

4 reasons you need to make recovery part of your wellness plan

ANDREW MAY - FEBRUARY 9, 2021

3 MIN READ



At the best of times, running a small business is hard work. Being the CEO, CFO, CIO, IT specialist, administrator and HR manager can feel relentless and exhausting. And that was pre-COVID. It's no surprise small business owners have a much higher incidence of burnout than regular corporate workers, writes human performance strategist Andrew May founder and CEO of StriveStronger.

So the question is how to manage this? What can small business owners do to **remain energised and engaged** throughout the year, pandemic or not?

The key is in recovery.

It's important to remember that human beings are designed to use and then replenish our energy stores. When we get this balance right, our bodies are fit, vital and healthy. **When we mess around with it, we get fatigue, inflammation and the onset of disease.**

To ensure energy is readily available throughout the day, we need good fuel, incidental physical activity as well as planned physical activity and **a strategic recovery plan.**

I learnt the value of strategic recovery plans working as a coach I elite sport for 15 years. Many of the world's best athletes and sporting teams now spend more time, more energy and more resources on recovery than they do on actual training.

You read right. Roger Federer, who has won 17 grand slam titles; Michael Phelps, who has won 18 Olympic gold medals; and Layne Beachley, who has won 7 world surfing titles are just three examples of winning athletes who plan their recovery strategies as much, if not more, than they plan their training and competition. They do this because they understand that recovery is when they replenish their energy and this enables them to perform at the highest level again and again and again.

Recovery strategies and staying fresh are the keys to sustained performance, whether in sport, in business or in life.

1. Holiday or off-season

The Australian workforce collectively has more than 123 million days of accrued annual leave. We are a nation that stockpiles holidays! So use it and use it wisely.

That means seeing it as a chance to switch off and recover so you can keep going. Plan ahead so someone can take care of business while you're away so you can stay off the mobile and avoid the temptation to regularly check your emails. Then, book a beach house, head for the mountains, tour the nearest wineries, go camping, visit friends interstate – whatever takes your fancy.

2. 30 weeks scoring 100 recovery points

David Misson, the former Elite Performance Manager for the Sydney Swans, introduced a recovery program where the players accumulate 100 'recovery points' each week, to make sure they are ready for the next big game. Each activity is worth a certain number of points – yoga could be 30 points, a light stretch 10 points, a massage or meditation session 25 points – and the players have to reach their 100 point goal.

For thirty weeks of the year try accumulating your own 100 recovery points each week.

3. 300 nights of quality sleep

The aim is 300 nights a year, or six nights each week, of quality sleep. **Quality restorative sleep is one of the major keys to health and vitality.** This means allowing an adequate amount of time for sleep (about 7 – 8 hours for most people).

Going to bed and getting up at a similar time every day will settle your circadian rhythm and you can prepare your body and brain for sleep by consciously switching off (and literally turning off digital devices) 45 to 60 minutes before going to bed.

4. 365 days a year – go slow

Every day of the year, spend at least 5 to 10 minutes taking it easy. Going slow is transition time where you give your conscious mind permission to change gears and engage your subconscious thought patterns. Pray, meditate, sit and be mindful. Do what works for you as this is all about stimulating the relaxation response, the exact opposite of the stress response.

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