that most of us have specific goals we aspire to achieve in our personal life, career and health. These three spheres overlap to a great extent and bleed into one another to facilitate a happy and healthy life.

I have found that the following nine commandments help me immensely when I try to achieve my personal -, career - and health goals.

## **Commandment #1: Live in the arena instead of judging from the crowd**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month I publish a new newsletter for our community. I enjoy writing and try my utmost to make each article one that will provide value to the members of our

community. That said, anyone can share an opinion as it is easy to sit in the crowd and offer suggestions (or point fingers). It is much harder to step into the arena and do the work. In order to make progress and grow we must be willing to take the risk of putting ourselves out there in vulnerable positions. As you have probably often heard before: growth only occurs outside of your comfort zone.

### **Commandment #2: Consistency is key**

I always tell CrossFit athletes the key to long term success in fitness and health comes down to one simple rule: do not miss your workouts. The point is that it does not matter what specific program you are following, how smart you think you are or what genes you were born with. You can have access to the best training program or coach in the world, but if you fail to put in the required work all of these resources will be of no value. If you do not fall in love with the boredom and do the work required on a consistent basis, everything else is irrelevant.

### **Commandment #3: When in doubt, go slower**

We often forget that small daily improvements are considered the key to staggering long term success. In contrast, small mistakes continuously repeated over time will result in failure.

If this becomes your focus, you will soon realise that daily improvements come in the form of smaller, safer and more sustainable increments. In your personal life these improvements will typically be reflected by daily habits you perform and in the gym it might be by way of adding 1kg each week to your squat routine.

#### **Commandment #4: You are a reflection of your daily average**

Your results in nearly every area of your life are often a reflection of what you do on an average day basis. In simpler terms, increase your average speed and you will increase your results. The fact is that successful people do the simple things that are easy to do on a consistent basis. The problem is that every action that is easy to do is also easy not to do. Think about that for a moment.

#### **Commandment #5: Self-care is crucial**

Often we get so immersed in our work and responsibilities that we tend to forget that stress is cumulative and that a work-life or health-life balance is really non-negotiable. Simply put, too much of a good thing is not a good thing! Make sure that you prioritize those matters that will facilitate a balance in your life.

However, you will often find that prioritizing will not be enough in itself – so schedule it in your diary. In your personal life, quality time with family or loved ones may facilitate balance, while in your health life this may take the form of recovery sessions such as sleep, stretching or other mobility exercises. Focusing on self-care will enable you to focus solely on the task at hand in a committed manner as you will feel fresh and rejuvenated.

### **Commandment #6: Push yourself past the point of comparison**

As the old age saying goes - compare and despair. There is something magical about the ability to solely focus on your own progress and measure yourself against your own results from the day before. The truth is that there will always be someone smarter, stronger or more competent and comparing ourselves to others often leads to us failing to see our own progress. The reality is that the only measure you should apply to yourself is to that of your previous performance or results. It will not only relieve you of unnecessary stress, but also allow you to focus on the process and not just the end goal.

## **Commandment #7: Focus on volume before intensity**

It is only by doing a large volume of work that one becomes proficient in a specific area. Professionals know that the foundation is laid by way of high volumes of work and only thereafter it makes sense to step up the intensity. Think about it in this way: If I struggle to jog around the block on a regular basis and attempt to run a marathon after a couple of weeks I will be setting myself up for failure. However, if I systematically increase the distance I run over a certain period of time in relation to the distance I would need to complete in the marathon, I would be conditioned and more likely to complete it successfully. Focusing on the volume before stepping up the intensity requires a great amount of patience and persistence, but true professionals know this is the foundation for future successes.

## **Commandment #8: Always measure your progress**

The majority of us tend to spend our lives living in a grey area. Am I better today than I was yesterday? This applies to various roles we fulfil in life such as our role as spouse, parent, friend, employee, training partner and so forth. To be quite honest, on most days, this can be difficult to judge and this is why we need to test ourselves and measure our progress. These measures

might be in the form of times or weights used in workouts, feedback from friends or family members, performance rating systems at work or other business metrics.

The fact is that when you measure your results, you cannot hide from yourself. You cannot lie to yourself. You cannot pretend to be something else. Best of all, there is no reason to fear failure because no matter what the outcome, you understand yourself better.

**Commandment #9: Short-term results are only useful when considered in a long-term context**

History is filled with examples of people who have sacrificed their values, morals, friends and families to achieve short-term results of some kind. If you are obsessed with a particular goal, it is easy to find yourself making exceptions and just-this-one-time choices that you may regret later. However, if you view your short-term choices within the context of your long-term values, then it becomes much easier to celebrate in the moment without losing sight of what really matters.

Perhaps not all of these commandments will be useful for your specific circumstances, but my hope is that you will be able to

use at least one of these commandments to enforce progress in your life, work and health.