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## WHAT'S YOUR WORKOUT?

By JEN MURPHY



# Trump's Apprentice Says He Won't Let a Deal Derail His Fitness Routine

December 13, 2005

*Editor's Note: What's Your Workout? is an Online Journal column that looks at busy people's fitness routines. Here, we talk with Kelly Perdew, winner of the second season of "The Apprentice," about falling out of shape when work stress cranked up and how and why he vowed not to let it happen again.*



Kelly Perdew

### THE EXECUTIVE

Kelly Perdew's response from Donald Trump was about as good as it gets: "You're hired!" The 38-year-old winner of the second season of "The Apprentice" is now working with Mr. Trump on a new marketing venture. Mr. Perdew works in New York City where he lives with his girlfriend.

### THE WORKOUT

After serving in the U.S. Army for seven years, including three years of active duty and four at West Point, Mr. Perdew enrolled in 1992 in a four-year program at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he earned both an M.B.A. from The Anderson School of Management and a JD from UCLA School of Law.

By the time he finished the program in 1996, the West Point alum realized he was acquiring some bad civilian habits. Though he wasn't exactly a couch potato, he was definitely losing some of his military discipline and fitness rigor. "I wasn't obese but I was getting soft," Mr. Perdew says.

#### THE ROUTINE

**Monday:** 40 minutes of weights, 15 minutes on the elliptical machine.

He initially exercised for two hours before class every morning

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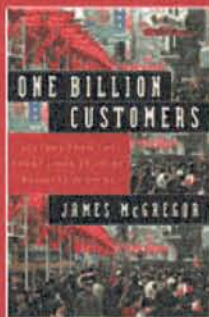
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**Tuesday:** Sprints stairs in Central Park for 15-20 minutes.  
**Wednesday:** 40 minutes of weights, 12 minutes on the treadmill.  
**Thursday:** Day off .  
**Friday:** 40 minutes of weights, 10 minutes on the treadmill.  
**Saturday:** Sprints stairs in Central Park for 15-20 minutes.  
**Sunday:** 40 minutes of weights, 20 minutes on the elliptical machine.

but during his final year he started neglecting his body as he became consumed with raising money for a start-up, ImagTel, a high-end videoconferencing company. As he threw himself into getting

the company off the ground over the next two years he noticed he wasn't able do as many push-ups and pull-ups. And that wasn't his first inkling he'd gotten lazy. "I couldn't stay up late, I got tired easily, I wasn't as alert and I wasn't happy with my physical appearance," he says. The work stress killed his appetite, and poor nutrition plus a lack of exercise turned his muscle into fat. "I didn't get fat, I turned soft," he says.

About six years ago, Mr. Perdeu vowed never to let himself get out of shape again. "The start-up was the turning point when I said 'I need to make a conscious effort'," he says. Since making that promise to himself, fitness has become just as important to him as clinching business deals -- he makes sure to fit at least three or four days of aerobic exercise a week into his plans. He schedules exercise on his calendar just like a meeting.

His workout has shifted focus since his military days. After blowing out his Achilles tendon playing basketball a couple of years ago, a friend encouraged him to train for a mini-triathlon as part of his rehabilitation program. "I loved the training," he says. "Now instead of focusing on building muscle, I focus on cross training."



Kelly Perdeu

Mr. Perdeu strives to do three to four days of weight training a week. His weight-lifting routine includes sets of functional exercises rather than exercises aimed at beefing up muscles. He packs in his 40-to-60 minute workout starting at

6:30 a.m. and is lucky to live fewer than two blocks from his gym. Mr. Perdeu works his muscles from strongest to weakest, doing one set of 15 repetitions and then moving to the next exercise. He caps his routine with a cardio workout -- 15 to 20 minutes on the elliptical machine or six to 12 minutes on the

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What's Your Workout Wall Street Journal Online looks at the lifestyles routines of busy executives by Jen Murphy, an author of Food & Wine magazine



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treadmill, running at a pace of six and a half minutes a mile and maintaining a heart rate of 160 to 165 beats per minute. He also sprints about 40 stairs in Central Park for 15 to 20 minutes two days a week. His focus is on quality cardio exercise, not quantity -- but he's also willing to push himself. "When I get to the point where I'm trembling and tasting blood, I do push-ups and crunches until I get my breath back, then sprint home."

an avid runner and fit was a personal trainer at Northeastern University's Fitness Center. She earned her bachelor's degree in journalism from Northeastern University.

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**THE DIET**

Mr. Perdew is lackadaisical about his diet when his workout is on track, but more vigilant when he can't fit as much exercise into his schedule. At six foot, 190 pounds, he keeps trim with a high-protein diet, which he followed before low-carb, high-protein diets became the latest fad. He tries to eat four servings of vegetables and three

**SAMPLE WORKOUT**

(One set, 15 repetitions)

- Leg Curl
- Leg Extension
- Abduction
- Adduction
- Leg Press
- Standing Calf
- Glute Isolator
- Lat Pulldown
- Pectoral Fly
- Seated Row
- Incline Chest Press
- Dumbbell Front Raise
- Overhead Press
- Dumbbell Curl
- Dumbbell Tricep Extension
- Seated Dip
- Abdominal
- Leg Lowers
- Incline Abs
- Treadmill

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servings of fruit per day. Breakfast makes it into his diet about half the time -- usually energy bar or bran or wheat cereal with fruit. The cafeteria in Trump Tower offers choices like soups, salads and turkey sandwiches for lunch. Mr. Perdew eats dinner at restaurants three nights a week but both he and his girlfriend try to make healthy choices. "It helps to have someone with me who is also thinking about being healthy," he says.

He also avoids eating after 10 p.m. and tries to stay away from fried foods, though fried chicken. "I can eat seven or eight pieces without slowing down," he admits. His weakness is thick-cut French fries. "I only sub the fries for the salad half the time,"

**QUESTIONS ON FITNESS?**

E-mail your questions on working out and dieting, plus suggestions and thoughts on the column, to Jen Murphy at [workout@wsj.com](mailto:workout@wsj.com).

Read [previous installments](#) of this column.



**THE COST**

Mr. Perdew purchased an all-access membership at Equinox fitness club because it lets him use facilities across the U.S. An annual membership costs between \$1,800 and \$2,200. He buys New Balance sneakers for their pronating support. Clothing is simple -- bike shorts under gym shorts and T-shirts. "All you do is sweat, you don't look pretty," he says. His only other accoutrement is lifting gloves, which cost less

**THE EFFORT**

Mr. Perdew is on the road about two weeks a month but says traveling is no excuse for slacking. "To say you don't have a place to work out is a cop-out," he says. "You have to make it work."

creative. I've seen someone with a chair show me about 20 exercises. It's a lot easier. The machines are new and there's nice water and spray mist but we didn't have facilities like the Army. We used partner-resistant exercises."

Mr. Perdew says his girlfriend motivates him to go to the gym and eat healthier. "I have a buddy who relies on you," he says.

### THE BENEFIT

Mr. Perdew makes time for exercise because he considers it a commitment to his health. "[During] the hour and a half of getting to the gym, working out and showering, I do another deal a week. But it's totally worth it."

Write to Jen Murphy at [workout@wsj.com](mailto:workout@wsj.com)

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