

Millionaire **INSIDERS**

A stylized black silhouette of a city skyline with three buildings of varying heights, each with a grid of white squares representing windows.

Real Millionaires - Real Action

with Jaime Tardy, The Eventual Millionaire

We all have times when we have great energy and can focus and get a ton of stuff done and we also all have times when we can't focus no matter how hard we try. These highs and lows of energy are the natural flow of our circadian rhythm which cycles every 24 hours. Hugh explains that to become more productive all we need to do is to tap into these rhythms.



Millionaire Interview with Hugh Culver

02 Going with the Flow by Hugh Culver

□ IDENTIFY YOUR ENERGY CYCLES

The first step is to identify your energy highs and lows throughout the day. For most people the most energetic and productive time of the day is the first 90 minutes of the day. There is also usually another spike in energy after lunch for about hour. Hugh has asked close to 10,000 people about their energy cycles and discovered most of us have nearly the same cycles.

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TAKE ACTION NOW:

Sit down and think about when you feel most energetic at work. If you have difficulty, take a day and rate your energy level throughout the day to identify energy peaks.

6am: _____
7am: _____
8am: _____
(etc): _____

EXAMPLE FROM HUGH

“What I’ve found from thousands and thousands of people is that most people have an opportunity of about 90 minutes at the very beginning when their energy is really high. But what a lot of people do is they arrive at work and they fiddle with their e-mail and then they check Facebook and that reminds them of something so they go back to working on a blog and then 10:30 rolls around and then, right when their energy is going into a low point, which makes sense if you ate breakfast two or three hours before because your blood sugar is getting low.

So it makes sense that you start to have a lull around mid-morning and that’s why people run off to cafes to buy muffins. If you were to dedicate

the morning to the hardest work, knowing that there’s going to be a lull, then that’s perfect because that gives me a window of opportunity to do easy work. So that’s a great time to check your e-mail, that’s a great time to work on something that’s routine, like some editing.

If you did the creative writing in the morning, that’s the time to do the editing, that’s the time to return phone calls, that’s the time to do some research or working with a colleague. Then what’s going to happen after lunch is you’re going to have another shot of energy – it’s just natural; it goes down and then it goes up. That usually lasts for around an hour and that’s a perfect time to do hard lifting. That’s the perfect time

for me to finish that negotiation, to have that coaching call.

One of the easiest things to change is when you check your e-mail. So, rather than checking it all through the day, what you could do is you could say, ‘Well, I’ll check first thing in the morning for maybe 10 minutes and look at critical e-mails. Then I leave it and check again half an hour later and then dedicate some time, maybe 20 minutes, and really work through it and write some responses.’

So what you want to do is separate that out into distinct chunks of time where you work on only e-mail, but in between you change what you work on based on where you’re at with your circadian rhythm.”

□ HIGH ENERGY WORKLOAD

Once you have identified those peak energy times it is time to pack those times with the hardest work. These times are great for things like creative writing, making that phone call you are dreading, and negotiations. Hugh recommends packing 50 percent of your hardest work into your first 90 minute high energy cycle.

TAKE ACTION NOW:

Look at your calendar right now. Rearrange it for the rest of this week to schedule your hardest work during your peak energy times.

□ LOW ENERGY WORKLOAD

Hugh tells us to pay attention to when we start losing focus and drive. When that happens we need to back off from the heavy work and get some of the lighter stuff done. These lower energy times are great for things like email and everyday office tasks. Hugh cautions us about our obsession with email and constant checking warning that it can decrease our productivity greatly. Check it in small blocks of time during your lower energy times.

TAKE ACTION NOW:

Limit yourself to only checking your email a few times a day in small chunks of time and only during a low of your energy cycle.

FINAL THOUGHT

We all complain that we do not have enough time to get everything done. Hugh believes we just need to get better at managing our time so that we do not waste so much of it. He points out that the day before we go on vacation or head out to conference we get so much more done than on a normal day. This is because we make quick decision and limit ourselves on the less important and distracting

items we often fill our day with. Getting in tune with our personal energy flow and utilizing that along with limiting those tasks that really suck up time will greatly increase our productivity.