

THE LIFE HACKER'S M A N I F E S T O

[10 Questions, 10 Experts]

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WELCOME !

Hey. I'm Cody Wheeler, self-improvement author and founder of **ACADEMY SUCCESS**.

I'm all about finding a better way. It's what **ACADEMY SUCCESS** is based upon and how I've always lived my life. So when I set out to create a new resource for you, I didn't just want to fill it with my own stuff. I wanted to compile the best advice from experts all around the industry, and I wanted it to be as actionable as possible.

We all have our own areas of expertise, and through the experiences of the amazing people you're about to meet, your life transformation towards becoming a more effective individual will take a huge leap forward.

Each blogger in this report was given the opportunity to answer just one question from some of the hottest topics in the field today. I knew it was going to be awesome to get all of these people together, but I had no idea it was going to be this good. There is some serious life changing advice just ahead.

If you like what see, be sure to check out their websites and resources as well.

I'm up first, and then prepare for the who's who of upcoming self-improvement bloggers and online entrepreneurs, some who have already cracked the six and even seven figure income mark, and have contributed their knowledge to help you do the same.

Enjoy!

// **CODY WHEELER**

FOUNDER OF [ACADEMY SUCCESS](#)

TACKLING LARGE ACHIEVEMENTS

QUESTION #1

What is the best way to tackle a large achievement?
 How can people easily implement this into their life?

BY: { CODY WHEELER }*

Success starts with mindset. It's really easy to get mentally overwhelmed when faced with the magnitude of a large life achievement. I would argue that the inability to achieve significant goals is one of the biggest reasons more people aren't successful.

You'll hear a lot of advice like, "just take it one day at a time", or "just power through it".

This kind of stuff is hard to argue with, but the problem is that they are just empty tactics. They're not going to do anything for your mental state as you work through your achievement.

Anybody can focus on something for a few days, but the real mental struggle that you must tackle comes when a few days turn into a few weeks, a few months, and even a few years...

I've recently been teaching a technique to approach large projects that I call, "The Marathon Mindset," which helps you keep focused on a long-term result, just like a marathon runner focuses on a long race.

He knows it's a long road, so he accepts that and doesn't expect it to happen all at once. This helps the marathoner understand that while the finish line may be a long way out, he will get there if he continues to strive ahead.

He also understands that a marathon is a large goal, and if he only sees the monumental achievement he is after, he is going to get overwhelmed, view it as too big to do, and lose focus on the tasks to get there. He knows he must take a mindset that allows him to focus on smaller achievements along the way. This will allow him to combine a series of small and more mentally acceptable goals to achieve his ultimate long-term goal.

He knows he is going to need some training along the way. He can't step out tomorrow and have the skills, endurance, and mental toughness to finish his race. He must train and equip himself to be able to finish, and he's ok with that. This acceptance helps him recognize while he doesn't have it all figured out, he knows he can do it if he trains himself properly.

Lastly, he knows that once he has done all of the above, all he has to do is take action and execute. This is much easier for him being in this long-term type of mindset because his mind is completely relaxed and at ease.

If you can focus like the marathoner by keeping a long-term mindset, focusing on easily achievable milestones, accepting you may have to train yourself, and then take action to achieve your goal, and then you will have a much easier time with the significant accomplishments in your life.



* { CODY WHEELER } is a self-improvement author and founder of [ACADEMY SUCCESS](#).

He believes there is always a better way. He teaches people how to be more successful by helping them improve in proven key areas of success such as mindset, productivity, personal finance, and health & fitness.

OVERCOMING ACCOMPLISHMENT OBSTACLES

QUESTION #2

What is the number one thing that is stopping people from getting more big things accomplished in their life, and what can they do about it?

BY: { ERICA DOUGLASS }*

The number one thing I see holding people back is simply a belief that they are not capable of doing "big things"--that it takes someone who is somehow more ____ (wealthy, old, smart, beautiful, educated, confident...) than they themselves are.

Yet, it's not true. 20-year-olds are out there creating multi-million dollar companies. Teenagers are writing best-selling books. Ugly people have become billionaires. College dropouts formed Facebook and Microsoft. And most of those people didn't start with much more money than you have.

So what did they have that you don't? Often, the answer is... not much! If you have a computer and an Internet connection, and can read this, you have more than they likely did when they started out. There's plenty of proof that you don't need a college education to succeed (I'm an example of a college dropout who became a success, too.) And you certainly don't need to be beautiful or particularly smart, to be famous or make money.

Try this on for size. Look in the mirror, take a deep breath, and tell yourself this: "I have everything I need to succeed." Then believe that. Incorporate it into your life. And act as if you can do this. Not "cocky" or so over-confident that you won't listen to good advice from people who have been there. But confident that you really don't need anything more than what you have right now to succeed.

You may be surprised at what doors open...because it all starts with the belief that you can do this.



* { ERICA DOUGLASS } Started her first online business at age 20 and sold that company at age 26 for \$1.1 million. She then went on to write one of the Internet's most popular entrepreneurship blogs, erica.biz, which reaches over 1.4 million people a year.

She's been featured in Inc. magazine, Mixergy.com, Forbes.com, and in U.S. News & World Report. She is currently CEO of [Whoosh Traffic](http://WhooshTraffic.com), a funded startup providing search engine optimization tools to hundreds of companies worldwide.

BALANCING LIVING LIFE AND LEARNING

QUESTION #3

What is your take on the low information diet? People have to keep up with what's going on in their life and field. How can we best balance the day-to-day with what we want to get accomplished in our lives?

BY: { PETER CLEMENS }*

Our lives are getting busier and the world is throwing more and more information at us. Some of this information is important, but most of it isn't. My sense is that most people consume way more information than they really need, and this leads to increased stress levels and less time working on things that really matter.

The best way to determine what information is important and what isn't is to stop the inflow of information for a finite period. That's why I'm a fan of trying a low information diet – it's a great way to gain perspective on your life. I recommend scaling back on the following for one week and paying attention to what happens:

- Web surfing
- Excessive email checking
- RSS
- Social media
- Television news
- Business books, newspapers, magazines, and other non-fiction

At the end of the week ask yourself these questions: Was I happier? Was I more productive? Did I miss anything important? What sources can I live without?

Personally, I would describe myself as having a medium information diet. I watch very little television. I read a moderate number of websites, but I'm careful not to get caught up consuming information for the sake of it. I'm active on social media, but I'm mindful that after a certain point my time is better spent doing other things.

The above is what works for me. Ultimately a low information diet is a tool that can help you determine what works best for you. So give it a go and pay attention to what happens. Perhaps you decide to stick with it. Or maybe, like me, you find somewhere between a low information diet and what you previously consumed works best. You won't know for sure unless you try.



* { PETER CLEMENS } is the Founder of [The Change Blog](#).

He lives in Vancouver with his wife and four boys. A great way to get in touch is via Twitter: [@PeterClemens](#)

THE BEST WAY TO MANAGE DISTRACTIONS

QUESTION #4

What is the best way you have found to manage the distractions that occur throughout every day of our lives? How can people easily implement this into their lives to stay more focused on their day to day life and what they'd like to ultimately accomplish?

BY: { MIKE VARDY }*

I have found that there are really two approaches you can take to combat distractions.

The first is more of a "learned" style, in that I am able to connect with getting things done to the point that the reward of seeing things through to completion is able to override the urge that any given distraction may present.

But I've been doing this for a while, and it does take time to foster this approach. Keep in mind that the more you discover what distracts you and what you can work with or around, the better equipped you'll be to perform in different circumstances and environments. This knowledge can also serve to "childproof" your working habits, as I've learned from personal experience.

The other approach is to set limits. Once you set limits, you essentially have set up a guardian against overwhelm. These limits are identified by really taking a look at your own habits and deciding what you can and cannot deal with while you're trying to get things done. Maybe that means using a program like Concentrate for Mac to keep yourself offline while you're trying to get writing done.

Maybe it means turning off all notifications on your computer or mobile device so that you can truly be in the moment. Maybe it means putting headphones on – without audio of any kind – just so you can have the silence that you need to stay focused.

I have found that the second approach is the one you need to start using now, and eventually you will be able to use the first approach far easier. You're really setting limits in both cases, but with the former approach you are trusting yourself with those limits. And once that happens, distractions don't have a chance.



* { MIKE VARDY } is an independent writer, speaker, podcaster, and productivityist. He has served as the Managing Editor at Lifehack, and contributed articles on productivity to Lifehacker, The Next Web, and GTD Times.

He is also the author of *The Front Nine: How To Start The New Year You Want Anytime You Want*, published by Diversion Books. You can keep up with him at his blog, Productivityist.com, and learn more about his other work and his upcoming Ready Retreat workshops at MikeVardy.com - <http://mikevardy.com/contact>

STREAMLINING YOUR FINANCIAL TRACKING

QUESTION #5

For the vast majority of us, managing our money is a time consuming activity. What is your best tip to help people save time in managing their day-to-day finances and feel better about their financial situation?

BY: { JEREMY MAHER }*

Money Management can be time consuming -- if you don't have a good system in place. However, there are a plethora of options when it comes to automating your finances.

You could do all of the tracking, balancing of checks, and net worth analysis yourself, but why waste hours of your precious time? I'm sure you've got better things to do.

If you'd rather save time and the hassle involved, automation is one of the best things you can do. You can do this with an online tracking service such as Mint.com.

Mint is a free service owned by Intuit, Inc (makers of Quickbooks) that tracks all of your transactions from your bank accounts, credit cards, and even your investments. You just provide your financial information on Mint.com's secure website once, and then it pulls in data from each source to track everything for you.

It even provides easy-to-read charts and graphs that can be segmented by type of purchase, the month the purchases were made and several other factors. This allows you to see where all of your money is going... instantly.

As an example, at the end of the year, my wife and I look at where we spent our money. Last year we looked at how much we spent on restaurants and decided to reduce that amount, divide it by 12 and that was our monthly budget for restaurants. The entire process took us 10 minutes. Imagine how long that would take if you tracked it all manually. Literally dozens of hours, easily.

You can even create budgets for specific expenses, like my wife and I did for restaurants, and if you get close to your limit for the month, you'll get an alert telling you to dial it back.

You can log onto Mint.com anytime you want to see how much you have spent during the month, how much your net worth is, how much your bills are and how much money you have in the bank. It will even send you due date reminders on upcoming bills so you can avoid pesky late fees.

When it comes to financial management, automation with peace of mind is an awesome winning combination to save you a significant amount of time, freeing you up to do the things you really want to do.



* { JEREMY MAHER } is a certified credit coach with first-hand experience in dozens of credit and financial industries. Jeremy's a former credit repair company owner that realized Americans can repair their credit themselves faster and for less money than paying a service by laying out the step in a simple way.

He created a simple 5 step process anyone can follow to improve their credit, [Credit Repair Doctor®](#), which helps people who have gone through credit damaging life events and improve their credit score to create an easier and more secure financial future.

HACKING HEALTH TO IMPROVE YOUR OUTPUT

QUESTION #6

How can people leverage a healthier and more active lifestyle to improve their effective output?

BY: { JUSTIN MILLER }*

Richard Branson calls exercise his ultimate productivity hack. If a guy that runs a 400 company empire finds the time to work out surely you can too.

Think back to a time in your life when you were you healthiest, most active, and athletic. You were probably eating right and exercising regularly. I'm sure you looked your best, felt your best, and were getting more done in your life. Living a healthier lifestyle has been proven over and over again to improve energy, positive thinking, confidence, mental clarity, and strengthen of the immune system - less sick + more energy = you more effective.

But you probably already know that stats. So how can you leverage healthy habits in order to be more effective in all that you do?

1. Start your day with activity: "I don't have time to work out" simply means you don't make it a priority. Make exercise a priority. Schedule it as an appointment with yourself. Start your day with a short run, some push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, anything that gets you moving right out of bed. You'll release those endorphins right off the bat and benefit for the rest of the day.

2. Be prepared: Take the time to prepare healthy meals ahead of time. Try picking two days a week (Sunday and Wednesday work great) to prepare healthy meals for the rest of the week.

If you are not much of a cook simply throwing a palm size portion of protein like chicken, ground beef, or salmon in a pan with a couple handfuls of mixed vegetables, and a little healthy fat like olive oil or coconut oil and you have some quick meals ready to go. Another great idea is to cook a big pot of some healthy chili. This will sit in the fridge for quite some time and is ready to be eaten in an instant. This tactic alone can save you hours throughout the week, and help you eat well along the way.

3. Sleep, sleep, and sleep some more: Working all day and all night is not only terrible for your health it actually makes you less effective. Every so often those long hours are needed, but the majority of the time you should prioritize sleep for a minimum of 7 hours, and 8-9 is even better. You will develop mental clarity, strengthen your immune system which means fewer days stuck in bed so that you can focus on getting work done, and improve your mood. Try using dark curtains over your windows and keep your room at a cool temperature to maximize restful sleep.

Just take a look at some of the most successful people that you admire most. Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, Tim Ferris, and Mark Cuban to name a few all make practicing health and wellness a part of their day. What is one small step you can make immediately that will make an impact on your health and effectiveness? There are three above for you to start with. Choose one of those and start doing that today.



* { JUSTIN MILLER } is the chief trouble-maker at [Limitless365](#).

He believes that health and wellness is more than just measured by physical accomplishments. To achieve optimal health and wellness mental, emotional, and spiritual health must be developed as well. You can pick up his free Ebook "Paleo, so easy a caveman can do it" at [Limitless365](#).

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOWNTIME IN YOUR LIFE

QUESTION #7

What's your opinion on downtime in the life of a successful and productive individual? Should you always be working on something, or should people set aside time to relax and enjoy the world from time to time? How can these best be balanced?

BY: { MARC AND ANGEL CHERNOFF }*

Downtime is imperative.

In all walks of life, the highest human performance occurs when there is equilibrium between focused activity and rest and renewal.

This is due to the fact that the human body is designed to labor in short pulses, and requires renewal at regular intervals not just physically, but mentally as well.

In other words, most successful endeavors look something like this: activity, rest, activity, rest, etc. And this is as true for long-term goals, as it is for short-term tasks.

It's simply a matter of creating balance in your life – balance between activity and rest, balance between work and family, balance between getting things done and leaving them undone, etc.

Without balance, everything falls out of whack. For instance, when you let your work life (or social life, family life, etc.) consume you, and 100% of your energy is focused in that area 100% of the time, every other area of your life falls apart.

Bottom line: While drive and focus are important, if you're going to get things done right, and be truly successful, you need to balance the various dimensions of your life, including the basic foundation of activity and rest.



* { MARC AND ANGEL CHERNOFF } Passionate writers, admirers of the human spirit, and full time students of life, Marc and Angel Chernoff enjoy sharing inspirational advice and practical tips for life on their popular personal development blog 'Marc and Angel Hack Life.'

Topics covered include: productivity, health, love, work, and general self-improvement. www.marcandangel.com - angel [at] marcandangel [dot] com.

STAYING CONTINUOUSLY MOTIVATED

QUESTION #8

So many people struggle with finding a way to stay motivated. This kills their productivity. What is your best tip for people struggling with a lack of motivation? Please elaborate.

BY: { JOSH HINDS }*

Zig Ziglar said, "People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing - that's why we recommend it daily."

For some reason, people assume that because they don't automatically experience this ongoing, never ending motivation & enthusiasm for something that it's a major problem.

If you had the motivation to pursue something at any given point, then there are things you can do ongoing to help you regain that same feeling for whatever you happen to want to work towards.

Having the ability to experience lasting motivation isn't found in a magic pill, anymore then you could take a bath one time - and expect it to have a lasting effect. That's not a bad thing at all, it's just saying that you've got to "recharge your motivational batteries" from time to time.

Here are some suggestions to keep that motivation alive:

Begin your day with gratitude - This helps connect you to why

you believe whatever you're pursuing is worthwhile. At least in the beginning, something had you believing it was worth getting started. Reconnecting through gratitude is as simple as saying, "I'm thankful that the "insert project" I'm working on came to me. Then just sit with it for a moment, and just think about how you'll feel when you've completed it.

Identify success points & work on those to completion. Depending on the scope of what you're working on there can be any number of what I call "success points" - smaller wins, which as they are completed get you excited about having accomplished them. I like the saying, "success begets success" - which basically means as you experience a positive result it makes you feel good, which grows your belief system to the point that you see yourself being capable of achieving whatever you happen to be working towards.

Keep a journal. Here you want to have a place where you are capturing your "success" and achievements as you're experiencing them. Life moves

fast - real fast! And as such if you don't capture those achievements you have all the time it's quite possible that you'll be swept up in the day to day things that pop up and require your attention, never taking the time to come back and experience your "well deserved job well done."

Accept that motivation will take effort at times. Not a lot of effort, mind you, and often simply being proactive is all that's necessary to change your feeling to a more inspired one. Make the habit of reading or listening to books or audio programs that carry with them a positive message. The main thing to keep in mind is that you have a choice to either remain stuck, or instead you can do some simple things to change the state you find yourself in to one that serves you in a positive way.

Remember this... When you're feeling stuck... move! When you're feeling uninspired - get into some related action, and let it pick you back up.

It's Your Life, LIVE BIG!



* { JOSH HINDS } It's Your Life, LIVE BIG!

Josh Hinds is a speaker and the author of 'It's Your Life, LIVE BIG!' Through his work, Josh teaches people the essential life skills necessary to live by choice over chance. Visit him at <http://JoshHinds.com>

A SIMPLE PRODUCTIVITY EXPERIMENT

QUESTION #9

If you had to suggest one radical idea or experiment for people to try to increase their productivity, what would it be, and why?

BY: { NICK THACKER }*

My one "radical idea" is pretty simple (in theory, at least): Commitment. Chances are, you've heard just about every last productivity hack and motivation method there is – it's time to commit to one, two, or all of them.

We tend to feel like our jobs are done when we finish reading through a nonfiction book, a educational piece, or something meant to "teach" us something – not so.

These things were designed to help us take action, and just simply reading it doesn't count! We need to be much more deliberate with productivity.

I heard once that self-discipline is a muscle, and I believe productivity is the same – we need to exercise it constantly so we get better at it, and to prevent "productivity atrophy." As with a workout or diet, it doesn't take much time at all to stumble and get back to our old habits of unproductivity and laziness.

How do we combat this? How can we take specific, deliberate responsibility for our productivity in a very easy, meaningful way? Here's one idea:

Take an hour and write down all of these ideas, then tear them up so there's one each on a bunch of pieces of paper. Then take these little productivity methods and stick them in a hat or bowl, and – you guessed it – draw one out. Whatever it is, follow it to the letter for a day.

Do this one little thing for a week or two – long enough to make it stick – and then draw another piece of paper. Rather than focus on only this new "hack," add it to your "productivity repertoire," again until it becomes habit.

After a month or two of this method, you'll know what method truly works for you: which ones you can stick with, and what's worth your time.



* { NICK THACKER } writes about writing and selling books, publishing, and productivity at LiveHacked.com.

Be sure to [grab his new book](#), Welcome Home: The Author's Guide to Building A Marketing Home Base, and grab the newsletter for contact info as well!

WHAT YOU SHOULD STOP DOING

QUESTION #10

We hear a lot about what people should start doing in their lives to get more, done, but let's turn that around. What is the number one thing people should "Stop Doing" to increase their effective output, and why?

BY: { WILL }*

The one thing people should stop doing to increase their effective output is to stop reviewing all the time.

Let me explain.

A productivity principle that gets passed around a lot is that we should work in fixed chunks of time, focus on only one task, and eliminate all distractions.

This is because even small distractions can break our concentration and dramatically reduce our productivity.

The mistake that many people make is they eliminate distractions around them, but forget about the one inside their own head.

From my own experience, distractions of the mind are the worst. It can even lead to self-doubt or "analysis paralysis".

If you've ever caught yourself "pausing" in the middle of a task to review your situation, your life, or the task at hand, then you know what I'm talking about.

This can often elude us because we're taught to eliminate external distractions via isolation, the ideal environment where our mind becomes the loudest speaker and our thoughts, the biggest productivity killer.

Reviewing your work when you should be streamlining it, can distract you and break your concentration. It can also create opportunities for self doubt.

The easiest way to overcome this is to segment your work day into 3 parts: planning, doing and reviewing. These must be followed sequentially, which means you can't start working until your done planning, and you can't start reviewing until your done working.

Here, are 5 simple steps you can follow:

1. Get yourself a notepad and a pen.
2. Start writing down your plan and tasks for the day.
3. Take action and complete 1 task at a time.
4. When an unrelated thought comes up, write it down and move on.
5. Once your tasks are all complete, use your notes to review and plan your next day.

Repeat these steps and you will notice an immediate increase in your effective output.



* { WILL } is a perpetual student of life and enjoys helping others realize their potential for greatness. He is also the founder of <http://www.dreamaboutlife.com>, a website where he shares everything he's learned throughout his journey of success and failure.



CONTINUALLY IMPROVE YOUR LEVEL OF SUCCESS

I hope you enjoyed the Life Hacker's Manifesto. Now that you're finished, I encourage you to go through it again and identify the changes that you would like to make in your life. Then, most importantly, take action to make them happen!

If you know someone who would enjoy or benefit from any of the lessons in the Life Hacker's Manifesto, please send them to [THIS LINK for a free copy](#).

Additionally, if you're not already subscribed, you can [join the Academy Success community here](#) to continue learning how to improve your level of success through lessons like those from the contributors above.

They were all kind enough to contribute to this report for free, so be sure to check out their great resources from above.

Thanks for reading. To Your Success!

// CODY WHEELER

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