

Keep on Truck'n on!!



TruckSure

By Trevor Toohill

One of the challenges that TruckSure brokers face when they are undertaking insurance reviews is the physical, mental, and medical fitness of drivers in the transport industry.

I have had plenty to say about various aspects of insurance as it applies to the trucks and liability.

I have also touched upon Keyperson life and disability insurance.

It is one thing to be able to purchase truck insurance because you have a good driving and accident record, but what about when you want to buy life, health or income insurance and the insurance company says no because you have a health problem or you may be overweight.

As a professional driver you have a need to keep yourself in good physical shape and yet a high percentage of drivers have a health problem or are just plain out of condition.

You maintain your truck to a high level, give it the best lubricants, fuel, and tyres, and throw plenty of bling on it to make it look pretty.

But what about you...the driver!

Do you match your fancy rig, or are the cracks starting to appear in your chassis?

Are you carrying the spare tyre?

Are your lights a bit dim?

You have probably travelled a few million k's – but when were you last overhauled and reconditioned?

Need a check up from the neck up?

Now I am not just talking about the need to be healthy to be able to buy life and health insurance.

What I am saying is that you need to be in top shape to drive your rig safely and keep enjoying the job!!!

How to maintain peak performance

What do you think the risks are of not developing and maintaining performance habits as a transport operator or driver?

Exhaustion?

Decrease in enthusiasm and motivation? Burn-out?

The risks of not living sustainably are numerous and to be blunt - not very pretty. When you're not sustaining performance over time almost every aspect of your health and well-being will be impacted. **Too many people are sacrificing their health in order to create wealth, and then they retire and spend most of their wealth trying to claw back their health.**

Wouldn't you much rather have it all - to be both content financially and fit physically and mentally? There is no reason why you can't have success and still look after yourself along the way - it just takes some extra discipline and planning to **create high performance habits** in all aspects of your life.

Here are a couple of tips to help you drive to survive:

1. Change your Outlook

"If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change". To develop sustainable performance habits you need to have a flexible mindset and attitude. See the opportunity in challenges. Push yourself every day to improve and be the best you can be and know that you can learn to think differently and manage negative thoughts and recapture your positivity.

Recall how positive and motivated you felt when you got your first contract and bought that dream rig!

2. Change the way you eat and move

We all know the value of healthy eating and regular physical activity. But did you realise that the way you eat and move also impacts your ability to think, your productivity and your day-to-day performance? Healthy eating habits and making time for at least three hours of medium to high intensity physical activity each week will improve your sleep, reduce the risk of developing certain diseases, maintain desired weight and dramatically improve your energy levels.

And if you're one of those people that have been thinking of starting a fitness programme for years – make yourself accountable through a personal trainer, a family member or a friend.

Stop thinking about it and just start doing it.

3. Change the way you balance stress and recovery

Elite athletes balance intense training (work) with periods of rest and strategic recovery. Unfortunately in the transport industry, many people view rest as luxury and they keep working in the hope that one day they'll get more time off. If you are a company driver, annual leave is there to be taken and not stored up. For owner operators and company managers, to maintain peak performance and keep motivated throughout the year you need to build in periods of strategic recovery. This means taking regular breaks throughout the day, having a mini-break or weekend away every quarter and one big (at least two weeks) holiday once a year.

4. Change your driving attitude

I repeat a couple of lines from last month's article:

Do **not** accept that driving risks are an occupational hazard! Stay focussed on the driving task and overcome complacency, inattention, and excessive risk temptation.

"Create a risk free attitude".

Slow down!

A couple of useful reference points to have a look at:
Andrew May - Australia's leading expert on performance and productivity, www.theperformanceclinic.com
The Log Transport Safety Council's "Fit for the Road" programme. – www.logtruck.co.nz
Or have a chat to a TruckSure broker. www.trucksure.co.nz 



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