



## 5 Life Hacks From Elon Musk That Could Help You Reach Your Full Potential

### Description

If we're honest, most of us will admit we've never operated at our full potential. At first that can seem depressing. After all, who among us doesn't work extremely hard every day, putting in the hours to save money, build wealth, and leave a legacy worth remembering?

But, in truth, failing to meet your full potential is good news. It means you have room to grow. As William S. Burroughs once said, "when you stop growing, you start dying." And if you have potential left, I'd say you're not dying yet.

Enter Elon Musk. We can all agree Musk is an entrepreneur who operates at his full potential. Love him or hate him, Musk has three successful companies, six kids, and the biggest net worth in the world.

What can we learn from Musk about meeting our full potential? He has a lot to say on this topic, but here are my five favourite tips.

### 1. Keep your pain threshold high

For a guy who has six kids — one set of twins, one set of triplets, and a baby — Musk certainly knows the meaning of exhaustion. But he doesn't let exhaustion get in the way of innovating: like a bodybuilder or an athlete, he accepts the reality of pain and uses it to his advantage. As he says:

"Starting a business is not for everyone. Number one, I'd say, is to have a high pain threshold."

—*Elon Musk*

Your potential is like a muscle. It grows to the degree that you rip it. You might start with a low pain threshold. But the more you push yourself, the higher your pain threshold will become, helping you reach record performances.

## 2. Embrace failure

As a culture, we have a stigma against failure. Many of us would prefer to talk about our successes, rather than our failures, and the fear around it is so high, it can put a firm cap on what we can accomplish.

For Musk, however, failures aren't an obstacle. They are the way to success. As he said:

"If something is important enough, you should try even if the probable outcome is failure."  
—*Elon Musk*

When I think of Musk's failures, I think of SpaceX: Musk has launched so many failed rockets, he's even made a video about it. But none of those failures has stopped him or his team from innovating harder. As he says in another quote, "If things are not failing, you are not innovating enough."

## 3. Don't follow trends

Musk is certainly not someone who follows trends. As the face of the EV revolution, he's forging a path ahead, not following one that others have laid down.

As he's said:

"Going viral doesn't happen by accident. Stand out by focusing on what makes you unique instead of chasing others."  
—*Elon Musk*

## 4. Never settle

Musk isn't someone who's comfortable with himself. That's not to say he's always restless or dissatisfied. But he's driven by the idea that he can be better — that he can perform at higher levels. As he says:

"It's very important to have a feedback loop, where you're constantly thinking about what you've done and how you could be doing it better. I think that's the single best piece of advice: constantly think about how you could be doing things better and questioning yourself."  
—*Elon Musk*

That last part is key. *Question* yourself. It reminds me of that Socrates quote, "The unexamined life is not worth living." Socrates probably wasn't thinking about making electric cars. But he certainly knew the limits of the human mind as well as how an individual can surpass them with rational thought.

## 5. Give yourself long, uninterrupted time to think

For a long time, people thought Elon Musk broke his day into five-minute blocks. They even made it a rule, the “five-minute rule”: segment your entire day into five-minute chunks, and you’ll feel more productive.

Then, a few years back, Musk confronted the rumour on **Twitter**.

“I definitely don’t do this 5 minute thing. Need to have long uninterrupted time to think. Can’t be creative otherwise.”

—Elon Musk

“...long, uninterrupted time to think.” This is perhaps my favourite Musk habit. It’s the most countercultural, and it’s the hardest to pull off. The “five-minute” productivity rule is better suited for the way that we operate today: move quickly from one task to the next, everything is planned out, and there’s no room for surprises. But when you sit and think — like, *actually* think — you go deeper into yourself. You rule out distractions, which permits you to focus on a single purpose for a long period of time.

In fact, I think this tip is the infrastructure for the others. When you think for long periods of time, you build the mental strength needed to accept failure, disrupt trends, and understand your pain threshold. And with that mental strength, you can have the stamina to surpass your own limits.

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