

15 Little “Life Hacks” That Can Change Your Life



**I WILL TEACH YOU
TO BE RICH**

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Welcome

What if you could double how interesting people found you at parties...with one word?

What if you could you could attract more and better customers...by charging more?

What if you could triple the number of men or women who answer your call (or call you)...with a single text message?

Welcome to the wonderful world of testing, where little changes to your life and business can deliver massive rewards.

I've been obsessed with testing since I was in high school. My parents didn't have the money to send me to college, so it was up to me to find it. I built a system to test my way through dozens of scholarships and interviews. I ended up paying my way through undergrad and grad school at Stanford.

All from a few little tests.

In this guide, you'll learn about some of my favorite little "life experiments" that I've done. I've also invited a number of special guests to share some of their best tests.

Enjoy,

- Ramit

www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com

How to get people interested in you at cocktail parties and bars

You're asked the same questions hundreds or thousands of times in your lifetimes — “What do you do?” “Where are you from?” “Where do you live?” “What do you like to do in your free time?” — yet how many of us ever take the time to systematically test them?

You can be completely honest, yet the way in which you answer these common questions can change the way virtually everyone responds to you.

1. The “What Do You Do?” Test

Answer 1: “I’m a writer.”

Results: An interest level of 2/5. They’ll say, “Oh that’s cool...I have a friend who’s a writer...he’s trying to publish his book on using cucumbers to generate sustainable energy for —” NO YOUR FRIEND IS NOT A WRITER, HE’S A LOSER.

Answer 2: “I’m an author.”

Results: An interest level of 4/5. “Really? So what did you write?”

The Takeaway: The way you word your answers can produce profoundly different interest levels. Test your responses to see what works the best.



2. The “Oh, So Do You Have An Office?” Test

Answer 1: “No, I work from home.”

Results: A 90%-95% “Scorn Score,” (e.g., “Oh...” or “Ah...how is that?” followed by a semi-frown).

Answer 2: “No, I work from a home office.”

Results: The Scorn Score drops to 50%.
Common answer: “Wow, I wish I could do that.”

The Takeaway: One word changes everything.

Ramit Sethi is a New York Times bestselling author and the founder of [I Will Teach You To Be Rich](#). His personal finance and career advice has been featured in The Wall Street Journal, CNBC, FORTUNE, NPR, CNN and ABC.

How to grow your brand's value by counter-intuitively charging more

When AppSumo.com started out, promoting the best online tools at a discount, the <insert superlative here>



in me tried to price everything just 10% above our cost. So if we had to pay our partner \$25 for selling their web tool I'd price it at \$27.50. The rationale was lower prices = more sales = more customers and more growth. Right?

This lunacy continued for some time until I decided to test if this really was true.

Our first test: Doubling the margin. So now we sold the \$25 product for \$50. I was nervous but figured a test would give me good insight. Our daily email for awesome entrepreneur's products was sent out (notice the shameless plug?) and I waited for the results....Queue drumroll.

Conversions went up!
Revenue went way up!
Returns went down!
Customer happiness went up!

WTF was going on? My traditional "practical" alarm was going berserk. I talked to the customers, reviewed the data and came

to some fascinating conclusions.

We weeded out a lot of the bargain hunters. They may seem like "good" customers, but they don't care about you long-term. If a cheaper option for something they want comes along, they're out of here. Ever notice how Zappos is 10-20% more than any other place online. They don't compete on price and as a result they get customers who don't focus on that either.

If we 10x the price or if the products sucked, then the increase in price would backfire. However, this wasn't the case; the actual conversion rate for our customers went up. They care more about VALUE than price. Bowing to our Sumo-lings!

The Takeaway: It all comes down to value. Think about all the free PDFs you've downloaded vs. knowledge you've paid money for. Which do you prioritize to read? Exactly! You're reading this and it's good, but you would value buying a product 10x-100x more!

Noah Kagan is the Chief Sumo of AppSumo.com, the online store for entrepreneurs. We help cure your case of the Mondays by helping you kick ass in your own business!

How to make flossing a habit

I've been working on systems to create daily habits, and just over a year ago I decided to get serious about making flossing a daily habit.



Those of you who don't floss, we've all had the experience: You go to the dentist and the hygienist takes care of you and the dentist comes in and says, "Okay, I can see you're not flossing very well." You resolve to do it and it works for a little bit.

So, for me, cracking the code on flossing was to put the floss right by the toothbrush, and to commit to myself that I would floss one tooth — only one tooth — every time after I brushed.

I could floss them all if I wanted to, but the commitment was just one tooth. So I'd

brush my teeth and then I'd just floss one tooth, and it was like victory. I succeeded. I would not feel guilty about not flossing the other teeth.

I was training the behavior. So maybe once every two weeks, I floss one tooth, but pretty much I floss them all, and it's even easier to do now.

The Takeaway: If you're doing a small behavior like flossing one tooth without any outside pressure, the full behavior will naturally emerge.

Dr. BJ Fogg directs the Persuasive Tech Lab at Stanford University. A psychologist and innovator, his work empowers people to think clearly about the psychology of persuasion — and then to convert those insights into real-world outcomes. Fortune Magazine selected him as one of the "10 New Gurus You Should Know". Learn more at his website: www.bjfogg.com.

How to change your body composition with one 20 minute workout a week

After endurance athletics ruined my health, I discovered the simple efficiency of the sprint. It took me awhile to accept the fact that I didn't have to train for three hours a day just to get a good workout, that I could spend twenty minutes running really fast in short bursts and get an arguably superior level of fitness, but I eventually did. I put on more muscle and maintained my low body fat in a fraction of the training time.

Problem was, all that wear and tear I'd accumulated over the years running marathons caught up to me, and I aggravated an old knee injury. Nothing career-ending, but enough to make me wince the day after a sprint session.

So I started thinking: How could I keep the efficiency of sprinting while reducing the jarring impact inherent to running as fast as humanly possible? I figured I'd test hill sprints instead of flat ones. Why hill sprints?

They're lower impact than regular sprints.

Since your feet aren't "falling" as far with each step on an uphill slope, hill sprints are actually easier on your joints than sprints on a flat surface.

They give more bang for your buck. You're working directly against the greatest source of

physical resistance in the known universe — gravity.

They're safer. The steep grade prevents your body from moving faster than it's built to withstand, but the effort you expend to reach that diminished speed is just as high.

The results?



I dropped the flat sprints and took up hill sprints as an experiment. My joints stopped hurting, my sessions became even

shorter and more intense, and I got better results. They were harder than flat sprints, but not as hard on my body.

The Takeaway: Small tweaks to winning formulas can reveal even bigger wins.

Mark Sisson is a former elite endurance athlete and the author of [The Primal Blueprint](#), [The Primal Blueprint 21-Day Total Body Transformation](#), and the upcoming [Primal Connection](#). He blogs about health, fitness, and nutrition at [Mark's Daily Apple](#).

How to text message important people (and girls)

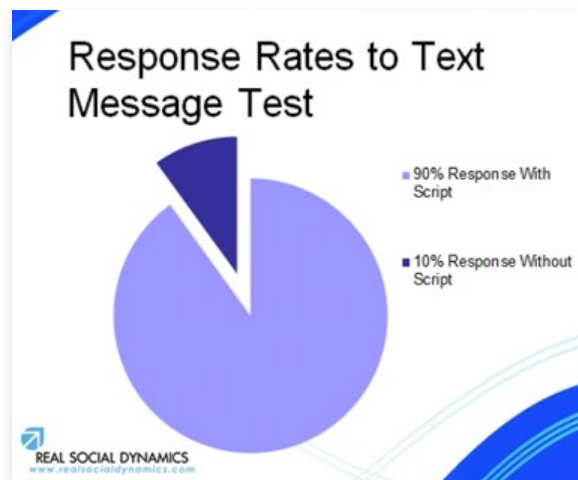
Here's one of the most effective dating and business scripts that I recommend to all of my clients. Immediately after getting a phone number of a beautiful woman or an important person, to send them a text message that states, "Amber — It was a pleasure to meet you. Save my phone number in your phone because if you are like me, you don't answer unrecognized calls. Cheers, Nick." Over 90% of the time, you get an almost instant response of something to the effect of, "Lol. I'm so like that too. Will do and it was great to meet you."

This works because the text makes the recipient feel important. It demonstrates that I have the intent to stay in touch with her after our encounter while simultaneously showing that I'm someone that has higher value with an active social life.

I have found this script helps a lot in removing phone flakes because most beautiful women, and any other busy people, really don't answer unrecognized phone calls.

This is a major problem to a lot of guys who have great interactions with a woman

they just met or a very important contact who is busy, especially if it was their first encounter with that person from an initial cold approach.



In addition, when you call the recipient you've met after using this script, she is 3x more likely to answer the phone than if you were an unrecognized phone call.

The Takeaway: Follow-through is just as important, if not more, than approach.

Nick Kho is the Co-Founder of RSDNation.com and Real Social Dynamics, an Inc 5000 company and the world's largest dating coaching company hosting 1,000 live programs annually in 270 cities and 70 countries for over 40,000 people.

How to optimize your conversions by testing your message medium

People have different learning styles.

Though the written word is still the bread-and-butter persuasion medium on the Web, it's also important to appeal to people who prefer to learn by watching.

We therefore created a video for our site to see if it increased the conversion rate. We wrote a three-minute script that encapsulated the key points of our sales message. Although it's now possible to "point and shoot" a high-definition video in just minutes, a mediocre video could lose our audience in seconds—so we used the video production company [Demo Duck](#) to create the video. And we think they did an excellent job.



The result?

Even though the video's message was similar to that of the rest of the page, during the split-test the version of the page with the video in it generated 64% more conversions than the control.

The Takeaway: Test different modalities to find what works best for you, your audience, and your message.

Neil Patel is the co-founder of 2 Internet companies: [Crazy Egg](#) and [KISSmetrics](#). Through his entrepreneurial career he has helped large corporations such as Amazon, AOL, GM, HP and Viacom make more money from the web.

*[Conversion Rate Experts](#) is an international consultancy that has worked with companies including Apple, Sony, Vodafone, Google, 888, BT (British Telecom), SEO Book, and SEOMoz. Conversion Rate Experts has pioneered a new approach to conversion rate optimization (CRO) called *The CRE Methodology*. Double- and triple-digit improvements are the norm.*

How to increase your impact with a photo

Do human photos on a landing page increase sales and conversions? Medalia Art sells Brazilian and Caribbean art online. They showcase paintings from famous artists on their homepage and decided to test what happens if paintings are replaced by the artists' photos.

First, the control: painting thumbnails



And the variation: artist thumbnails



Results?

The thumbnails of paintings converted at 8.8%, but if paintings are replaced with artists' photos, the conversion rate increases

to a whopping 17.2%. That's more than a 95% increase!

The Takeaway: Humans relate very strongly with each other, even when the visitors were looking for art. Don't let your content get in the way of connecting with your audience.

Paras Chopra is the Founder & CEO of [VisualWebsiteOptimizer.com](https://visualwebsiteoptimizer.com), the market leading A/B testing tool that is used by thousands of businesses across 50+ countries to easily increase sales and conversion rate on their websites.

How to triple your productivity by testing how you measure success

If your goal is to maximize your productivity, then you'll want a full understanding of how you spend your time and what really influences your output. Or so I thought...

For an entire year, I tracked my productivity, mood, energy level, and health in 15 minute increments. I also logged everything I ate, how much I slept and a slew of other tedious details. Major pain in the ass...but I was able to identify hidden patterns in my workflow and boost my total writing time.

The result?

I completed a record amount of writing, most of it in big chunks.

So it was with more than a pinch of skepticism that I decided to test Jerry Seinfeld's productivity advice: Get a calendar and place a big red "X" on it for every day you write. The idea is that pretty soon you'll start a chain of success and will be motivated to not break the chain.

Well, I was never able to extend the chain past 5 or 6 days. And some of those days were pretty short. But it didn't matter. Seinfeld's tip may not have boosted my total

writing time, but it *tripled* my output.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
X	X	X		X	X	
	X	X	X	X		X
X	X	X		X	X	X
	X	X	X		X	
	X	X	X	X	X	X

Because I was writing more often, I didn't spend a big chunk of my writing time trying to figure out where I left off. I could just jump right in and make progress. Often in windows of time I previously would have considered too short to be of use.

As it turns out, the biggest lever wasn't how much I wrote, it was how often. Keeping my writing top of mind was the key.

The Takeaway: How you measure success can shape how successful you are.

Ryan W. Johnson founded [Master the Craft](#) to help aspiring and professional screenwriters learn how to write faster, better and longer.

How to increase your gym attendance by 300%

I was having problems getting myself motivated to go to the gym. Every morning, I'd groggily wake up and say, "Ugh...I know I should get up..." and then roll over and go back to sleep.

Day after day — even though I genuinely wanted to go to the gym.

I finally realized that "motivation" alone has very little to do with successfully changing behaviors. I started testing different techniques: Adding gym to my calendar, sleeping 30 minutes earlier. I would test different approaches for 2 weeks, noting the outcome in a wiki. I got mediocre results.

But when I sat down to analyze *why* I wasn't going to the gym, I realized: My closet was in another room. That meant I had to walk out in the cold, in my boxer shorts, to the other room, shivering while I put on my clothes.

Easier to just stay in bed.

Once I realized this, I folded my clothes and shoes the night before. When I woke up the next morning, I would roll over and see my



gym clothes sitting on the floor. In fact, I couldn't get up without stepping on them!

The result? My gym attendance soared by over 300%.

The Takeaway: What tactics could you use to increase your gym attendance? Could you find a workout partner? Hire a trainer? Or simply use the "folded-clothes" approach? My suggestion: Test them all.

Ramit Sethi is a New York Times bestselling author and the founder of [I Will Teach You To Be Rich](#). His personal finance and career advice has been featured in The Wall Street Journal, CNBC, FORTUNE, NPR, CNN and ABC.

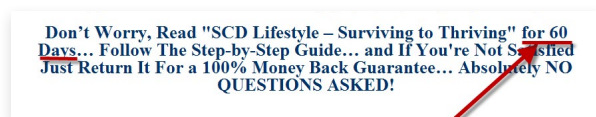
How to double sales (and halve refunds) by eliminating risk

My buddy Steve and I help people with digestive diseases like Crohn's Disease and Ulcerative Colitis naturally treat their symptoms with diet. In 2007, I was diagnosed with a life-threatening digestive disease, and this diet was so effective it saved my life (and Steve's too). We took our experiences and techniques and wrote an ebook to help other people with similar problems.

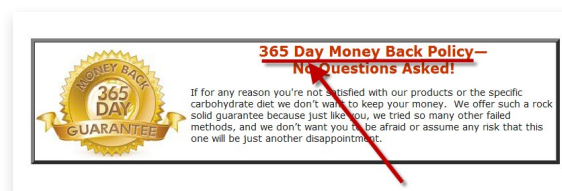
But the first year we had a big problem: Our customers didn't trust us. Why would a sick, skeptical person try our \$37 ebook? Why risk throwing away more money on yet another failed treatment that won't work? Refunds were high, and people were still afraid to try the diet.

That's when we decided to completely eliminate their risk by testing a more confident 365-day guarantee against our original 60-day guarantee.

The original 60-day guarantee:



The revised 365-day guarantee:



What happened blew my mind. Refunds dropped 44% (from 9.25% to 5.14%)...sales doubled (roughly 200% increase)...and customers sent us more success stories than ever!

All because of trust, which came naturally after giving them an entire year to try the diet and if it didn't work, refunding their money... something they'd never get from the medical community.

The Takeaway: If you want people to trust you and you're confident, ask yourself: "How can I *completely* eliminate risk to earn their trust?" Then test it. You may be surprised at the results.

Jordan Reasoner is the Co-Founder of SCDLifestyle.com, the #1 resource for naturally healing digestive disease used by thousands of people across 146 countries to live a long and healthy life.

How to boost your impact by keeping things simple

People like to believe that flashier websites, sales pages, and videos will outsell simpler, less-sexy versions of the same.

Fun to believe (and true under specific conditions), but why do we think that? Is it true?

We recently had a client selling a nutrition book that shared science-backed food remedies for specific chronic health conditions. They asked us to create a video selling the product.

We made two versions:

1. A text-only version that simply had the words going across the screen as they were spoken



2. A graphical version that contained graphics along with much of the text



Which do you think converted better?

It turned out the text-only version outperformed by over 2:1.

The Takeaway: Does making something flashier or more complex = making it "better"? Guess not.

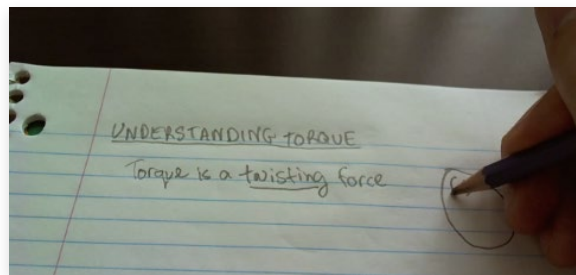
Mike Williams is a copywriter, conversion optimization expert, and founder of Momentum.org. He advises and consults folks like Ramit Sethi, Noah Kagan, Neil Patel, and Boardroom Publishing.

How a simple switch could triple your learning rate

Simple changes can have big effects, especially when the answer is “obvious”. Here’s one that forever changed how I learned:

I found myself facing a tough physics exam in a few days, and I kept getting a particular type of question wrong. To me the answer was obvious — I needed more practice. Yet even after a few hours of practice, all I could do was plug in a formula.

So I made a switch. What if I went through the explanation given, sentence-by-sentence, and rewrote it in my own words. Certainly I didn’t have time for that, did I? My exam was only a few days away!



The entire process took only 30 minutes and clued me into the exact gap in my understanding. Since then I’ve used this technique every time I’ve gotten stuck, and I’ve found it clears up mistakes in roughly a third of

the time as the typical skim-and-practice method, despite feeling much slower.

The funny thing is, whenever I share this useful technique, I get comments that it is “obvious”. Yet I’ve seen almost never seen anyone do this. Many great ideas are like this: They’re not counterintuitive hacks, just easy tests we fail to explore.

Three takeaways:

1. The right method matters more than the most effort. Blindly putting in time doesn’t guarantee success.
2. Seemingly slow but effective methods can be much faster than quick fixes.
3. Good ideas seem obvious in hindsight, but we rarely test them out!

Scott Young is a blogger currently completing MIT’s 4-year computer science curriculum in just 12 months, without taking classes. You can sign up to get his [free rapid learning ebook](#).

How to capture Ramit Sethi's attention (or anyone's)

When I was heading up Marketing at RunKeeper, I took my first stab at PR by playing the volume game. I hammered out one canned pitch email after another. The result? A pathetic 7% response rate on a good week.

So I tested a new game.

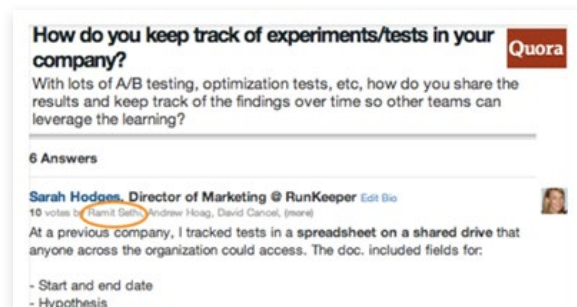
First, I actually read reporters' articles before I reached out. I went for real connections and quality over quantity.

Then I worked hard to make my press releases easy for them to read. I cut out the jargon. (Sometimes longer is better, but always be efficient with your words. Trust me, no one likes the sound of your voice as much as you do. Nix.) I also polished the style. I used section headers, bullets and selective underlining or italics to tell the story.

The results?

My newly crafted notes sung with a genuine interest in the reporters' work, immediately driving the response rate up to 37%.

Which reminds me of a story: I was on Quora when it was cool to be on Quora, back when it was still just a bunch of self-important bleeding-edge hipsters. And you know what? Ramit Sethi liked my answers so much, he picked up the phone to see if I wanted to geek out over marketing analytics together.



It's pretty simple—choose your words wisely, and people will like you (or at least, listen to you).

The Takeaway: Keep it real. Get to the point. Highlight the good stuff.

Sarah Hodges is the Co-Founder of [Intelligent.ly](https://www.intelligent.ly), a learning campus that connects experts with professionals who want to hone their skills. While previously at RunKeeper, she drove coverage in The New York Times, Tech Crunch, Gigaom and Mashable.

How to increase your energy level in one week

Three years ago, I had a major mystery health issue. I slept 14 hours a day and woke up absolutely exhausted. I barely had enough energy to leave my apartment, let alone work on the book I was supposed to be writing.

The doctors couldn't find anything wrong. I had an MRI, an echocardiogram, and blood work done. All negative: No abnormalities, deficiencies, or diseases. Just a "poor constitution" and a folder full of expensive images of my brain and heart.

Modern medicine couldn't help me, so I started testing little things on my own — amino acid supplementation, light therapy, exercise. Each of these experiments made things a little bit better. Not a dramatic improvement, but noticeable progress.

One day, I met a woman with the same symptoms. She found that eliminating wheat and dairy from her diet helped significantly. *Worth a test...*

I changed my diet immediately. To avoid relying on willpower, I threw away every-

thing in my kitchen with these ingredients, so it was easy to avoid eating them. I learned what to look for on food labels to make shopping easier. (Did you know soy sauce contains wheat?) If I didn't know what to order at a restaurant, I ordered a grilled chicken salad or a steak.

The result? My "condition" improved in a matter of days. By the time I went in to see my doctor for my annual physical, I felt like my old self again. As the doctor drew my blood for a confirmatory allergy test, he said this: "It doesn't matter what the test says, your self-experimentation is proof enough for me. Keep doing what you're doing."

This little experiment changed my life: I regained the energy to focus on doing great work. I finished my book, took on more projects, and my business began to grow. As an unexpected bonus, I lost 25 pounds. I'm in better shape now than I was in high school.

The Takeaway: Small improvements in your health or fitness impact EVERY day and aspect of your life, including your business.

Josh Kaufman is the founder of PersonalMBA.com and the author of "The Personal MBA: Master the Art of Business," an international bestseller. He helps entrepreneurs and creative professionals learn the fundamentals of business, psychology, and systems so they can make more money, get more done, and have more fun.



How to strengthen your friendships and self-esteem with \$1

There are two destructive things that most people I know do:

1. They destroy their relationships with others by saying negative things about them behind their backs.
2. They destroy their relationship with themselves—their self-esteem—by negative things about themselves.

Every month for years, I've given myself "thirty-day experiments" as a form of behavior modification. So for 30 days, I decided not to say anything negative about anyone behind their back (no matter how true I felt it to be) and to not say anything negative about myself (even if it was just self-deprecating humor).

I've found that these experiments are most successful if there is a small punishment for engaging in the undesired behavior. And so I added a consequence: If I said anything derogatory about anyone else or myself, I had to give whomever I was speaking to a dollar on the spot. If it was on the phone, I had to give a dollar to the very next person I saw.



I went to the bank, put \$30 worth of singles in an envelope in my back pocket, and started my 30 day challenge.

"Have you found a new assistant yet?" the banker, Leon, asked.

"I think so. Found a great person. She used to work for Sharon Stone."

"Wow."

"She's really taken a step down in life," I joked.

As soon as the words left my mouth, I realized that, just seconds into the experiment, I'd already failed: I put myself down.

Leon said he'd lose his job if he accepted the dollar, so I went outside and gave it to

a man asking for spare change. And so began one of the most productive months of self-improvement I've had in my life. I soon discovered two important things:

1. There is no reason to ever put someone else down when they're not present.
2. There is no reason to ever put ourselves down in front of other people.

So then why do we do it?

For myself, I found that I did the former to get ratification of my opinions about someone and the latter in a misguided attempt to be humble.

This doesn't mean that as a result of these 30 days, I never want to put myself or others down. However, by taking the high road not giving in to the impulse to pointlessly verbalize it, I've become a happier, more confident, more positive person. And as a result, my friendships have become much stronger. Not only do others enjoy my company more, but so do I.

Neil Strauss is the author of seven New York Times bestselling books, including [The Game](#), [The Dirt](#), and [Emergency](#). He can be found (naked) at www.neilstrauss.com.

How to get more experiments to improve your life

I hope you enjoyed this little guide to 15 life experiments that can change your life.

If you know someone who would enjoy or benefit from any of these tests, please feel free to forward this guide to them.

If you're interested in using a "testing mentality" to earn more or improve your career, you can join my [free newsletter](#), where I send out psychological insights and test results every week.

You'll get a behind-the-scenes look at the IWT Laboratory.

Here's that link:

<http://iwillteachyoutoberich.com/more-tests>

Thanks for reading,

- Ramit