

SECRETS OF GREATNESS: HOW I WORK

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Take a break, even if you work Sunday nights.

I've learned how to manage my energy. I used to just focus on managing my time. I'd be up in the morning between 5 and 5:30. I'd work out and be at my desk by 6:30 or 7, drive hard until about 7 p.m., then be back at it later that evening. I was just grinding through the day.

During my first year in this job, I worked every Saturday and every Sunday morning. Now I work really hard for an hour or an hour and a half. Then I take a break. I walk around and chit-chat with people. It can take five or 15 minutes to recharge. It's kind of like the interval training that an athlete does.

I learned this in a program called the Corporate Athlete that we put on for P&G managers. I did the two-day program, where I also learned to change the way I eat. I used to eat virtually nothing for breakfast. Now I eat five or six times a day. It's about managing your glycemic level. You don't want to boom and bust.

The other piece of the Corporate Athlete program is spiritual—things you can do to calm the mind. I've tried to teach myself to meditate. When I travel, which is 60% of the time, I find that meditating for five, ten, or 15 minutes in a hotel room at night can be as good as a workout. Generally, I think I know myself so much better than I used to. And that has helped me stay calm and cool under fire.

A key to staying calm is minimizing the information onslaught. I can't remember the last time I wrote a memo. I write little handwritten notes on my A.G.L. paper, and I send notes, a paragraph or less, on my BlackBerry. I prefer conversations. That's one reason my office and our entire executive floor is open. The CEO office is not typically a warm and welcoming place, but people feel they can come in and talk in mine. We have goofy-looking pink and chartreuse chairs with chrome frames and upholstered backs and seats.

I still work weekends, though not the killer hours I used to. On Sunday nights, [HR chief] Dick Antoine and I get together at his house or my house or on the phone and go through some part of our leadership development program. We started doing this shortly after I became CEO, because I know that the single biggest contribution I will make to this company is helping the next generation of leaders become the best that they can be. *—Interviewed by Patricia Sellers*