

Eight Ways to Greater Success By Living a "Never Stop Learning" Life

By John Wood



When once asked the key to his success, Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett pointed to a stack of books and answered, *"Read 500 pages like this every day. That's how knowledge works. It builds up like compound interest. All of you can do it, but I guarantee not many of you will do it."*

Buffett estimates he spends as much as 80% of his day reading.

Now, while it might be too difficult to match Buffett's percentage, it raises the question ...

Are you living a "never stop learning" lifestyle right now?

Buffett, who just happens to be the third richest person in the world with a net worth of \$81.5 billion, considers reading the key to his success. But there are plenty of other reasons why you should take the time to challenge your brain. Including:



You'll be happier — A 2009 study published in the *Journal of Happiness Studies* found that people who work hard at improving a skill or ability, while they may go through stress "in the moment," experience great happiness on a daily basis and longer term.

"No pain, no gain is the rule when it comes to gaining happiness from increasing our competence at something. People often give up their goals because they are stressful, but we found that there is benefit at the end of the day from learning to do something well,"

says Ryan Howell, assistant professor of psychology at San Francisco State University.

- ✓ **You'll keep your brain healthy** — A 2010 University of California, Irvine study revealed that mental stimulation could limit the debilitating effects of aging on the memory and the mind. And a 2017 University of Exeter study found that experiences that challenge the brain make people more resilient to changes resulting from age and illness. This gives them a higher cognitive reserve which makes them more resilient to illnesses such as dementia.

- ✓ **Knowledge in one area helps you in another** — Having a well-rounded knowledge base about different facets of writing and marketing can only help you perform your job better. In his book *Purple Cow*, Seth Godin points out that it's beneficial for designers to take a marketing course and marketers to take a design course. Doing so allows each to understand the benefits and challenges of working within their niche.

In his 2005 Stanford University commencement speech, Steve Jobs said, *"If I had never dropped in on that single calligraphy course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts."*

- ✓ **You'll stand out from the competition** — As a freelance writer, you want to avoid competing on price. When you compile knowledge of different marketing and writing strategies, it gives you a huge leg up on your competition.

So, how do you create a "never stop learning" lifestyle? Here's eight easy ideas to get you started.

1.

Block off a chunk of time each day that you dedicate to reading — Start with 20 minutes, because if you block off an hour, you might think you can't spare that much time and neglect to do it. You may find you get lost in what you're reading, and 20 minutes becomes the minimum time you spend reading each day.

In addition to blocking off 20 minutes, why not make a point of reading a half hour before you go to sleep? Besides learning something, it could help you get to sleep faster. A study by the University of Essex found that when it comes to reducing stress levels, reading works the best. And the faster you de-stress, the faster you fall asleep.

2.

Watch videos and documentaries — Netflix has a robust documentary section where you can learn about everything from German professor of theology and monk Martin Luther to how the healthcare, pharmaceutical, and food industries are influencing the food you eat. YouTube has many full-length documentaries you can view for free.

Plus, watch at least one Ted Talk (or TEDx Talks: videos from local speakers presented to local audiences) per day. With a Ted Talk, in a short amount of time, you get to soak in someone's expertise about a specific topic they've spent hours compiling and refining.

3. **Build a routine that maximizes your learning time** — If you listen to music in your car, spend time at the gym, or go

for daily walks, why not turn that time into learning time? Listen to an audio course, audiobook, or podcast instead of music. Even 10 or 15-minute chunks of time add up.

4. **Visit websites that present (and inspire) new ideas** — There are some sites on the Internet working hard to keep you informed. For instance, howstuffworks.com will tell you everything from how retail brands use music to generate more sales to 10 myths about sugar.
5. **Learn a new word a day** — Many dictionary-related websites (such as dictionary.com and merriam-webster.com) have a free subscription service where they will email you a new word and its definition each day.
6. **Play agoogleaday.com** — This Google site asks you three questions each day. The faster you answer, the more points you receive. Not only do you learn something new each day, it allows you to fine-tune your online searching skills.
7. **Be stingy with your time when keeping up on the news** — If you find yourself mindlessly looking at your Facebook news feed too many times each day, use the following email services to keep you informed of what's going on in the world: theSkimm (theskimm.com); pressed (pressednews.com); and for finance information, finimize (finimize.com).
8. **Take courses** — Benjamin Franklin once said, *"If a man empties his purse into his head, no one can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest."* EdX.org offers a wide variety of free online courses and OpenCulture.com lists 1,300 free cultural and educational media links. Of course, AWA! offers a variety of specialized courses to help you master a specific writing specialty. ([Learn more here.](#))

There's another benefit to living a "never stop learning" lifestyle. In addition to doing your job better, using the new knowledge you accumulate, you can write a blog or Money-Making Website, create YouTube videos, put together a presentation and post it on SlideShare, or write your own e-book about a topic you're passionate about.

I will leave you with a quote by Henry Ford ...

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young."

Do you already do any of these "never stop learning" activities? Which ones do you find most helpful? Please share with us in the comments below.

Published: February 20, 2018

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Reading is the best. Nowadays am choosy what I read. My social media fans find my inactivity on fb and whatsapp boring! I have consistently used AWAI resources both at leisure, and when bombarded with a client search challenge. Sometimes I quickly scheme through the AWAI archive file when I am preparing for interviews with clients. And it has worked. Thumbs up folks.

Christine Muleme – over a year ago

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