

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

QATAR TODAY CONTINUES ITS HEALTH AND LIVING SERIES WHERE THE TOP ECHELONS ANSWER THE HARD QUESTIONS ABOUT SUSTAINING A WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND ISSUE SOME HEALTHY LIVING GUIDELINES OF THEIR OWN.

LAST MONTH WE FEATURED A BANKER, THIS MONTH A HOTELIER.

BY NICOLE VAN HATTEM



Garry Friend is engaging, energetic and successful in an industry that requires long hours, strong competition and constant people interaction. As a General Manager of the Grand Hyatt Hotel, a five-star hotel property, how does this leader maintain the balance, positive attitude and energy levels required to sustain success?

What health or lifestyle changes have you made in the last one to two years?

My weight has changed tremendously. I put on 13 kgs when I came to Qatar and now I'm back to my original weight.

What was the key to your success in regaining a healthy weight?

I exercise three or four times a week for 60 minutes each time. I swim in the sea and use the personal trainers at the Grand Hyatt – they are amazing!

How does exercising regularly help you to manage stress?

Exercise is key to maintaining healthy stress levels, and the fitter I am, the more productive I become.

Working long hours, being surrounded by delicious food all the time and entertaining constantly provides many opportunities to overeat or to choose the wrong foods. How do you cope with this?

Managing my food choices is also essential. I make it a point to not eat while I am doing other things such as working on the computer or in meetings. When I eat I choose high quality foods, and I enjoy healthy foods such as green apples, walnuts, honey, green tea, leafy greens, and spices such as chillies.

What do you eat (on most days) for: Breakfast

- Yogurt with fruit and nuts
- Lunch
- Tuna and salad

Dinner

- Fish, chicken or salad unless I am entertaining hotel clients, when I have bigger meals



YOUR TOP 10 TIPS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AT A SENIOR LEVEL IN BUSINESS?

- KEEP HEALTHY
- ENJOY YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT
- UNDERSTAND YOUR COMPANY GOALS AND TARGETS
- KNOW HOW YOUR BOSS TICKS
- KEEP A HIGH PROFILE IN YOUR COMPANY
- WORK WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY
- EMPLOY WELL EDUCATED STAFF
- KEEP LEARNING
- MENTOR THE YOUNG STAFF IN YOUR COMPANY
- ENSURE YOU GO ON HOLIDAYS TWICE A YEAR

Snacks

- Selection of mixed nuts, green apple, green tea with honey

Stress is a normal part of everyday life, however too much stress can be detrimental to health and performance. How do you manage stress in your work and life?

If my stress levels are too high for too long I notice it in my shoulders and back, where it causes pain. So I go for a stress relief massage every week.

I also make sure that I monitor my thought

patterns. I look for the positive side of everyone I meet and if I'm faced with a very challenging situation, I think of the worst thing that can happen and quickly switch to think about all the possible solutions.

Spending quality time with a variety of friends is also a great way to release stress.

I really enjoy what I do and I surround myself with positive people.

How do you see your personal approach to health and work-life balance reflected in the rest of the hotel staff?

I find that people who do not balance work and life tend to burn out very easily, become emotional and negative and can swing from engaging to disengaging.

Fit and healthy employees are key to delivering consistent and high levels of customer service and business performance.

Hyatt has stress management programmes and encourages its executive members and department heads to access the gym.

On a weekly basis, the department heads and I do a physical workout session together to start the day and build the team.

Our healthy approach extends into the staff restaurant, where we offer lots of raw salads without dressing, and whole fruits. We are also renovating the pool at the staff accommodation to provide a lap pool.

As a leader in the community and the workplace, setting an example for others to follow, what would you say are your top 10 tips for: Managing stress

- Enjoy your job
- Make sure that fun is in your daily routine
- Eat sensibly
- Stay away from junk food, soft drinks, sugar
- Take regular exercise
- Have a good mix of friends
- Target short-and-long-term goals
- Keep a sense of humour
- Practise positive thinking
- Overcome fear and move forward

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