



GOING THE DISTANCE

*What can our elite athletes teach us about the average work day?
Enough to greatly improve workplace productivity and performance.*

By Tony Wilson MBA, BSc

Athlete mentality is a way that great athletes approach their preparation, training and race day. When I worked with sporting teams, we had a saying about players that had an exceptional work ethic. We called it 'athlete mentality'. In the circle of coaches that I worked with, it was a known remark, and although not clearly defined, when someone said "this kid's got an athlete mentality", the meaning was universally acknowledged.

You can make a start today on having an athlete mentality in your workplace.

1) A SENSE OF URGENCY

The average athlete has 4500 training sessions over a 10-year career. Simply put, if they don't maximise each one of those training sessions, they won't come near fulfilling their potential over the long term. If they waste 20 per cent of the sessions, they won't be as good.

So those with athlete mentality learn how to maximise every opportunity to improve.

In the workplace, I see the most productive people with the same approach. If you find yourself with 30 minutes spare at the end of

the day, don't waste it doing meaningless, low-impact things to pass the time. Instead, pick one or two things that make a big impact, even if they take a lot more effort.

2) PREPARING TO EXECUTE

Successful athletes are prepared for every day's opportunity. While some turn up to practice three minutes before the start of training, the great ones are there early and they're ready to get the job done.

Great performers get themselves in the best state to hit the ground running whether it's time to perform in training or on game day. These people don't waste 30 minutes at the start of a session 'getting into it'. They are ready to go because wasting 30 minutes per training session over 4500 sessions means a lot of wasted time.

In the workplace, it's the small things that make a difference to your preparation and execution. Plan your days and weeks so you don't waste time, fuel yourself properly, get the right amount of sleep, and don't let negative events and

emotions gobble up precious time and resources – learn to be resilient.

3) QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

When great athletes practice, they do it at game day intensity.

I know plenty of people who can get the same work done in six hours that other people would do in nine. Being productive is about short bursts of high intensity, quality work – not spending hours getting sidetracked and

*Those with athlete mentality
maximise every opportunity to
improve, and in the workplace
it's the same approach*

switching tasks, with only minimal high-quality work being completed.

If you can apply athlete mentality in the workplace, your ability to do more, higher quality work dramatically improves.

Visit my blog for more tips on productivity and peak performance in the workplace
www.tony-wilson.com.au/blog