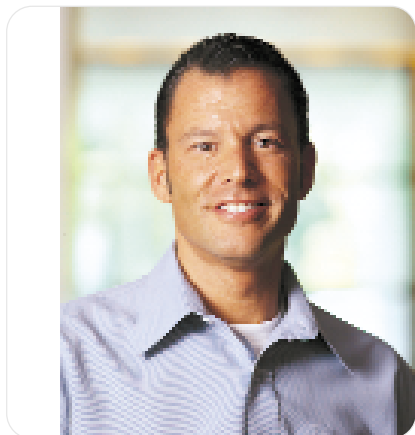


Staying Healthy

Now that it's beach weather in Silicon Valley, it's more important than ever that we geeks stay fit, and not let our bodies and minds grow soft and lazy.



*by Stuart R. Gold,
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At Ariba, where our most valuable asset has always been our people – our partners, our employees and our management – I'm particularly zealous about us staying healthy. I'll admit that the painful layoffs earlier this year made me focus on how we take care of ourselves, and our company.

The truth is that for the last few years, personally and as an industry, we overspent, we over-marketed, we overate and we underslept.

Today, I am as committed to my health as to the health of Ariba. Here are some of my tips:

1. Break a sweat

This is something you want to do before the beach, not at the beach. It's not easy, and it's not much fun, to squeeze exercise into a 60 hour work week. I'm up at 5:30 in the morning two days a week, and all the way to the gym I hate it, I hate it, I hate it.

But you know, those 25 minutes on the treadmill are mine, all mine. Leaving the gym, I love it, I love it, I love it. I have more energy, I think more clearly, and I make better decisions.

2. Take care of your head

As you know, there are times when I can be pretty nuts. I bounce off walls, do 50 things at the same time, make a lot of

noise and get pretty wild. But that's actually part of keeping sane.

Mental health can be sorely tested in this frenzied business. We don't just work days, we work life. Our colleagues aren't just co-workers; they're family.

Our layoffs were the hardest thing I ever had to manage. The day after half my staff was laid off, I brought in a counselor to help the survivors deal with carrying on. I go to therapy myself just to keep my head clear, and I encourage the people on my team to make time to do the same. With clear minds we can be more efficient, thoughtful and productive.

3. Take time for your family

I'm still learning this one and it's tough. But one thing I know is that in our ecosystem, balance is not eight hours sleep, eight hours with family, and eight hours in the office. That's a myth from the 1950s.

There are times when I give Ariba 200 percent – 13 hours at work, two hours in traffic on my cell phone, three hours on conference calls, six hours of sleep, no weekends off.

But then there are times when I am out of the office. I turn my cell phone off, and my family gets me 200 percent.

This, for me, is balance 21st Century style. Healthy bodies, healthy minds, healthy families. It takes personal commitment, it takes understanding at home and it takes support at work.

We're refocused here at Ariba, but our strength remains as always in our people. ▲