



## Finding your Balance: Running your Company Without Running Yourself into the Ground

As the founder and CEO of two successful companies before the age of 30, my learning curve was nothing but steep. I started Dane PCG, a NYC based affordable housing brokerage, in 2008 and by 2013 founded Saxon/Hart, an event production firm that focuses on causes to create a social impact. But despite the continued success of both my companies, I found myself struggling under their weight. I wanted to be able to say you can do it all, but it just wasn't proving true.

Posted by: [Heidi Burkhart](#) April 1, 2016

Finding a balance between work and life seemed impossible. Point blank, I was unhappy and I found myself burning out. This is when I turned to fitness. I have always been an athlete and currently I am a weightlifter, strength trainer and Spartan/Tough Mudder enthusiast. So when I was feeling the burn at work, I made sure I felt the burn at the gym. In turning my attention to fitness, I was able to find my focus again in business, and in life.

I committed 100% to having fitness in my day—everyday—so much so that my schedule revolves around my time in the gym. Even on the road, I have a no slacking policy. No joke. It adds structure and balance to my life in and out of the office. Not only that but it significantly improves my concentration and stress levels. It gives me ideas and solutions while I zone out in the moment lifting, running, or whatever it is. Getting a morning workout in is just as effective as that morning cup of coffee, I promise it will be that jolt you need to your day. I firmly believe a leader must maintain mental and physical wellness to drive a business forward and inspire their team. You cannot run yourself into the ground and effectively run a company, much less two.

Countless 'highly successful' people will tell you the same. Everyone from Anna Wintour to Ellen Degeneres and Richard Branson has discussed the importance of exercise in their routines. Wintour starts her day with a 6AM game of tennis. Ellen begins her day with Yoga. Richard goes on countless 'fitness adventures'.

An ever-growing number of studies highlight the benefits of regular exercise, specifically the correlation between success in the workplace and fitness. Better ability to focus, improved confidence and enhanced ability to follow through were directly attributed to improved fitness levels, according to a 2013 Virgin HealthMiles and Workforce Management Magazine study. Fellow CEOs agree. In a recent survey from executive job site The Ladders, 75% of executives said good physical fitness is "critical for career success at the executive level."

Don't let running a company (or two) burn you out, feel the burn in the gym instead. "The journey is the reward," as Steve Jobs said. Make your journey an adventure every day—work out hard, play hard and hustle hard.

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### ABOUT HEIDI BURKHART



Heidi Burkhart, 34, Founder and President of Dane Real Estate, an affordable housing brokerage in New York City, is a 13-year veteran of the real estate industry. Heidi is also a dedicated philanthropist and recently launched BizLivGiv, a 360° initiative which supports her professional, philanthropic and personal endeavors.