

# Super Simple Method to Increase Lifting Performance Using a ...

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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readings from South Padre Island, Texas, what's going on? It's Dr. Mike T. Nelson here back again with the flex diet podcast, where we cover all things that help you increase your performance in the gym, and hypertrophy, adding more muscle, body comp, all done in a flexible manner. On today's podcast, it's just me, I'm going to be talking about the effective things for a training notebook. I know that sounds boring as all heck, but it is something that not many people in the gym do. It's very simple, doesn't require any real additional time, and will literally save you years of going down the wrong path. And today is brought to you by the flex diet, Online Business mentorship. So I haven't really made this public that much at all, other than through my newsletter a couple times per year. And but for the past two years, I've ran an online business mentorship, which is quite different than other ones. So for this one, there's four parts. We focus on program design, exercise, and assessment. What are some big principles you need to consider for how to set up an assessment with new clients of a wide variety, how I found the best way to program in an online environment, which is different than in person. The second part is marketing and business, how to do an online content based model. So I actually go through and proof all the content that you helped create. And yes, you are required to create some content each week. But I'll walk you through the model that I use to create it, it doesn't have to take you hours upon hours per day does take a little bit more practice. If you can figure out how to create content online, you can then use it on social media newsletter, all sorts of different ways. But I find creating the content is usually the roadblock for most, and go through the model that I use to be running my own online business now full time for over five years. And I've been doing it part time status for decades before that. And some of that was in person also. Part three is mindset, both yourself and of your clients. And Part four is personal development. How do you set these things up so that you don't burn yourself out in the process, which is everything from boundaries, scheduling, time blocking, prioritization, how to include time for yourself to regenerate. And if you're interested in this, again, I usually am only going to be doing this once next year does start at the beginning of January 2022, then I'm when you're listening to this.



So there is an application process. Right now I do have the minimum which is five people. And in all honesty, if I don't add anyone else, I'm perfectly fine with that, I get to be pretty picky about who I let in and who I don't. Because it's a very close knit group of people. We have a Slack channel, we've got two calls a month, and you have access to me to ask any questions at any time. So if you are interested in this, and it is before January 1 2022. Earlier, the better find me online somewhere, send me a note. And I will

get you the application. And we will go from there. So yes, this is a test, you do have to hunt me down and find a way to get in contact with me. And that is done on purpose to make it a little bit more difficult because I only want people that are really super interested in this and who are already pretty good at training. So that's the flex diet online business mentorship. So getting into the podcast for today. We're still down here hanging out in South Padre Texas, which has been really good. Had a lot of fun kiteboarding getting a bunch of work done, gotten to play on all sorts of different combinations of kites and boards haven't quite hit my goal of hitting a 20 foot vertical jump yet but maybe I was of this recording I will the winds looking pretty light this week but I've gotten close at 16.7 feet and hit a lot of PRs for distance ridden. I've got a little device called a whoop that measures All sorts of metrics jump height, angle of the board distance written, how far you go through the air, etc. So it's been pretty fun to do comparisons with your friends down here have little contests. And just having data in general, I find is beneficial. Again, how you use the data is very different from one person to the next. My buddy, Dr. Ben house has talked a lot about this to the point of data is to make yourself more anti fragile and more robust not to be afraid of everything in the world or looking at data, assuming you are doing everything wrong. Again, the data itself doesn't have any feelings, or any projections, those are all things that we add to it. My bias is if you can use it in that fashion to make yourself better, not as a comparison to see how much you suck compared to others, then having data is very beneficial. So I find new for kiteboarding. Having a little food device that gives me data is beneficial. So same thing when you're training in the gym. Have you ever gone to a commercial gym, and noticed how many people don't write anything down? I have a hard time believing that all those people ping away on their phone between sets are logging everything that they did or checking in with an app, I do use an app I use a true coach app with clients. So having them log stuff at the gym, I think with a phone can be beneficial. My bias is more old school, getting a training a notebook, and writing things down. And this is something that you will rarely ever see in the gym. In fact, I was training down here yesterday at Island fitness, shout out to them. And I found someone who was actually writing down her training. It was amazing. The whole time. I've been at the gym down here. That was the only other person over the course of five and a half weeks that I've seen write anything down. Again, maybe a couple of people ping away on their phone or actually logging their training, but I highly doubt it. And I don't think your brain is designed to try to remember everything, I highly doubt you'll be able to remember your third exercise your fourth set, did you really do 10 reps? Or was it really 11? Maybe some of you can remember that. I don't think most people are able to remember that. Nor is your brain designed for that. I'm a big fan of having an old school training journal. I started training, oh, God, three plus decades ago, probably longer than that now



was probably the only intelligent thing I did. When I started. I had a notebook, and I wrote things down. Now granted, I did that for many years and never reviewed any of it, which again, is probably an issue. But at least I wrote stuff down. And I still have a lot of my early training journals. Not really sure why I have them. But writing stuff down is the very beneficial. The reality is you've got a rest period between most things unless you're doing some circuit style training. And you can write things down during the rest period. It's not really costing you any additional time nor effort, pen and pencil or notebook, very inexpensive. And here's what I have in a training journal that I'd recommend you look at. It's pretty basic. I don't think you need to write essays in it. But the first one, so step one, what is your training plan? Again, I have clients who work online with me and three online training program. I do use software I happen to use true coach right now. And having an app I think is beneficial. So for management of clients, I've found that it's very easy compared to old school managing of Excel spreadsheets that I did for way too long. However, even with that, if all things being equal, I'd still recommend that they transfer it to a paper notebook. Only have the notebook in the gym and then just updated online after. Again for some people that's easier. Some people it's not either way, having a plan in place is step number one. I'd love to see some statistics. And how many people are training at the gym with no plan whatsoever. I think it's pretty high in my Most

commercial gyms. So step one, have a plan. Whether you pull one off online, you have someone create something custom for you. Or if you have the skill set to do it yourself, I think that is very beneficial. As you get older, and you'd have a little bit more idea of what's going on how your body responds to things, this may not be super detailed. So for myself, I've got a pretty good idea of what I'm going to be doing on that particular day. However, sometimes the accessories will change. Sometimes, the main exercise I'm doing just doesn't test well, I use a form of range of motion biofeedback testing, and so I will alter it. But I've got a really good idea of what I'm going to be doing on that day. And for this week, next week, and the following week, step one, have some sort of plan. And ideally, at least write out the first couple exercises first, or the theme for that day. Step two is data that you may collect before you get to the gym. I like writing down very simple stuff, the date, the time of training. In the morning, I do heart rate variability, once you can find other podcasts I've talked about this is a marker of the status of your autonomic nervous system. I'll be speaking on this also at the upcoming neural sports conference 2022 In January, down in Florida, so check that out, I hope to see you there. That heart rate variability, simply a marker of stress on your autonomic nervous system. I also record resting heart rate. These are the two measures I take first thing in the morning. The app that I use for this right now is the AI fleet app. So instead of athlete it's I fleet with an AI. That gives me heart rate variability on a one to 100 score that they use, and also resting heart rate. In addition to context, I can log in there, how I felt total training volume from the previous day and some other metrics.



I do use the aura ring, which I find is useful. The HRV on it is accurate. But if you have a very low resting heart rate, you may not see the heart rate variability move around that much and day to day. This is something called parasympathetic saturation. You'll probably find other podcasts where I've talked about this in more detail. My cut off for that with clients is if your resting heart rate seated is kind of 50 or below or you're hitting the low 40s. At night on your aura data, doing the commanded seated one time Heart Rate Variability measurement in the morning is going to be better. If you're trying to look at changes in stress from one day to the next. I do think Ora will get you in the approximate ballpark area. And if your resting heart rate is not real low, it's probably going to be pretty good. But other than that, I found that it doesn't change a lot less, it's pretty severe. Alcohol will have big changes in that not as much sleep can big stressors will still show up. But smaller stressors such as changing in your training program may not necessarily show up. If I'm recording any sleep data, or monitoring that I may make a few notes on that in there. Any am routine changes. I'll log that in the training book. Also, when I'm at home, I'll do some photobiomodulation usually like red light therapy for a while meditation. Lately I've been doing more club bow work. Shout out to my good buddy John Wolf at on it. I picked up some five and 10 pound clubs from on it and John gave me some great exercises and just general words of wisdom for how to do that. So do some of that mobility work in the morning. Down here in South Padre we've been getting up at sunrise most of the days going for a walk and a short run in the morning. After that, we'll have the training plan. So what it is I plan to execute for the day same thing for clients, what are the exercises, the sets the reps, I will track the duration. This could be total duration of completion of all the exercises or it could be duration of a particular exercise. I may be monitoring more closely or it may be exercise pairs. So for example, my buddies Sam Pogue was doing a new programming for him. He was an online client. He was doing deadlifts and chin ups. So a one was deadlift, a two was chin ups. And so what kind of track how long it takes him to complete all of those sets and reps. And once we know the volume, we can then figure out the density because we have the time. So density is just simply volume of work divided by time. The big keys for overload are going to be volume, density, and intensity. So intensity here is percentage of one rep max, or just simply the load that you're lifting. We can track other things such as reps in reserve are IR, or RPE, rating of perceived exertion on a one to 10 scale. But the basics are going to be exercise, sets, reps, and some type of time component, which allows us then to look at density. That's about all I track. For the most part, I may make other notes as I go through, if I feel tired, or feel good, or rub speed felt better,

some less, I may track RPE, as I mentioned, they may add a few other notes. But it's pretty basic. If I have any other changes that I'm making, maybe I'll track more electrolytes, or more fluid, or if I had a pre workout what it was. But it doesn't need to be anything too complicated. I find just keep it very simple. And I'd log what I did during the rest period. And move on to the next exercise.

A couple other notes here that might be useful for you. I do track the PRs. So personal records of the main exercises I'm trying to improve in the back of the notebook. Again, I'm not tracking PRs for every single exercise that I do. I'm tracking the ones that are my top goals. And I will look at volume, density and intensity for those. This way, when I'm working, I always have a good idea of progress or not. Right. So just simply doing more volume means you're doing more overload, you're going in the right direction, if I can do the same volume, but in less time, that's going to be a better density. And that's better overload. So I'm making progress. If I'm lifting the heavier load a percentage of one RM, then that is progress with intensity, what I typically find is more volume, more volume, better density. And then usually an intensity PR will be after that. That's a general pattern. Again, it's highly variable from one person to the next. But this allows you to look and see are you going in the right direction or not? If you're not able to add more volume, or density PRs are not happening. In my experience with myself and clients, it's very unlikely that you're going to hit an intensity PR or heavier load. So people when they start, you may hit higher intensity PRs week after week, but after a few months, for most people, that's just not going to happen. So having other metrics to know that you are moving in the right direction, super helpful. Now again, if you're having someone else to do programming for you, hopefully those parameters are baked in, they're gonna modify your volume, density and have some form of watching your intensity, whether that's a test day, I have a client's at the end of the cycle, I do a lot of am raps, so as many reps as possible, having them fix the load, and then do an AMRAP set that gives me some really good data, are they moving in the right direction with that exercise or not. And I don't have to do one around or, you know, two RM or three RM testing all the time. With some clients that's more appropriate, if they're doing potentially CrossFit and max strength is what they're working on. powerlifting, etc. But for a lot of clients, just looking at an AMRAP it's going to give me all the data that I need. A couple other just general notes that I find. I don't like having my phone on in the gym. I know for some people this is possible or not. I would argue for the vast majority of people, you can take an hour turn your phone off, and the world's not going to end. So in the past I did work for a medical device company where I was on call at times so I would have to have my phone on. But now having it off for an hour. It's gonna be just fine. So I would highly encourage you to consider turning your phone off greatly limit The amount of distractions. Another thing that's been helpful for me is I don't know why I didn't do this sooner. It has bluetooth headphones. For the longest time, I was a little bit too old school and use the little cords that go into them. And about a year and a half ago, I switched to bluetooth headphones. Again, this is only when I'm in a commercial gym, which if I'm at home is only about once a week, maybe twice a week, most of the time lifting in my garage gym, which is great. And then don't bother using headphones then. But the bluetooth headphones were super beneficial. I forgot how many times even running the cord under my shirt that you have to put the phone in your pocket. You're doing say Dumbbell Bench Press and the phone wants to fall out or the cord gets tangled or it's just a pain in the butt. So I have found that Bluetooth headphones are super nice. This was reminded to me as my current bluetooth headphones crapped out. So if you have any suggestions on Bluetooth headphones that you like, please send me a note, I would greatly appreciate that. For me personally, when I go to a commercial gym, now this is different if I'm training with other people at their facility, or I'm at my good buddy, Dr. Ben house that his place in Costa Rica. But most commercial gyms, I'm on a relatively time fixed schedule. I don't know anybody there. And I generally don't like talking to anybody.



Just want to go in, do my thing and leave. For me, I found that Black Death Metal shirts with black headbands and headphones, work pretty good to scare everybody else off, and they won't talk to you, which for me is awesome. Last part too, I have another micro lecture where you can find the micro lectures on the site, Mike T. Nelson calm, you'll find them over on the right hand side, about what to do for eye position breathing, and how to set this up so that you are amplifying sympathetic stimulation right before a lift, which is going to give you better performance. And then going back to parasympathetic, so rest and recovery during your rest periods. And then getting ready for the next set. There are specific things you can do with eye position, breathing, etc. Those are all hardwired into your autonomic nervous system. So I've got a couple of lectures on that in the micro lecture series. You can check those out. Again, right now. They're literally just for I don't know, what is it 160 lectures I think I have, you can just pay whatever you want. So very inexpensive.



Yeah, so there you go. A training notebook, what to set up in it. Again, it's very inexpensive. It's a very simple to use. It's one of those things that I believe is highly underused, in the gym, like just go to a commercial gym and look if anyone writes anything down, I just don't think they're knowing if they're making progress or not. Maybe they do testing every so often. Maybe they have a coach that they're working with, that's keeping an eye on everything for them. But I kind of doubt that that's the case. So step one, have a plan in place. Whether you hire someone to do that, or you take it from online or you write it yourself. Step two, record just some basic data before you get to the gym doesn't have to be anything crazy. Maybe nutrition changes. If you want to write in your macros, I like using heart rate variability, resting heart rate, at a minimum. And then anything different I'm doing in my am routine. Step three, have an actual training plan where you're writing out exercise sets, reps, duration, have some form of overload that you're monitoring, volume, density intensity. I like having PRs in the back of the notebook, so I can look to see if I'm getting close, everything feels good. That may then determine am I going to do more volume, or am I going to go for an intensity PR. Lastly, you can note any other changes that you've made, how you felt fluid changes, diet changes, etc. In terms of reviewing the notebook, I like to review it about once every four to six weeks. Usually at the end of a cycle, I'm going to look and see what changes I need to make. Most of the time I have my top goals that I'm working on. And I'm reviewing the PRs in the back of the notebook as I go through. So if it's been many training sessions, and I haven't gotten a PR for volume, density or intensity, I'm probably going to make a change at that point. I use some biofeedback range of motion testing. Maybe the exercise isn't testing well, maybe I need to do something different. There you go. Very simple information of how to set up and use a training notebook to your advantage to make sure that you are on track hitting all of your goals. And this podcast this week is brought to you by the flex diet, online mentorship, it's divided into four parts, program design and assessment. Part two is marketing and business with a content based model. Part three is mindset, both yourself and your clients. And then Part four is personal development. So it is six months in length, and rotates through those four topics each week. So you'll have six lessons on each over the course of six months, we've got a private Slack channel, and we also have calls that are twice a month. If that's something you are interested in, there is a stiff application process. So I'm only looking to add maybe just a couple more people. And to apply, find me online and send me a note. And I'll get back to you that way. So this is a test to make sure that we are getting people who are very serious about doing it, and who are already pretty decent at coaching, because the stuff we're covering is more on the advanced side. Again, if you're looking for just nutrition and recovery, the flex diet cert would be a better place. Or if you're looking for more advanced recovery metrics to be more robust, then the physiologic flexibility cert would be a better program. But if you're pretty good in recovery, nutrition and basic exercise programming, and you want to transition to a more online based model, especially now with all the craziness that goes on in the world and changes in gyms opening and closing and everything else. Check out flex diet, Online Business mentorship, send me

an email, and I will get you the application. Thank you so much for listening to the podcast. I greatly appreciate it. If you enjoyed this one, right hit subscribe, and please leave us any review any stars that you feel is appropriate. Talk to you next week.