

Healthier You = Healthier Bottom Line

By Robert Selders, Jr.

As self-employed or small business owners, we're focused on the quality of our products and services; and the health of our bottom line. We, along with our valued employees, work long hours, oftentimes performing multiple functions to keep our business in the black, and out of the red. But what are we all doing to keep our personal health and fitness out of the red? Finding the time, energy, and motivation to exercise and eat right can be a challenge when you're working to build a successful enterprise. And let's face it, with so much on our plates, personal fitness just isn't a very high priority for many entrepreneurs or their team members.

But it should be – and research proves it. People who exercise on a regular basis enjoy a wealth of benefits: better productivity, increased mental acuity, more energy, and higher levels of confidence. They're less sick, suffer from less stress, are able to work longer hours more effectively. These benefits translate directly into decreased healthcare utilization cost and improved business performance which makes investing in your own personal health, and the health of your employees, a very smart business decision.

The challenge for most owners and employees is in integrating fitness into their busy lives. As a small business owner myself, I know this only all too well. But as a fitness professional, I've also developed practical tools and strategies that make fitness and health not only attainable, but sustainable for both business owners and employees alike. In the next series of articles, I'll be sharing those tools and strategies with you.

In the meantime, here are 4 critical actions you'll need to lay the foundation for boosting your personal health and fitness as you and your team work to grow a healthy bottom line for your business:

1. **Make the decision – your health and fitness matters:** Building a successful business requires perseverance. The daily grind and stress of your mental and physical wares without proper exercise, nutrition, and rest is a recipe for burnout, decreased productivity, higher absenteeism, and lost revenue. Decide today!
2. **Commit to planning** – As in business, fail to plan – plan to fail. Your business profits don't come by happenstance; neither does optimal health and fitness.
3. **Keep it simple** – You're either taking steps in your business to increase productivity and profits or not. Similarly, what you put in your mouth to feed your body or the activities you engage in will either improve your health or not.
4. **Establish S.M.A.R.T. health and fitness goals** – Milestones and benchmarks allow you to track the growth and success of your business activities. Setting mindful health related goals will serve as a beacon to guide you successfully towards more optimal health. (NOTE: **S.M.A.R.T.** is an acronym for the 5 steps of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based goals.)

Spending a little time improving your personal health will allow you to have more energy, better stamina, and sharper focus. Plus it might add decades to your expected lifespan. This gives you and your employees a greater opportunity for achieving success now in your business, and being able to enjoy the fruits of your labor in your latter years.

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