

WHILE most people know the significant role fitness plays in overall health and well-being, it is still challenging for many people — especially time-crunched executives — to make fitness a priority.

Furthermore, fad diets and weight loss pills often lure people into believing that there is a quick fix for the extra bulge or lack of physical fitness.

The reality is that there are simple, tried and true steps you can take to incorporate fitness into your busy schedule.

1 Be prepared

It is all too easy to neglect workout time when you do not make an effort to be prepared for any moment of physical activity.

By packing a bag with handy items such as a pair of comfortable running shoes, a bottle of water, a change of clothes and deodorant, you will be ready for a break in your schedule for a workout session.

Whether you take a brisk walk during your lunch break or invest an hour in the gym after work, you will have what you need to get moving.

2 Be accountable

"I don't eat that much, why do I weigh this much?" Most people have pondered similar thoughts. It is one of the great mysteries of life.

However, the fact is that people often eat significantly more food than they remember putting in their mouths.

By keeping a food log, you will become more aware of your food intake. The mini candy bar and the handful of chips add up over the course of the day.

Once you write down everything that goes into your body, you will begin to see a pattern — for

FIT TO WORK

Here are five steps to incorporate fitness into your busy schedule



Invest an hour in the gym after work, and you will have what you need to get moving. - Filepic

example, the problematic times of the day when you are tempted to snack. When you are aware of this, you can take action.

In the same way, an exercise log can help you to identify what workouts are most effective, helping you to improve and stay committed to your routine.

Writing what you have achieved promotes commitment.

3 Be persistent

Okay, so you are not perfect. It is likely you will miss a workout day or two. You may even seriously blow your diet.

Allow these times to be minor

setbacks, instead of major detours, by jumping back in the game right away.

Beating yourself up or continuing on the junk food road is completely pointless.

By quickly returning to your fitness and eating plan, you will be able to decrease, if not erase,

the damage done and get back to business.

4 Be a buddy

Consider inviting a friend or family member to join you in your quest for fitness and health.

Doing it together not only provides much-needed accountability but also enables you to spend quality time with someone in your life.

Whether you are working out together or just encouraging each other in your efforts, joining forces with someone else can help you to meet your goals.

5 Be smart

When it comes to better fitness and reaching your ideal weight, it all boils down to one principal: Increase your activity and decrease your intake.

You may have success in doing one or the other, but for complete fitness and the healthiest body possible, it is best to do both.

By increasing your activity level and decreasing your caloric intake, you will burn fat, build muscle and benefit your cardiovascular system.

A healthier body means improved brain function, which translates into more work productivity. Which executive wouldn't want this?

By incorporating a few simple steps into your schedule, you can make a significant impact on your life and your job. - Source: ST/ANN

■ Article by Mark Sanborn, author of *The Fred Factor*.