

THE 110% SOLUTION

Achieving Superlative Performance in Business and Life

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MAIN IDEA

Humans feel their best when they are doing their best - when they are putting in a 110% effort. The main attraction of any sporting contest is that all participants are trying their hardest, producing an intense and exciting spectacle.

This same principle applies not only to sports but in business as well. People experience their greatest happiness and highest job satisfaction when they are placed in a business environment in which they are putting in maximum effort. The investment of a peak effort in a business project produces enhanced self-esteem for everyone closely involved. Concentrating 110% on a successful project generates self-confidence and an intense sense of achievement. Total involvement generates pride.

The benefits of a 110% approach to business don't need to be enjoyed only on rare occasions or accidentally. A smart career builder will create the appropriate environment and motivating circumstances under which an all-out effort is required on a consistent basis. In that way, the practical benefits of the 110% performance (doing your best plus a little bit extra) can be enjoyed time and again.

1. THE 110% IDEAL

Any person can enjoy the intense sense of achievement that comes with a 110% effort with practice, discipline, knowledge and a willingness to push beyond current personal limits.

2. FIRST THINGS FIRST

Business people, like professional athletes, cannot expect to make it to the top without a thorough and intensive grounding in the bedrock basics. Otherwise, anyone who has paid the price to master the basics will always have an advantage.

Before embarking on a successful business career, take the

3. WHAT IS LIFE MADE OF?

To make the best possible use of your time, you need to develop work habits which are high performance and effective from the perspective of your own personal requirements. Hard work done well is energizing, and your capacity to work hard increases the more you push yourself to achieve.

4. THE TANGO OF TIME

Always maintain a clear perspective of how long any business meeting, conversation or negotiation should take. Organize your schedule to allow that amount of time only. If you leave time management to the person you meet with, you'll find it very easy to fill a day doing things that add little or no value to your own business.

5. ACHIEVING THE MOST WITH YOUR TALENTS

When you have an accurate and realistic perspective of your talents and your weaknesses, you can develop a game plan that uses your talents to best effect and minimizes the effects of your deficiencies.

6. 110% AUTHORITY

The most important duty of any boss is to motivate his staff when they are down and out and to keep them in touch with reality whenever they start glorying in their successes.

7. HOW TO MAKE YOUR CAREER

Most employees spend the majority of their time worrying about what their boss thinks of them. A far more productive style for any employee is to concentrate on the job at hand, and let the boss take care of himself or herself.

8. IDEAS THAT WIN

Ideas come in a variety of shapes and sizes. A brilliant small idea is just as important as a great big idea. So many people look for huge new ideas and ignore the significant number of impressive small ideas they could be taking advantage of.

9. CONCEPTS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

An ability to develop and put into practice creative ideas is an exceptionally valuable skill for any person to develop, and a boost to any business career.

10. REAPING THE MOST FROM YOUR OPPORTUNITIES

Every company and every businessperson is, ultimately, a salesman for some product or service. Therefore, to excel in business, increase your sales skills.

11. THE GENTLE ART OF PERSUASION

A 110% approach to life includes understanding the art of negotiating and how to make it work.

1. THE 110% IDEAL

Main Idea

Human beings feel their best when they are doing their best. This applies not only to professional sports but in business as well. People experience their greatest happiness and highest job satisfaction whenever they are immersed in a business environment into which they are putting a maximum effort.

The investment of that peak effort produces enhanced self-esteem for everyone closely involved. Similarly, concentrating 110% on a successful project generates self-confidence and an intense sense of achievement.

Any person can enjoy the benefits of an ongoing 110% effort with practice, discipline, knowledge and a willingness to push beyond current personal limits.

Supporting Ideas

Most of the developed world has a healthy obsession with the fortunes of locally based sports teams - whether the sport is rugby, soccer, baseball or whatever. The spectacle of any sports competition is thrilling because the people involved are trying their hardest.

This same spirit does not need to be confined to the sports arena alone. In any area of life, a person putting in a 110% effort - their very best plus a little extra - is impressive. To maintain that over the long term takes discipline and a willingness to consistently push beyond normally accepted limits.

Some people try and get by in their professional careers putting in only 50% of whatever they are actually capable of. Others operate at around 75% and rely on street smarts to make up for their lack of total commitment.

For example:

Assume a person has developed a new business idea and would like the chance to explain the idea to the Chairman of the company.

A 50% solution would be to dream that it would be nice to run into the Chairman in the elevator some time.

A 75% solution might be to think a little about what you would say to the Chairman if you happened to bump into him.

The 110% solution is to plan in detail exactly what you would say, to rehearse before hand and to find out what time each day the Chairman uses the elevator so you can be sure to be there.

The only problem with working at the 50% or 75% levels is that human beings feel best when they have achieved something that required a 110% all-out effort. In the world of sport, the week-in week-out results measure whether you're committing 110% effort. In most other aspects of life (especially business), there is no objective standard by which people can gauge their progress.

Everyone is familiar with the story of a great athlete with all the skills needed to dominate his chosen sport who somehow fails to reach his full potential. The business equivalent is someone whose career never reaches any peaks of great achievement because they're willing to slide by with a minimum of effort rather than make a 110% commitment.

Key Thoughts

"Success in business, after all, is just one aspect of success in life, and it is success in life - comfort and confidence in dealing with others, enjoying a healthy self-esteem, knowing the joys of affection - that finally matters."

- Mark McCormack

"You have to go all out, you have to give 110% every day. If that intensity isn't there - whether it is in business or music or writing or sport - you can never experience the magic moments. They don't come often; they are the exceptions."

- Billie Jean King

"It is important to realize that you can modify things. Never accepting things as they are is very important. To invent where there is nothing to invent: that is leadership."

- Jean-Claude Killy, Olympic Ski Champion

"My style is not to rely on talent and ability but to bludgeon the competition, to work harder than the other guy. No stone left unturned. Attention to detail is how I get there. You can win with tremendous talent. But I combine mostly effort with some talent."

- Dennis Conner

"If you think about the implications of what you're trying to do, if you spend time worrying about all the outside influences and all the things that could get in the way, you'll be overwhelmed. You need to stay in the present and focus on what has to be done. I've had to work to get this kind of focus to become a habit, to get to the point where in a match my attention is very sharp, very precise on exactly what is happening. When I'm on the court, I am alone. The preparation has been done and it is up to me to deliver. If I'm not ready, nobody can help me. I have to figure it out myself. When I first started working on my head and my focus, it was exhausting. I had to concentrate on concentrating, until concentrating became a habit for me. If I hit a bad shot, I had to figure out why I missed it and try to improve the next time, but then put it behind me."

- Martina Navratilova

"The 110% approach to life is not the only worthwhile approach. The world is a big place. It has room enough for people who put in their eight hours and bolt, room enough for those who daydream rather than perform. We cannot, finally, know the depth or quality of another person's experience, and we should never presume to think ourselves more inherently worthy just because we try harder. The goal is to be as demanding of ourselves as we choose to be, yet tolerant of others whose priorities are different."

- Mark McCormack

