



The Power of Systems

Dear Reader

I was in the gym this morning. I train on my own three times weekly. I also train three times each week as part of a group of seven men. We call ourselves the EAC (Everyday Athletes Club), a name given to us by Jordan Stinson when he coached us at Just Start Fitness. When Jordan moved to London to set up Executive Athlete Club (EAC) the group continued under the able watch of Conor McAnallen at Resilience Gym.

Training is probably the closest thing I have to an addiction. My current weekly training comprises two strength sessions, one high intensity cardio session, two Zone 2 sessions and one Zone 5 session. The structure is intentional as I have a VO2 Max test next week. I am also working on getting my running legs back after 8 years of not running because I want to have a decent go at a Hyrox sometime next year. In case you're wondering, the other day of the week is a rest day.

This morning in the gym I was doing four rounds of ten ring rows followed by eight dumbbell bench presses. You can google the moves if you're interested, but it's basically a lot of pulling and pushing. Anyway, on the dumbbell bench press the weights I used for the four rounds were 22.5Kg, 27.5Kg, 30Kg and 30Kg again. I managed eight reps on the first three rounds and seven complete and one assisted rep on the last round, right at the point of failure. I was delighted and shared the numbers with Jordan at EAC, who will be testing my VO2 Max. Watching the numbers is my system for tracking my progress.

Jordan who I started working with in November 2022 came back to me to say, 'When we started working together you were pressing 17.5Kg.' He was right. In November 2022 three rounds of eight reps at 17.5Kg would have been a real struggle for me. My system of training has enabled me to increase my muscle mass by almost 8kg over the last 20 months ago, giving me the ability bench press over 70% more weight.

To say I am pleased with this would be an understatement. But this newsletter isn't really about weights or training or even progress. For the last twenty-two months I have been training at least four times per week, more recently five or six times, holidays and work trips included. I have been moving weights, to get stronger and build muscle mass and working my heart and lungs to build my cardiovascular fitness. That has been my system as part of my commitment to get stronger, fitter and healthier. My progress has come through the compound interest of consistently following my system.

My coach Ankush once asked me if I knew the difference between an intention and a commitment. I hadn't a clue. The answer he gave me was 'a system'. We were talking in the context of me building my business at the time. I had established a goal for my coaching

business. He wanted me to see that having the intention of building my business was a bit like having a New Year's resolution. Something I might want, or like the idea of but without a workable system that I was committed to, it just wouldn't happen, and I'd probably just end up giving up on the idea. Ankush also wanted me to see how creating a system and committing to it could have me achieve the goal. So, we created a system.

The first system was to have three or four conversations every day until I had filled my calendar with conversations. The next part of the system was to have as many of those conversations as possible be coaching conversations. The system third part of the system was for me to share my numbers (conversations, value of proposals, amount invoiced) with him. The final part of the system in those early days of building my business was to be regularly coached and to use that coaching to talk about my business and the systems I was using to build it. I committed to the system and stuck with it. Within 12 months my business was full of clients. Having a system, committing to it and sticking with it worked.

I recently shared another goal for my business with Ankush. Not surprisingly, he asked me what my system was going to be for achieving the goal. I wasn't totally clear as the goal will take my business to a level it hasn't been before. So, we spent some time creating a new system to which I committed and has me firmly on the path to achieving my next goal. Now I have a system I am committed to and excited about using to build my business to the next level.

What I have noticed since is that when I have systems and stick with them, I tend to move in the direction of achieving my goals. What I have also noticed is that when I don't stick to the systems, it doesn't take long for my momentum to reduce. For example, when I don't monitor the number of conversations I am having, I tend to have fewer conversations and when I have fewer conversations, I make less proposals and when I make less proposals I invoice less.

Having a system to get stronger in the gym and sticking with it has worked for me. Having systems in my business to achieve the goals I want has worked for me.

Where in your life or work do you have an intention that you could shift to a commitment and achieve what you really want by creating a system and sticking to it?

Have a great weekend!



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