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>>**Because my job depends on my appearance,** I put a considerable amount of effort into building and maintaining my physique. Many well-intended associates will compliment me on my “genetics” and lament that they wish they were as “gifted” as I am. Truth be told, I have as many fat ancestors as they do.

>> **The decision is the most-important key to getting lean.** I know the reasons that fuel my decision must overpower all of the discomforts and sacrifices inherent in being lean. I have to make that same decision at 5 a.m. every morning when the alarm goes off, so it has to be a strong enough to get me out of bed.

>> **I set a date to start leaning out.** Just before that, I throw a farewell party for all of my habits that will no longer be useful. After this final indulgence, the old habits get replaced. Not only do I substitute sweets and pasta with spinach and protein, I also trade in any emotional barriers like procrastination, comfort and security with intensity, desire and perseverance.

>> **My workouts are non-negotiable.** I’ve surrounded myself with people who support my training and understand that exercise is my Prozac. Everyone has a team (workout partner, significant other, friends, parents, etc.) so make sure your team understands and supports your goals, too – or kick them off!

>> **I spend two hours in the gym five days a week** plus at least an hour per day of cardio *every day*. (This is cut-up time; my maintenance routine is less than an hour per day.) I use the stair machine or run along the ocean if it’s a nice day. Afterward, I meet my workout partner to focus on just a couple of muscle groups per session. We do high reps with low weights to really shred up. I constantly change my routine so my body stays alert and my progress doesn’t plateau. Every workout ends with a 20 minutes of intense ab training .

>> **I eat six high-protein/low-carb meals (roughly 2,000 calories) daily.** If I’m not leaning out for an upcoming project, I’ll make Sunday a cheat day. I used to struggle with fat loss until I discovered the real secret to diet – water -- which is the best all natural appetite suppressant, diuretic and fat metabolizer, and it’s free! I drink at least a gallon of water per day; to do that, I need to drink *before* I’m thirsty.