

4 Things Successful Entrepreneurs Do Before Breakfast

Neil Patel Former Contributor 

I cover entrepreneurship, conversion optimization, marketing and sales

Sep 24, 2015, 10:00am EDT

 This article is more than 7 years old.

How do the extraordinary successful people rise to the top, achieve great things, and accomplish so much?

They wake up early.

This could sound like an overstatement, especially since there are dozens of other systemic, genetic, geographical, and cultural factors that produce success. But don't dismiss the power of mornings.

Early in the morning, amazing things happen. Successful [entrepreneurs](#) know the power of mornings, and have arranged their life to harness its potential.

Behind a successful entrepreneur, is an amazing morning. Here's what they're doing.

1. They tackle their nastiest task.

Yesterday, a successful entrepreneur told me,

By 7:30am, I've finished the day's biggest task.

She's not alone.

Subscribe Now: Forbes Entrepreneurs Newsletter

All the trials and triumphs of building a business – delivered to your inbox.

Forbes Daily: Get our best stories, exclusive reporting and essential analysis of the day's news in your inbox every weekday.

Sign Up

By signing up, you accept and agree to our [Terms of Service](#) (including the class action waiver and arbitration provisions), and [Privacy Statement](#).

Many other entrepreneurs have realized the enormous potential of the early morning hours for getting major traction on the biggest, hairiest tasks. Starbucks' Howard Schultz got up at 4:30 this morning. PIMCO founder Bill Gross is also up at 4:30 in the morning. Jack Dorsey starts his day with a 5:30 meditation session. Richard Branson rises with the sun, at 5:45, even when he's supposedly relaxing on his private island. Tim Cook is a regular on the 4:30 email marathon, firing off messages hours before most people start hitting their snooze buttons.

But why the morning? Why not jump into that odious task once you've downed some coffee, made some phone calls, checked some emails, and feel a bit more ready?

Here's why.

- Mornings are distraction-free. Your phone isn't dinging, ringing, pinging. You're basically alone.

- Your willpower is enormous. The will is like a muscle. The more decisions you make during the day, the less muscular energy your will possesses. Early in the morning, steer your willpower towards the toughest endeavor so you can be sure it gets done.
- Accomplishing a morning task sets the day off to a successful start. Accomplishing a single task before breakfast can cascade its success for the rest of the day. You'll experience more productivity, power, and optimism for the rest of the day.

Brian Tracy's motivational book, *Eat That Frog!* is all about the power of accomplishing major tasks early in the day. Nailing a single task in the morning is the recipe not just for a day of power, but can actually transform your life.

Yes, mornings are tough. But who said success was going to be easy? As Brian Tracy wrote,

Move out of your comfort zone. You can only grow if you are willing to feel awkward and uncomfortable when you try something new.

2. They focus on self-improvement

There are plenty of things that you could do early in the morning. But the time is far too precious to spend on the mundane or ordinary. This is why many entrepreneurs use the time to improve their lives in extraordinary ways.

Paul DeJoe, who wrote the article "Why Productive People Get Up Insanely Early" explained what he experienced:

The first time I woke up at 4 a.m. to try this, my mind was in a completely different place with a completely foreign feeling. I had a completely different initiative.

This optimal time is perfect for optimal [experiences of self improvement](#).

- Watching or listening to lectures or seminars. You can even double up your morning exercise session (below) with an hour of a self-improvement audio book.
- Meditating
- Praying
- Goal-setting
- Reading
- Journaling
- Visioning
- Planning

Mornings are periods of growth just waiting to happen.

3. They work out.

Physical improvement is just as important as mental improvement. In fact, you can't really separate the two. John Ratey, MD., author of *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, explained that exercise combats stress, improves mood, prevents memory loss, improves decision-making, and improves your intellect.

Many people [use the morning hours](#) to crush their workout goals. Remember how your morning hours wield the greatest potential for willpower? You can use this mental power to pull on your workout clothes, and get moving.

A lot of people moan that they're "too busy" to exercise. The truth is, they are choosing to do other things instead of exercise. [Rich and powerful people](#) — from [the president of the United States](#) to the CEOs of the world's largest businesses — prioritize exercise.

Wake up, and exercise. [Your brain](#) — and the rest of the day — will thank you.

4. They review their big goals

Goals are what move life forward. Without a clear set of goals, you'll simply coast — doing whatever comes your way, caving in to pressure when it seems easier, and failing to move towards any summit.

One of the things that distinguishes the world's ultra-successful from the huddling masses yearning to breathe free is this: They set insane goals.

But goals alone aren't sufficient to move someone forward. You've got to keep those goals front and center at all times. One of the best ways to do that is to review your goals each morning.

[Benjamin Hardy's Medium article](#) sums it up like this:

If you read your long term goals every day you will think about them every day. If you think about them every day, and spend your days working toward them, they'll manifest.

Conclusion

Waking up early and using the early morning can completely change your life. It's no exaggeration to say that simply the act of rising early and focusing on the *right* things can produce greater success in your life.

Other entrepreneurs have experienced the life-altering power of the morning. It's time to set your alarm clock.

What activities do you focus on before breakfast?



Gallery: 12 Ways To Rethink Your Morning Routine

13 images

[View gallery →](#)



Neil Patel

I am the cofounder of Crazy Egg, Hello Bar, and KISSmetrics. I help companies like Amazon, NBC, GM, HP and Viacom grow their... [Read More](#)

[Editorial Standards](#)

[Reprints & Permissions](#)
