

From Cubicle to

PITCH

How to Regain Your Former Glory



ABOUT

this book

Do you own a replica football shirt but haven't played since school?

Do you subscribe to a dedicated sports channel on TV but spend more time watching than playing?

Do you sit in frustration at your desk as the latest sports scores arrive but can't run for the train?

Do you go out for a beer with your friends and talk about how you were the "Man" "Back in the Day" but now sit in the cube working for the "Man"?

Then this book might help you get out of the cubicle and back on the pitch.

GOAL setting

EVERYONE SAYS THEY SET GOALS.
TURNING GOAL SETTING INTO ACTION IS THE DIFFICULT PART.

Dream... Plan.... Do.... Review.

By reading this book you have already shown that you are interested in improving your performance. You have started your journey to success. Now you have to think a bit more about what that success will look like: how will it feel; who is going to help you achieve it; where will it happen? Take time out to daydream and envisage what success will taste like.

Then – when is it going to happen? Write it down... now. How much of a gap is there between where you are now, and where you need to be? Break that down into a timescale of where you need to be in a year, 6 months, 1 month and 1 week.

In order to make progress by next week you will need to plan actions for each day and for each session. You will have to plan the warm ups, training, cool downs and recovery. You will have to sort out what you are going to eat, so that means writing a shopping list.

Do that now.

TIP Write down your goals and share with a friend. Get them to sit down with you and review them- allow yourself to be accountable.

The logo for '100 day plan' is set against a green background. The number '100' is rendered in a stylized, white, multi-lined font. The '1' is a vertical stack of lines, while the '00' are concentric circles. Below the '100' is the text 'day plan' in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

100 day plan

The US president is always assessed after their first 100 days in office. By that time it is clear to see what has been implemented and what their priorities are actually going to be.

Most behavioural change takes about 100 days in order to become permanent. At this stage you will know whether you have succeeded in changing your habits and adopting your new “better athlete” lifestyle.

So, set yourself a 100 day plan. What are you going to try and achieve within that time. How will that help you achieve your vision of success?

If you want to run a marathon, try a 5km race first. You should be able to manage that in the first 100 days. For non-runners that will be challenging, but achievable.

You may not break the World Record, but you will have a better understanding of what it means to be a runner. If you like that, then do a 10km race, then a half marathon. That way you allow your training to evolve at a sustainable rate.

Many people fail by trying to get to the end goal too fast. If you are not used to exercising outside of team sessions, then the biggest hurdle will be the self-discipline and time management required to fit those training sessions in.

Get into the habit of training first, and then worry about the specifics. In order to do that, make sure your sessions are: achievable, enjoyable and accessible. At the end of the 100 days you can then set a target for the next 100 days and include intensity, specifics and more variety.

STRONG foundation



TIP

Skipping is a cheap, accessible and effective mode of exercise. Use it as part of a warm up, as part of circuit training, or as a session in itself.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW DEMO](#)

Injury prevention is key in ensuring that you succeed in sport. Having a solid foundation will allow you to specialise later and deal with high intensity training and competition. First you need to have a broad base of physical skills and fitness.

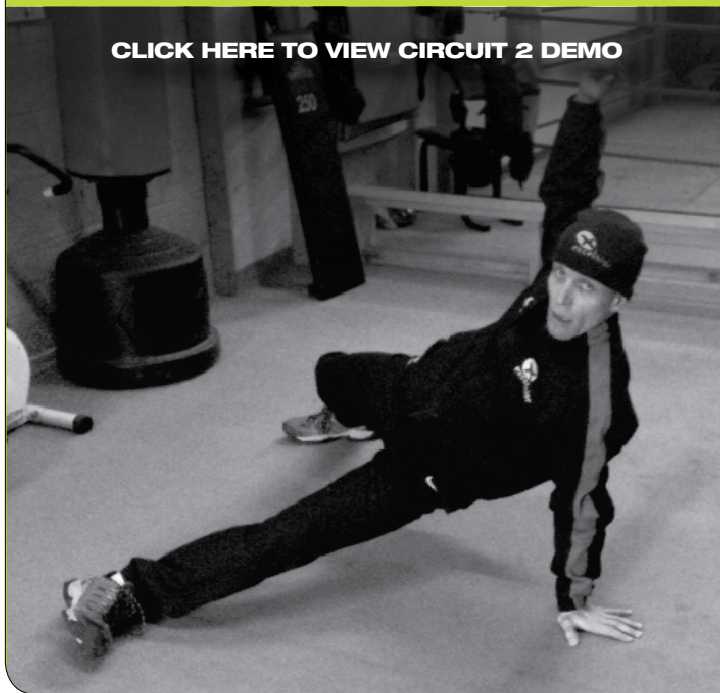
Instead of running to get fit, you may need to get fit to run. It requires strong legs, back and stomach. Instead of running to lose weight, you may need to lose weight to run. That will require control of your food intake, and some form of exercise such as walking or cycling to burn more calories.

Before embarking on your periodised Olympic Lifting programme that you can download from elitesportswebstomakeyouhurt.com, you will have to get strong and flexible in 3 dimensions. This requires exercises that involve squatting, pushing, pulling and rotating. It is a good idea to work on single leg exercises for balance and strength.

Some basic targets before progressing onto more expansive plans are:

- **PRESS UPS** 10
- Body weight **SQUATS** 50
- Single leg **SQUATS** (thigh and shin at right angles)
ability to hold for 3 seconds with knee stable.
- **WALK** 1 mile in 15 minutes
- **RUN** 1\2 mile in 4 minutes
- 50 **CRUNCHES**

If you can do all these then you are ready to expand your running programme or start to use weighted implements to provide further resistance.



CIRCUITS ARE A GOOD WAY OF STARTING YOUR CONDITIONING PROGRAMME. TWO SETS OF EXERCISES ARE SHOWN IN TABLE BELOW.

You can do these several ways.

EITHER: You can do a small number of each exercise before moving onto the next one. All 5 exercises would comprise 1 set.

Body Weight Circuits	
Circuit 1	Circuit 2
Press ups	Bench dips
Crunches	1½ pikes
Squats	Single leg squats
Back extensions	Lawnmowers
Bench jumps	Alternate leg squat thrusts

You can then rest or move straight into the 2nd set.

OR: do a larger number of each exercise that may require some rest before moving onto the next set. So doing 50 repetitions of each exercise may not be achievable without stopping at some point. The challenge is mental and physical and you can then set bigger targets each week. 100 repetitions is a good end point for this.

OR: do 10 repetitions of each exercise on the first set, then 9 on the second, all the way to 1 repetition on the 10th set. That way you have done 55 repetitions total but allowed the sets to get easier as you go along.

TIP

Make sure you vary the exercises you do every other session at least. Too much of the same will lead to stagnation and over specialisation. At the beginning it is best to include a large variety of exercises to make sure you are developing your overall athleticism.

INTERVAL training

There is a lot of talk about developing an aerobic base before going onto harder, sport specific training. But if you train to run slow, then you will run slow. Running slowly at a low level will develop your aerobic capacity, but not your anaerobic capacity. Running at a higher pace will develop your anaerobic capacity AND your aerobic capacity.

Guess what most intermittent team sport activities require?

You've got it- an anaerobic capacity. In order to win at sport you need to be able to produce fast, powerful efforts at crucial times. Plodders aren't winners. Don't train to plod, train to win.

One way of doing this is interval training where you do a near maximal effort burst, then recover and then repeat the effort. You can do this within your sporting practice too, by doing rounds or small games of 1 - 2 minutes, then resting and repeating.

Many coaches let drills run over 5 minutes, but the quality and intensity of the drill will deteriorate. Better to do shorter, sharper exercises and increase the number that you can do. This helps train your concentration and tactical decision making too.

If it takes you longer than 4 minutes to run 1\2 mile, then it seems likely that you can improve your strength and general fitness by other means before you attempt to run longer distances.

INTERVAL training

Sample interval training sessions

Exercise	Reps	Sets	Intensity	Rest
300 m run	4	2	50 secs	3 mins walk between sets. 10 mins active movement between sets.
200m runs	6	2	35 secs	2 mins walk between sets. 10 mins active movement between sets.
150 m runs	4	3	22 secs	2 mins walk between sets. 5 mins active movement between sets.
Skipping	10x 30 secs	1	180skips/min	2 min jog between reps
150 m runs in pairs	6	2	1st 100m80%, last 50m race uphill	Rest 3 minutes walking between reps, 10 minutes active movement between sets.
Hill runs	8x 1 min up and down short, steep slope	3	100% up the slope, jog down	1 minute between reps, 5 minutes active movement between sets.

NUTRITION



The easiest way to improve the western diet is to switch from white processed foods to wholemeal foods. Bread, rice and pasta are all excellent sources of complex carbohydrates which provide long term energy. But in their processed forms the nutritional value is diminished and you will get a short term boost in energy, followed by a slump. The wholemeal varieties are harder to break down in the digestive system (they are complex) and will provide energy over a longer time.

Caffeine in moderation is okay, but too much will lead to an unhealthy stress/ slump cycle. It is in the slump that you will reach for the fatty, sugary foods. You will need to eat properly in order to be fit for sport, but that does not mean eating more necessarily. Instead, look to eat food throughout the day that will lead to a sustained energy source.

Allow yourself treats and rewards, fish and chips once a month on a rest day is a treat. Fish and chips twice a week is an obesity time bomb. Make sure that they are treats, and not a daily habit.

There is no such thing as bad foods, only bad diets, but some foods are better than others. See the food pyramid for guidance.

TIP

Sunflower seeds are a good source of vitamin E and can be carried easily for snacking.

NUTRITION

Alcohol will impair any efforts to improve your fitness, don't kid yourself that "a little bit of wine is good for your heart" – if it was that good for you then doctors would prescribe it to pregnant women to drink, instead of recommending abstinence. Alcohol will add unnecessary calories to your diet and also limit protein synthesis which aids tissue repair after training.

Supplements are designed by big companies to fool people into thinking that there are shortcuts to getting fit for sport. If you work in a sedentary profession, the best thing for you to do is be consistent in your approach to diet and training. Unfortunately, this is also the hardest thing to do. You may think that you need to take protein supplements in order to get stronger. Again, you are being sold that message: the Western diet is high in protein anyway. You will need about 15% of your daily calorie intake to come from protein unless you are doing pure strength sports (which are few).

Some natural sources of protein that may surprise you are:

Asparagus **36%**
Broccoli **33%**
Peanuts **30%**
Cauliflower **27%**
Wholegrain bread **17%**
Walnuts **16%**
Wholewheat spaghetti **16%**
Cous Cous **27%**

REST & recovery

After training hard, you will need to recover well to allow your body to repair, heal and improve. After a hard day in the cubicle the last thing you need to do is spend more time sitting down on the couch or in the car, so active recovery may be more beneficial for you.

Stretching, walking, and playing with the kids are forms of movement that will help you get rid of waste products accumulated from training, make you more mobile and distract your mind from the pressures of work.

Static stretching after exercise will help improve your range of movement. Hold a stretch for 20-30 seconds at the point of mild discomfort and then repeat. Do this for legs, back, shoulders and neck.

Mental relaxation helps recovery for two reasons: it takes your mind away from the work, and it will help you sleep better. Sleep is not necessary in large amounts for physical recovery, but it is important for mental recovery. The sports you will be playing, combined with the exercise to get you fit and the physical recovery activities will only help you sleep better if you can switch off from work.

TIP

Try lying down and alternately tightening and relaxing the various muscles of your body. So start with the right fist, clench it for 5 seconds then concentrate on it relaxing and blood flowing around the hand. Then tense your upper arm, and so on around the body.



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ENHANCING SPORTS PERFORMANCE

TRAINING philosophy

Our number one priority is to get the athlete on the pitch ready to play. This is the underlying objective of our training; conditioning is not the end goal. We look to achieve: quality of execution; safety; progression; variety and intensity. In the correct training environment with good coaching you will develop a hard-working and winning mentality. This will help develop an underlying confidence in your ability to produce results under pressure. We do not believe there is a single magic exercise; we use proven training principles to develop the athlete. We avoid fads but keep an open mind to current research. There are no shortcuts to success, but we can help show you the way.

www.excelsiorgroup.co.uk