

Michael Simmons, wrote in *Inc. Magazine* of his study on the personal histories of widely admired business leaders, like Oprah Winfrey, Warren Buffett, and Mark Zuckerberg, in order to better understand how they apply the principles of 'deliberate practice'.

What he found reveals a surprising pattern. Many of these leaders, despite being extremely busy, set aside at least an hour a day (or five hours a week) over their entire career for activities that could be classified as 'deliberate practice' or; "Learning the five-hour rule."

How do the best leaders follow the five-hour rule?

It often fell into 3 buckets: reading, reflection, and experimentation.

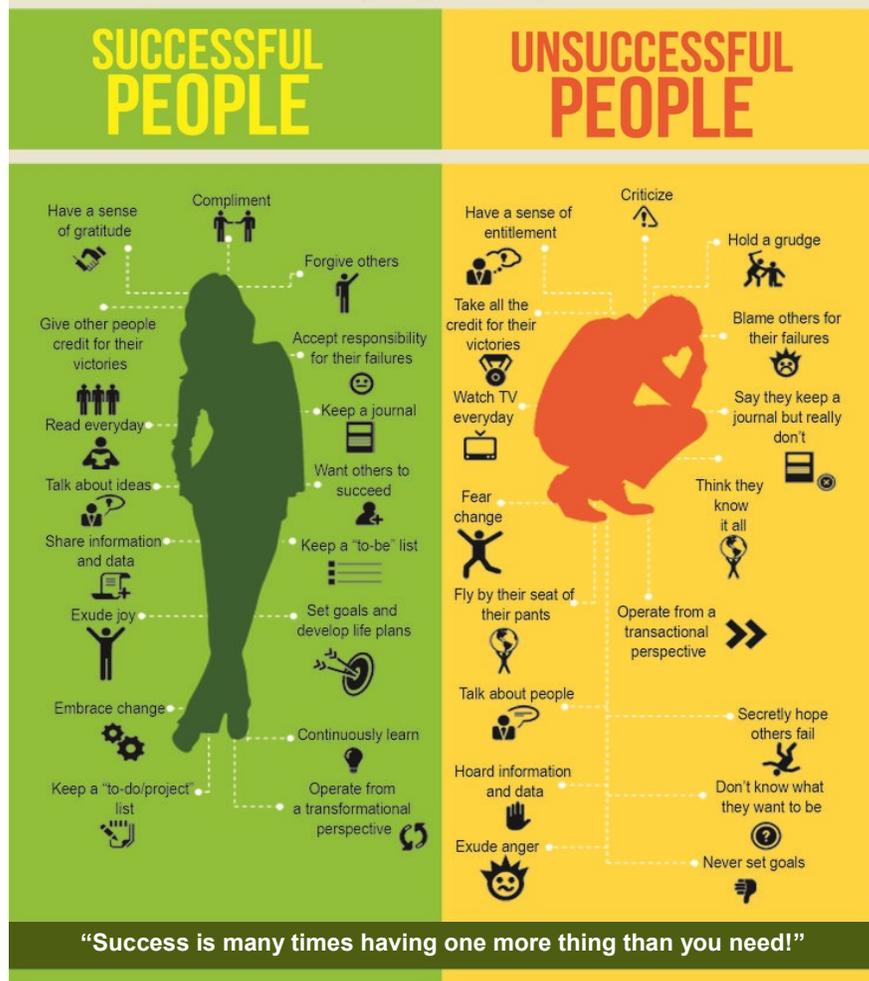
Reading - According to *HBR Magazine*, "Nike founder Phil Knight so reveres his library that in it you have to take off your shoes and bow." Oprah Winfrey credits books with much of her success: "Books were my pass to personal freedom." She has shared her reading habit with the world via her book club.

These two are not alone. Mark Cuban reads more than three hours every day. Arthur Blank, co-founder of Home Depot, reads two hours a day. Billionaire entrepreneur David Rubenstein reads six books a week. Dan Gilbert, self-made billionaire and owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers, reads one to two hours a day.

Reflecting - Other times, the five-hour rule takes the form of reflection and thinking time. CEO Tim Armstrong makes his senior team spend 4 hours a week just thinking. Jack Dorsey is a serial wanderer. LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner schedules 2 hours of thinking time per day. Brian Scudamore, the founder of the O2E Brands, spends 10 hours a week just

THE SUCCESS INDICATOR

By MaryEllen Tribby



thinking. When Reid Hoffman needs help thinking through an idea, he calls one of his pals: Peter Thiel, Max Levchin, or Elon Musk. When billionaire Ray Dalio makes a mistake, he logs it into a system that is public to all employees at his company. Then, he schedules time with his team to find the root cause.

Experimenting — Throughout his life, Ben Franklin set aside time for experimentation, master-minding with like-minded individuals, and tracking his values. Google allows employees to experiment with new projects during 20% of their work time. Facebook

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encourages experimentation through a program called 'Hack-a-Months'.

The best example might be Thomas Edison who approached new inventions with humility. He would identify every possible solution and then systematically test each of them. According to one of his biographers, "Although he understood the theories of his day, he found them useless in solving unknown problems." He took the approach to such an extreme that Nikola Tesla, had this to say about the trial-and-error approach: "If Edison had a needle to find in a haystack, he would not stop to reason where it was most likely to be. He would proceed at once with the feverish diligence of the bee to examine straw after straw until he found the object of his search."

The power of the five-hour rule: the improvement rate

People who apply the five-hour rule in work have an advantage. For most of us, it's a good idea to get help and skills. You will find this to be true of any of the great CEOs — they are encyclopedic in their knowledge of how to run a company.

We should look at the five-hour rule the same way we look at exercise

"Lifelong learning is good," but we must think more deeply about the minimum amount of learning the average person should do per day to have a sustainable and successful career. Just as we have minimum recommended dosages of vitamins and exercise for leading a healthy life physically, we should be more rigorous about how we think about the minimum doses of deliberate learning for leading a healthy life economically.

Summing it up

The long-term effects of *not* learning are just as insidious as the long-term effects of not having a healthy lifestyle. The CEO of AT&T makes this point loud and clear in an interview with *The New York Times*; he says that, "those who do not spend at least five to 10 hours a week learning online will soon obsolete themselves."

More on Emailing from last issue

Emailing has become the norm for much of our professional communication. Try to avoid these five email mistakes and your messages will come across much more professionally.

Unstructured criticism

Words can seem harsher, and are more likely misunderstood, when read on a fluorescent screen rather than heard in person. If you choose to give critical feedback through an email, be sure to cushion your constructive criticism with some kinder words before and after--also known as a compliment sandwich. It's so unprofessional to blast a bunch of negativity at someone through an email. Soften your email and get the point across professionally.

Email vs. private messaging

With high volumes of emails, it can be very annoying to receive those that are a couple of words long. These should be sent using a work instant messaging system or simply by sending a text. Reducing irrelevant emails is a great way to show your competence in the workplace.



Slow and no response time

It is unprofessional to have a slow response time or to completely ignore an email from a colleague or client. Even if you are short on time, email back a "Thanks!" or "Got it!" and then follow up within a reasonable amount of time. Filtering your messages and prioritizing which emails need to be addressed first will keep you on track.

Double emailing

One email pet peeve many employers have is when someone sends many emails in a row without giving adequate time for a response. If people don't allow you at least 48 hours to sort things through, they can come off as pushy and unprofessional.

Emoticons

Emojis are for texting and instant messaging--not for emails. Stay away from adding that heart emoji or smiley face, regardless of how well you think it fits within the content you are emailing. Some say nothing says *unprofessional* more than a smiley face at the end of each paragraph—you decide!.

Famously Successful People Who Failed at First

Few people are instant successes. More often than not, those who history best remembers were faced with many obstacles that forced them to work harder and kick-up their determination. Next time you are feeling down about your failures keep these famous people in mind and remind yourself that they might be the first step to your success.



Henry Ford: Ford is known for creating the Model T Ford in 1908 and went on to develop the assembly line mode of automobile production; it revolutionized the industry. His early businesses failed and left him broke five times before he founded Ford Motor Co.

R. H. Macy: Macy didn't always have it easy. Macy started seven failed business before finally hitting big with his store in Macy's Store in New York City.

F. W. Woolworth: Woolworth was one of the biggest names in department stores in the U.S. Before starting his own business, young Woolworth worked at a dry goods store and was not allowed to wait on customers because his boss said he lacked the sense needed to do so.



Abraham Lincoln: While one of the greatest leaders of our nation, Lincoln's life wasn't so easy. In his youth he went to war a captain and returned a private. Lincoln didn't stop failing there, however. He started numerous failed business and

was defeated in many runs he made for public office.

Soichiro Honda: Honda began with a series of failures and bad luck. He was turned down by Toyota Motors for a job as an engineer leaving him jobless for some time. So he started making scooters at home for support and, spurred on by his neighbors, started his own business.



Akio Morita: Sony's first product was a rice cooker that didn't cook rice so much as burn it, selling less than 100 units. This first setback didn't stop Morita and his partners as they pushed forward to create a multi-billion dollar company.

Harland Sanders: Sanders had a hard time selling his chicken at first. In fact, his famous secret chicken recipe was rejected 1,009 times.

Charles Darwin: In his early years, Darwin gave up on a medical career and was often chastised by his father for being lazy and too dreamy. Darwin said, "I was considered by all, a very ordinary boy, rather below the common standard of intellect." They judged too soon, as Darwin is well-known for his scientific studies.



Walt Disney: Walt was fired by a newspaper editor because, "he lacked imagination and had no good ideas." After that, Disney started a number of businesses that didn't last too long and ended with bankruptcy and failure. He kept plugging along, however, and eventually found a recipe for success that worked.

Albert Einstein: Einstein didn't speak until he was 4 and did not read until he was 7, causing his teachers and parents to think he was mentally handicapped, slow and anti-social. Eventually, he was expelled from school and was refused admittance to the Zurich Polytechnic School.

We know Oprah as one of the most iconic faces on TV as well as one of the richest and most successful women in the world. Oprah faced a hard road to get to that position, however, enduring a rough and often abusive childhood as well as numerous career setbacks including being fired from her job as a television reporter because she was "unfit for tv."



Orville and Wilbur Wright: They battled depression and family illness before starting the bicycle shop that would lead to experimenting with flight. After many attempts at creating flying machines, years of hard work, and tons of failed prototypes, the brothers created a plane that could get airborne and stay there.

Harry S. Truman: This WWI vet, Senator, Vice President and President eventually found success in his life, but not without a few missteps along the way. Truman started a store that sold silk shirts and other clothing started out as a success at first—only to go bankrupt a few years later.

Here's some steps you can take on living a life that's — *more true to yourself*

from www.Lifehack.org

Think about the bigger picture

We all have a finite amount of time in which to live our lives, and every day that goes by is one day less to live a life that's true to yourself. Taking a step back, considering the bigger picture, and remembering that your time is limited can help you stay focused on your real dreams and goals, rather than the dreams or goals you think you *should* have.

Question your beliefs

Everyone grows up with an internal script about how the world works and how we should spend our lives. That script forms in childhood and influences the way your life plays out. It's important to start questioning your internal script and the beliefs behind it.—It's your value system.

Invest in your self-awareness

Coaching and self-work like journaling are all useful tools for life transitions, including moving towards a life that is more satisfying and meaningful. They will also help you uncover your authentic values.

Imagine your eulogy

Take a bigger-picture perspective, thinking about how you want to be remembered can help you focus on what's most important to you. What do you want people to say about who you were and what you did?

Notice when you defer to others

Sometimes, we feel pressure to conform to the values of other people in our lives. In these situations, the first step towards shifting this pattern is to become aware of it. Start by noticing when you prioritize other people's values over your own.

Set boundaries

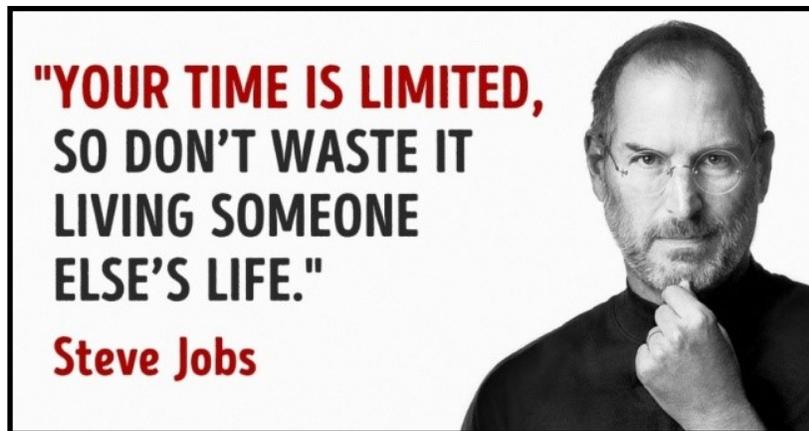
If you feel under pressure from specific people to live a life that's not true to yourself, then it's time to set boundaries. Doing this can be challenging, as you risk disrupting the dynamic of your relationship with people. Ultimately, the people who respect and care about your well-being will want to support you as you explore your individuality and develop a life that is more authentic.

Have fun and experiment

If you've been living someone else's life, it can be hard to visualize what your ideal life might even look like. This is a great opportunity to experiment with possibilities and explore your interests, dreams, goals and ambitions.

Remember that it's your life

As obvious as it might sound, remember that your life is your own and that as much as other people might give you advice, *you* are the one who will have to live with it. Keeping this reality in mind can help you distance yourself from other people's opinions and beliefs.



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