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Lawrence Neal: Lawrence Neal here. Welcome back to HighIntensityBusiness.com. This is episode 238. Today's guest is Skyler Tanner. Skyler is an exercise physiologist and founder of Smart Strength, a fast-growing, personal training business based in Austin, Texas in the United States. Welcome, Skyler, back to the show for the 100th time.

Skyler Tanner: Yeah. I have noticed that there's not been enough references to all of the old podcasts we have done with the new guests. Don't want to give them an opportunity to reference these podcasts.

Lawrence Neal: And today, we are doing a bit of a new experiment. I was quite excited to reach out to you, Wayne, because I know many years ago you had asked me if you could cohost an episode. At the time, I think I just wasn't too sure about it. I wasn't perhaps comfortable about it, but it occurred to me as someone who is early on in their high intensity business career so to speak, it would make a lot of sense for someone who's really in the arena to come on a podcast and talk to someone like Skyler who's really done well with his business, and to have that conversation.

Lawrence Neal: For those that don't know, Wayne is the owner of Quick Fit Indiana, a high intensity strength training studio using a combination of evidence-based exercise and the latest technology to bring you the most efficient, safe, and effective workout on the planet. Wayne, also welcome to the show.

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Wayne Thacker: Thank you very much, Lawrence. I really appreciate this. I told all my friends and family I was guest hosting this podcast today. They're all fired up to hear this.

Lawrence Neal: That's awesome. You're welcome and it's my pleasure. I'm really pleased we could all do this. So as I was kind of leading to in the pre-role for this, my objective really for this is to give you the opportunity, Wayne, to really ask Skyler anything you'd like, anything he's comfortable answering of course, on the topic of growing and running a high intensity training business. I think there's a lot of people out there who are in a similar position to you, Wayne, in their business, who might have similar challenges, and so I'm excited for this to be published, and obviously for the listeners to really get value out of this.

Lawrence Neal: Before I kind of pass the baton to you, Wayne, to ask questions, Skyler do you just want to give a little background on your business, how long you've been in operation, and the growth you've experienced over the last few years?

Skyler Tanner: Sure, sure. Three years as of three days ago, which also means we paid off the business loan three days ago.

Lawrence Neal: Congratulations, and happy birthday.

Skyler Tanner: Thank you, thank you. I kind of expected Tim Robbins Shawshank Redemption screaming-shirt-off-in-the-rain excitement when we paid that last note, but really it's a little bit more like Bill Belichick, "Onto the next week. Onto the next week. Onto the next week."

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Getting some distance from repayment, actually it'll be really great when next month we don't have that about \$3,000 going out in a fixed amount to one single debt. That will be really, it's like graduate school or college. When you graduate, it's not the relief. You look back and go, "Oh, I worked really hard." I'm still kind of trying to take it in there.

Skyler Tanner: So three years, and we've sustained about a 400% growth rate. We've grown about 400% since buying the business as far as month over revenue. Some months a little higher than that, but even in our low months it hovers right below that amount. I'm using that as kind of the metric rather than looking at my high water mark and saying, "That's our absolute growth." That has been where we are at.

Skyler Tanner: We hired our first employee in the spring, and I handed him some of my clients. Any of us who are in this business, handing somebody clients in the spring going into the down season of summer can sometimes be a little rough, but he's doing about 34 sessions a week right now. He has three free workouts next week, and so hopefully he continues to grow. He's really delivering on this stuff in his own voice.

Skyler Tanner: I on the business side am still trying to figure out or learning the best way to educate people who have the background in this stuff, but are not quite familiar with high intensity strength training, rev and space resistance training, and sort of having them get the philosophical core of what we do, and then bring their own unique

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ideas from their experience to bear on our clientele. That's been my current challenge, and it's been a lot of fun.

Lawrence Neal: Final question before I hand over to Wayne. So how many workouts are you doing roughly a week at this point?

Skyler Tanner: Personally I have scheduled on my calendar 83 sessions. In the spring, at sort of the peak before I hired Edwin, I had worked up to, I think my peak week, which was a really bizarre week was 115, but it was up to around 110 sessions. Now this week, Edwin will do almost 35 sessions, so we're doing just almost 120 sessions a week as a business currently.

Lawrence Neal: That's awesome.

Skyler Tanner: In a just under 950 square foot facility.

Wayne Thacker: That is fantastic, Skyler. Our businesses are so similar. We just turned three, just four days ago as well. Not quite debt-free yet, but looking forward to getting there really soon.

Skyler Tanner: I wish I didn't have to be debt-free so soon. Let me tell you, the pucker factor in the middle was intense.

Wayne Thacker: Right. No, no, I remember hearing your story when you first started out, and I was just started out, so the podcast you had done with Lawrence, those were pretty inspirational to kind of hear that someone else was going through the same things that I was going through as I started Quick Fit here in Indiana.

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Skyler Tanner: Yeah. We hear the people who've been doing this a really long time, and they have a whole team around them. You know, hearing Luke, as much information, tons of information it's amazing, because Luke figured out it's not about disclosing the information, it's about executing on that information. Luke could give us his entire playbook and a lot of people wouldn't be able to get it done because it's about execution. It's not about knowledge.

Skyler Tanner: Discover Strength is the professional athletic team, right? You're looking at Lance Armstrong, and you're like, "Oh, look..." or the Michael Phelps. Every time the Olympics come around there's inevitably somebody who's eating a gajillion calories a day, and everybody goes, "Well, I got to train like that if I want to be like that." It's like yeah, you don't see their daily massage, their physio, their afternoon naps, their dietician, all the support structure.

Skyler Tanner: Discover Strength is the professional athletic team. They have the full structure as a business. As great as that stuff is, it's challenging, I understand, to take the relevant aspects of that. What is some version that actually works for your business? I hope for you that what I've tried to do from that, and from other people, is beneficial to you because we're in such a similar place.

Wayne Thacker: It really has been. I remember, I think the first podcast I listened to you and Lawrence, one of the things you talked about was a Smart Start or Start Smart program. Maybe this was going to be like a one year deal. Are you still moving forward with that program? Is that still a term that you're using, or a process?

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Skyler Tanner: 100%. So Start Smart is we start everybody who comes in our front door, assuming they're not a post-rehab handoff, and I have some specific kind of continuing training I need to do, handing off to the PT to kind of keep them sort of finishing the rehab. Start Smart is just eight to 12 weeks of pure SuperSlow to start, because Westcott's studies demonstrated that people who do the pure SuperSlow first made faster strength gains than those who did more moderate high-intensity training in that first period.

Skyler Tanner: If you want to get somebody really excited about the effort that they're putting in, then having those quicker gains are really compelling. It also gives you an opportunity to put your marketing money where your mouth is. Seeing those gains, and remember I am using an isometric mid-thigh pull as my absolute strength assessment done on the ARX Omni, and it's not a movement that we practice. It has good efficacy, both in the general population and the athletic population, for projecting strength function and power.

Skyler Tanner: If we use that as our absolute variable strength, then training around that, and to coming back to it without practicing it and seeing that improvement in strength shows that the organism, the human got better. They like the visual. They find it really compelling, and they're hooked.

Wayne Thacker: That's excellent. For a new business, I know there's a lot of ARX users out there that are listening, that will listen to this, what about do you have a recommendation for those high-intensity studios that

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do not have an ARX, where they could do maybe this same exercise or a different exercise? What do you recommend for them?

Skyler Tanner: Absolutely. You could google "back and leg dynamometer," and actually I'm looking to move in this direction anyway, moving away from using the ARX, not because I don't like it or I don't have it as a tool, but I'm thinking long term. Remember I have an old ARX prototype. I am planning for the day in which that prototype might not work. I hope that day is far off, but you can google "back and leg dynamometer." I think Takei offers a digital version out of Japan. Baseline is a company that offers one here in the States. It's like a 600 to 1,000-pound, almost like a fruit or vegetable hanging scale, or like if you hunt, the ones you would weight the carcass on.

Wayne Thacker: Gotcha.

Skyler Tanner: You assume the same position on a platform that's been built for this, and it gives you a strength measure typically in pounds. Now I find it compelling and why I'm moving in this direction is because while you don't get the area under the curve visual that you get from the ARX, which is really cool. One of the things I do see very interesting aside, is that when we train people with the SuperSlow and then retest them on the isometric mid-thigh pull, they always have a faster rate of force development. In other words, their peak is happening sooner in the 10-second pull cycle than it was at the very beginning, even with familiarity, even if I test them twice on the isometric mid-thigh pull.

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Skyler Tanner: From an athletic population, rate of force development is often something that coaches are trying to improve, and I see improvements in the general population, not trying to make it faster, it's just a consequence of being stronger, and being familiar with what it's like to contract hard.

Skyler Tanner: Anyway, the point I was making that a lot of the data around population norms, in other words when clients get done with it they often ask, "Well, how did I do?" Like, "How did I do compared to other people?" I don't have buckets, you know, women 60 to 69 or something like that, that research hasn't been done. But there's older data going back looking at sort of percentile of population. You'd have a sample size for men doing the exercise, 638 subjects, and the percentile, 10th percentile of people who could barely pull 42 pounds of force. The 90th percentile in this mid-thigh pull position, remember general population, is 295 pounds of force.

Skyler Tanner: You could say, "Oh, you're at this, and that puts you in about this percentile." Instead of having an arrow under the curve visually, you have more of a, "You're stronger than 50% of the population as per this test, or 75% of the population." What I want to do, and what I'm doing, my big rock for the quarter is I'm having somebody build me a client dashboard for their strength training progress or an upper body push, a pull, a drive, a leg-press, and then the isometric mid-thigh pull as the fourth measure. So that'd be in a Google Doc dashboard. I can send the link to a client, and then I have in their folder on my digital folder, a Google sheet with the data. As I update

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the data quarterly, they can just check in on their data. I don't need to be the gatekeeper. They have the link.

Wayne Thacker: That's great.

Skyler Tanner: That's what I'm working on, or have been working on this fall, so I don't need the ARX if I don't want it for that test going into the future.

Wayne Thacker: That's fantastic. I think maybe a video of that mid-thigh pull would be a great thing to maybe post for some of the newer studios.

Skyler Tanner: I don't need to send you a video of Canada, actually, I'll link Lawrence to it. Canada uses it as part of its talent identification program for the strength measures. The countries that are smaller than America, but somehow often do really well, what they have is talent transfer programs and talent identification programs. They get really good at transferring kids from one sport who might be slightly ill-fit to another sport. They do that with these big kind of training ground camps. That's what they do, and so Lawrence, I'll send this over to you right now. The isometric mid-thigh pull, they've got a section on it. They've got a little video on it. And they have their age norms for kids between 14 and north of 20.

Skyler Tanner: Send that over to you right now. Open conversation. Well, you both will see it, but there it is.

Wayne Thacker: That's perfect. Is there anything else that goes into the StartSmart program other than just the SuperSlow protocol for the first eight to 12 weeks?

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Skyler Tanner: No, it's a structured program in the sense that I'm starting people off. It gets up to nine exercises, so big five. In my case, my fifth, because my only vertical pull right now is the ARX. My fifth and a pullover rather than a pull-down, but then to that I add the Gluteator, leg curl, rotary torso, and lumbar. That's total body. I can typically get people through when they're in the early stage of their workout building that.

Skyler Tanner: Along the way I use clients' education cards as per Discover Strength, my version of them. They have 10 little bits of information, more of the why behind the how for clients as they're coming in who don't understand what we already do. Occasionally we get somebody who's trained in this way before, and they've moved here, and they're looking to get back into it.

Skyler Tanner: By and large most people don't know. As I've said before in the past, you don't sell your high-intensity battleship on high-intensity training. I make no mention of the lineage of our MedX machines or any of that nonsense. I tell them, "Here's how this is going to make your life better. Here's how you're going to live your values out better and more, and do the things you would rather be doing more and better." It's about them. It's about what this can do for them.

Skyler Tanner: I often say, "I love our equipment and it lets us do what we do so much better, but you would be suspicious of a carpenter selling you on his service based on the quality of his band saw."

Wayne Thacker: Right.

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Skyler Tanner: You go, "Okay, show me what you can do with the band saw." If it helps you do the job better, great. I make the point that the machines are very adjustable. I have very tall clients and very short clients, and everybody fits and it's very smooth, so it lets us do this stuff better. But that's all I say.

Wayne Thacker: Right. Okay, that makes total sense. That's fantastic. Skyler, let's talk about some of the running the business. I know Lawrence is potentially getting fired up here to start a studio where he lives. Let's talk about something that you don't hear a whole lot from small shops like ours. What kind of hours are you running? Are you working seven days a week? Are you working on Sundays? Are you working late at night? Are you split-shifting? What does that look like for you?

Skyler Tanner: Initially it was semi-split shift. It was me working almost whenever, right? Some of that though was semi-structured because I already had clients. I had a small amount of clients, and they tended to be morning and mid-day, so I tried to fill in around them. But there was a while there where I was split-shifting. I would work on a Tuesday from say 6:00 to 1:00. I'd go home, I'd try and take a nap, put some food down my neck, and come back from 4:00 to 6:00. Never worked on the weekend. I only added Saturday once we brought in Edwin, our first employee. He works afternoons Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and he works Saturday morning.

Wayne Thacker: Okay.

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Skyler Tanner: We didn't offer that in part because I have now three children, so I was willing to, in spite of the debt load, I was willing to do less because I didn't want to sacrificed that. Now fortunately they were young enough, and we have enough of the support network that we could make it work, but I didn't offer that at the time. I just worked later and my mothers-in-law on those two days, when I was working up to 110 sessions, she was just picking them up, and I was coming home.

Wayne Thacker: That's great. I think maybe a lot of gym owners out there, or studio owners, might drive by the local 24-hour fitness place, and you know you see... Because we do the same thing. We close up early evening, only open Saturday mornings. You drive by a 24-hour fitness place and there's 75 cars out in the parking lot at 10:00 at night on a Friday, and you think man, are we missing the boat? Should we hire some more people and be open during these times? Who are we missing by not being open?

Skyler Tanner: Right. It's a challenge because going back to professional sports team, do you have the infrastructure and revenue to support having trainers who are standing around with their thumb up their ass while they don't have clients just on the potential of clients? I mean, I can't answer that question. But I don't think for smaller facilities we do.

Wayne Thacker: No, I don't think there's a lot of small facilities out there that just have the access to just burn through money like you said.

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Skyler Tanner: Right. And it depends on how you're paying your employee I suppose. There are some facilities that my understanding is they offer an hourly rate, plus session. So in other words they're making minimum wage, but then on top of that they're getting paid per session. It's compensation them for their time of their shift, but it is also aligning, which Luke talked about in his Getting Trainers and Building Them, aligning the interest of the business, making more revenue, the interest of the trainer, making more money, the interest of the client, being able to get in for a session. It's aligning all three of those values. Depending on how you're paying your employees, that could work. We do some version of that with the way we pay our employee.

Skyler Tanner: I could see if you were a larger company how that might be really useful, because you're telling people, "Look, you're not going to be getting nothing. You're not hanging out on potential, but you're not getting a lot, so you need to be focused on hustling and selling and improving your retention."

Wayne Thacker: Right, right. With your new hire, are you prompting Edwin to go out and pull new members into the gym, or is that just solely your responsibility and he will reap some of the benefits of that by having more sessions?

Skyler Tanner: First of all, as built into that client education process I talked about earlier with the cards, the last one is always reminding people while they're still excited in that early strength training phase that referring people gets them a free session. They're pretty excited to punch

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that button at that point. Outside of the first three months where we were just throwing all sorts of shit at the screen and seeing what went through the other side, hat tip McGough. We've done no external advertising. Zero. None.

Skyler Tanner: Now some of that, as a client of mine who, I have this idea. I have such interesting clients that the meathead talks to his clients as a podcast, because incredible stories. People are at the top of their field. It would be like Peter Attia's podcast except without the obsessive OCD, trauma-driven engineering background to sort of fetter away on details that don't matter for the population at large. This was a compliment by the way. He's like, "Yeah, but Skyler, you've got that cult of personality thing, so people are going to be reticent to give that up."

Skyler Tanner: That's true. Part of my rock this past quarter is getting myself outside of sales. Other than doing an initial phone screen with clients, the first person they see walking in the door is the person they're going to train with. I can still run my mouth and get them excited, or reinforce the excitement of the person who referred them, but then after that it's up to Edwin to sort of keep the sale. That, I think, he's fine with that. He has social media chops. He self-identifies as an introvert, and so as he gets to know people, he's much more, you can see the quality of his conversation and interactions improving over time. Whereas I run my mouth like I know somebody from the moment I meet them. It's just who I am.

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Skyler Tanner: I still take that on. I still play that side of the equation. As he's gotten better at delivering on the philosophical foundations of what we're doing and understanding kind of how we're trying to put people where they need to be, and learning the people who you need to hold back, they will drive themselves to death, and we want to keep them as a client. Forsake the acute intensity for a little bit more of a chronic adaptation, his business has grown. He's our employee, so we do all the tax work for him and all that other stuff, and that's part of our decision we weren't going to have contractors so we could have some control and some oversight.

Wayne Thacker: That is fantastic. I think you've probably just answered my next question, which was I think a lot of new studios and Lawrence is going to go through this potentially, but you run specials and boot camps and all the popular stuff that a lot of gyms around us do, but it doesn't sound like you do any of that, or have you ever done any of that, and can you talk to those programs or boot camps?

Skyler Tanner: Sure, so I don't do any boot camps. I don't do any specials in that way just because I don't have the bandwidth. When I'm done here at 2:00 or 2:30, I immediately go home. Well, if I'm done at 2:30, my oldest son is out of school at 3:00. So I'm immediately either going to pick him up, or I'm quickly going home, grabbing some snacks, and then driving over to his school to pick him up. Then we go and pick his brothers up. Then I am parenting full-time until my wife gets home. She's an assistant principal at a middle school. She'll get home somewhere between 5:30 and 6:30 currently, just because this is her first full year of assistant principal. She's still getting

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better, and the efficiency of all this. The more familiar you are, you know what is the wheat and what is the chaff.

Skyler Tanner: I don't have the time to do that, but the special I do run every March is I call it Smart Strength Stronger, that's what it is. Because it's my birthday month, I say, "Hey, anybody referred who signs up in March subsidizes your April payment." So if somebody signs up for once a week, and you're once a week, you get April free. That often will get us a handful of clients. People are excited about that, and that really does it.

Skyler Tanner: I got that idea from MaxStrength Fitness in Cleveland

Wayne Thacker: Okay. It really sounds from talking to you, this isn't just around high-intensity strength training studios, but a lot of small businesses were always after that next client. Client acquisition is king. I think a lot of people maybe spend a lot of money doing a lot of outward marketing and Facebook ads and Instagram, and this and that. It sounds like you really have driven your growth over the last three years just focusing on the people that have already walked through your door, which is great.

Wayne Thacker: Who taught you this method? Was this just something from a previous place, your previous experience? Where did you get this innate ability to focus on the people right in front of you, because that's hard for a lot of business owners.

Skyler Tanner: My talent is actually in human interaction. I've had enough of my clients who've been with me long, long term, like 15 years. Before I

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started this business I went through a crisis of having my first child and figuring out how the hell am I going to provide for this person. That crisis was compounded by the rudderless ship that I was a partner in at Efficient Exercise. It was just not in a good place. I had bought in as a partner, and it turned out not to be a good fit, so I tried to leave, and I was like, "Hey, I know people who are doing data science and data analysis." You know, you go through graduate school, you have a lot of statistics. I could do that crap.

Skyler Tanner: Then I went through a program and I gained some of those skills, and it was just brutal. It operated from a position of fear, rather than a position of talent. When we bought the business it was kind of a Hail Mary. You can go back to other podcasts and hear me talk about that, but I had enough of my clients, like I said the cult of personality thing, but also the point of I like the one-on-one interaction.

Skyler Tanner: It seems to me that there are some people who are in this business that I'm not sure why they're in the business, because by definition the bulk of the business is the client interaction. Some people come into it in a larger organization to an executive level kind of stuff where they're going to do operations or they're going to manage marketing. But there are some people that they're not people-people, and yet they want to work with people.

Skyler Tanner: I don't mean to sound harsh, but it's a challenge thing I think some people think they can systematize interactions with other human beings. My talent's always been relational and sort of energy

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swishing, the ability to immediately adapt to the person in front of me, and jive with them, which always felt sleazy to me. Lawrence and I have talked about this in a different podcast, because that's like sales, right?

Wayne Thacker: Right.

Skyler Tanner: That is a component of sales, and yet all of my interactions, I'm always selling the value of what we do and reinforcing those aspects of their life in which this is valuing it. It's not because I need to sort of trick them into believing that it's valuable. I don't believe my clients are just frittering money away. I think many of them are too successful for that to have had that accidentally fall upon success. But rather when you're focused on doing something else with your life, and this is a component of it, it almost needs to be brought to your attention the wide net that this is casting, and the way it's influencing other aspects of your life. Being reminded of that reinforces the excitement you have for the work you're doing.

Skyler Tanner: Then you bring back, you mirror what I'm telling you, and you say, "Oh, I did this thing, and it was great." Or as it turns out because of my community, I've become the osteoporosis guy, right?

Wayne Thacker: Okay.

Skyler Tanner: Yeah, because it turns out middle aged women have money to spend, and they want to look better, feel better, perform better. They don't want to be on bone drugs. Once you get some traction on building bone mineral density, all of the sudden you have people

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who can afford your services, are going to work hard, are less concerned with... I mean, the fact that the skin on their ass is sagging because they're in their middle age, and that's the way this stuff happens, they're just happy to have good energy and be strong and not have to take drugs. They're willing to pay for that. I've accidentally become that guy too.

Wayne Thacker: Is that your messaging, Skyler, as you're messaging? Let me give this some context. Almost 100% of the people walk through our doors and they're completely focused on weight loss. They think, okay, how am I going to lose weight working out 20 minutes once or twice a week. How do you handle that situation, that first person walking through the door and it's all about weight loss for them?

Skyler Tanner: I tell them, I say, "We focus 100% on strength. Strength is the currency that you live your life by. It's the foundation of anything else you want to do. If your goal is fat loss..." Well, that's part of the education and me just roping them in. It's a, "You're going to have to reduce calories, and oh, by the way, strength training maintains or even gains lean tissue, so you look better at a given weight loss. You don't lose the lean mass, which would mean you have to lose more weight and you feel worse to look kind of like a sloppy version of yourself already. You change the way you look by adding resistance training." I don't sell fat loss. I tell people, "If your goal is fat loss, I have registered dieticians and nutritional counselors I will refer you out to."

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Skyler Tanner: Part of what I've tried to do is stay strong in my niche and sort of be that hand off. I have three PTs who hand people off to me. I have a registered dietician I send people to, and she sent one or two people over to me. I've built that referral network through those results. I'm trained as an exercise physiologist so I can speak the language, which helps, but the proof is in the pudding when I can sort of speak their language and say, "Hey..." Actually Patti said this with your podcast, Lawrence, where she said, "The most common injuries are reinjury." So if we could just keep people from getting re-injured, that goes a long way in sort of providing value. You just develop those relationships over time.

Skyler Tanner: I don't focus on weight loss. I focus on strength utilizing joint-friendly fitness, hat tip Bill DeSimone, and doing that in no more than an hour a week, so you can, what I often say is, "So you can get hurt doing the things you'd rather be doing." Playing basketball and flinging wildly at blocked shots in the corner rather than just trying to go full build rustle, Lawrence. You just got to tap that ball. You just got to preserve it. You just got to tap it, then you gather the rebound. Saying that to the guy who loved pinning the ball against the backboard on block shots. I digress.

Skyler Tanner: So anyway, the point is that I don't do fat loss. My messaging is not fat loss. It's in the name Smart Strength. It's on 22 minutes, twice a week, twice as strong. That's my messaging. If somebody is focused on fat loss, I send them to an expert. I don't try to be everything to everybody. I want people who want me to be their guy. I don't want people who want 12 weeks of me, and then

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they're off. My messaging is I really key in on I've had people for 15 years, and for some people if I wasn't on their calendar, they wouldn't be doing this stuff at all. Trying to be that resistance training, touch point for them, and also the note in that referral network that can get them competent people that they need, should they need it.

Wayne Thacker: That's fantastic. Talk a little bit about your, do you use [MINDBODY](#)? Do you use another app to schedule? How do you handle that within your business?

Skyler Tanner: [MINDBODY](#) and I just auto charge the first of the month for either once a week or twice a week. I have some people who are on my calendar twice a week. They're charged once a week, and when they sort of blow through that, depending on their travel schedule, I'll ala carte the remaining sessions. I also will sell packages a year in advance, six months in advance depending on the clients, and what they want to buy. For that I ask for cash or check because I don't want to pay the credit card fees.

Wayne Thacker: Right, right. Do you have a minimum timeframe that someone can sign up with you? You're not going to let me come in and work out with you for one month and leave you, are you?

Skyler Tanner: I absolutely will. So, I don't have a contract. I don't have a minimum, but I tell people, "This is a long-term investment. If you think you're going to see huge results in four weeks, you might not even make the first purchase. You have to do some version of what got you here to keep you here. Just like a diet. The diet that got you

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lean, you have to do some version of that to keep the leanness. Your body is building this stuff from scratch, and it takes time. So if you're just looking to have a workout de jour for the next month, I'm not your guy. I'm not your guy." I say the best clients are those who have other things going on in their life.

Skyler Tanner: In my sort of little spiel to clients, I used to have this hour-long consultation. Now I do a 15-minute screener to make sure people aren't trying to get backdoor rehab or just want to try something out for a month. Then I have a five-minute version of the first half of my initial consultation that I followup with on video. I say, "Our best clients are good communicators who value their time and have things they want to do other than live in the gym."

Skyler Tanner: I am deliberately in my language trying to keep people I don't want to train, or I don't want to waste my trainer's time out of the gym. That doesn't mean they need to be flush with money, they need to be with us for 10 years. I'm trying to educate that strength training, building strength, building lean tissue, even when it's most efficient, it's not magic. It still takes time. We're just trying to minimize the downsides and maximize the upsides per unit of time.

Wayne Thacker: That's great. I'm writing some of this down. There's some good stuff here. So you use [MINDBODY](#). Any other tools, website builders, apps?

Skyler Tanner: I use G Suite for my document building. Let's see here, I'm going to send this over to you here. What I wish I had a version of sooner, and I'm trying to work on, Kyle Recchia, the COO of Perfect

Workout talked about getting the standard operating procedures out, but it's kind of like what's the structure for that? I'm linking right now. I sent them to Lawrence. That post should be popping up in your chat window [crosstalk] machine. It's all about building standard operating procedures document. They give you templates. They give you structure. They give you, "Here's your next step. Here is your next step," for those repeating tasks that we have. I have a lot of documentation kind of on the backend, but I'm trying to drag it into this more structured format, not for Edwin, I mean for Edwin, but more for the next employee so the on-ramp is smoother, for the next employee so the on-ramp is smoother whenever that happens to be.

Skyler Tanner: I would suggest anybody's who's young in their business life, and has the latitude to do this, even if it's just one line of this. Actually one of the things that Lawrence and I are working on right now, or I am working on, and I offered it to Lawrence some of the guys, he is going, "I will be able to cite high intensity businesses. My employer is an e-learning instructional designer," is a little 10 to 15 minute learning video for how I've implemented a version of Getting Things Done, that again is scaled to the size of our business. There's a cult around David Allen and Getting Things Done, and it makes sense if you're a really giant organization, but there's a lot of problems with Getting Things Done if you're like three people.

Skyler Tanner: There are good things in there. There are great things in there. I'm building a video, and kind of explaining how I've implemented a version of that, that you can then modularly build on pop as you

need the increased functionality. Because literally on the Getting Things Done website, it's a giant monolith, and it says, "Where should you start?" They say, "Start anywhere." No. You do not give people endless choice. That is tyrannizing. 75 salad dressings. You're going to pick one, and it's going to suck because you thought you could get perfect. You think that just because you have endless choices, you can get perfection, and you cannot. There's an entire book written on this called The Paradox of Choice.

Skyler Tanner: Too little choice, that's tyrannizing. I only have one option. Well, what the fuck? Too much choice, you think that your fleshy, imperfect humanity can find perfection, and you can't. You cannot do that. So having a little structure and saying, "Look, start here because it gets you the most," it's just like all I've done is the big five of a productivity system. The big five isn't perfect. By definition it isn't perfect. But it gives you the essentials. It works most of the muscles in your body. You can build that as a foundation, adding on to it as necessary, or scaling back to it as required. It doesn't optimize for anything, but it also doesn't leave anything out that is non-essential.

Skyler Tanner: So, caffeine awesome. So my point though is that all the people that are on the cult of getting things done are much larger organizations where they have all these moving parts, and they're singularly focused on sort of the business widgets. We, who are people who are still in the business, I don't have time for that, right? I want to have a seasonal ride. I want to prioritize what I'm doing.

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Skyler Tanner: With that prioritization, one of the things that we talk about, or you and I were coming back to this is that when we're talking about doing other things outside of the business, oftentimes it shows up on a to-do list in a monolithic kind of do this way. One of the things I found really valuable with standard operating procedures or this version of Getting Things Done is designating the input time.

Skyler Tanner: Instead of saying, "Do taxes, work on taxes, do payroll, whatever," for me it would be, "Work on client strength dashboard for 30 minutes," because there's a lot of things that I cannot control. Like we're talking about website building or it's a, "Write this to the web designer." It's not, "Finish this." It's, "Do this for X amount of time." I can control the input. There are things outside of my control. I think that that helps people, especially if they're working on components of a larger project to chunk it out and feel like they're making progress, rather than looking at this to-do list and going, "How the hell am I going to do all of that?" I've found that to be helpful as well, that designating how much time I'm going to work on something as the input, understanding that the output has factors that are outside of my control.

Wayne Thacker: That's fantastic. Lawrence, I think, 2020's going to be a big year for him. He's going to continue with the podcast, potentially open up his own studio. What do you say to someone out there that's just now discovering this and thinking about buying some ARX machines or some equipment, and going out on their own? What would you do the same? Obviously you got a lot of great things. But

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what would you do different? Or what kind of advice would you give that brand new person getting ready to make the plunge?

Skyler Tanner: Okay. I think that scripting some of your interactions and getting better at that scripting is helpful. When clients email me, I have email templates, so I don't have to think about it. I worked on them so that the communication of what I want to communicate at what point is clear. I just drag it out of my G Suite document and I plug it in there. Rather than trying to reinvent the wheel every time, I do a lot of scripting as far as how I talk to clients or some version of how I want to communicate something with them in the early stages. How can I make the relevant information timely and consistent from client to client?

Skyler Tanner: That's also part of the reason for Start Smart. I don't want to have to reinvent the wheel for clients so we can communicate and deliver on our marketing message, because as it turns out your elbow bends the same way as my elbow. Their knee is going to bend the same way as your knee. Anatomical function is anatomical function. I want to, just the same reasons the wear the same outfit to work every day, not because Steve Jobs did it. I didn't grow up in Silicon Valley. I don't have a cult of Steve Jobs mindset, but because I don't want to have to think about reoccurring processes.

Skyler Tanner: I shouldn't have to because in those early stages, there's all the things you're trying to learn about a client that are the unknown unknowns. If you're trying to do that while also reinventing the wheel, it's just a lot of thinking that goes on. It's hard enough to get

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people to disclose to you some three-year-old injury that they forgot to leave on the medical health history report that might be why their knee hurts on the leg curl, right?

Wayne Thacker: Right.

Skyler Tanner: The other thing that I think is helpful, I mean marketing's challenging because I already had some people. I already had some people so I could mind that referral network. They wanted to see me succeed. They saw the excitement I had. They saw the vulnerability too. Look, it was like a lot of them had had their own businesses or their own successes and had gone through something similar, so they were willing, not just because I was their service provider and they wanted to continue to have my service, but they were also excited about what I was doing, and the desert I was wandering out into that they had their feelers out a little bit more. They were thinking about that a little bit more.

Wayne Thacker: Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt there. I was going to say if you didn't have those people, and you were starting today, how would you go out and get your first client?

Skyler Tanner: That is, I think then at that point, that even though the marketing didn't bring me a lot, that I did it early on in my efforts here. I did get a little traction on that. We have a little local paper called Community Impact or the West Side Picayune, or those sorts of local papers, and I paid for a little advertising in one, and it kind of had a little traction. That worked for me, and also just the

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communication with... It's hard to say because I've been around this game for so long.

Skyler Tanner: Inevitably for a lot of us, we have a first or second degree kind of traction within our clientele, but coming up from scratch, it was probably that positioning amongst anything to go, "Hey, look I know a registered dietician, that you have people, you're not the exercise person." Rather than going to the yoga studio and saying, "Hey, we're going to make your yoga better," although it does. Going to some of those categorically similar health and wellness facilities, but that aren't exercise, and that don't try to offer an exercise component, because sometimes the nutritionist who also does boot camps. Those people, that's their obsession. That's what they do. They want to hang out in a gym. They want to fether around about nutrition.

Skyler Tanner: You go to a registered dietician who's just the registered dietician, and that's all they do, they want a hand off from somebody who doesn't want to hurt the people, who are just trying to get their diet right. Or the PTs or the manual therapists, who you're poking around on their website and you're looking at the language and the language is similar to what we do. The rehab world, you can talk about anatomical drug function, they're all in on that. We're speaking their language. It's just they often get people who, they leave and they immediately go and try DataLift or they go to a CrossFit box or something like that. They want to have that handoff.

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Skyler Tanner: Yeah, PTs, I've gotten a couple PTs who've become really good, but it was just a trying to reach out to them in the local area and make that connection and it's worked out really well.

Wayne Thacker: Skyler, yeah, I know you're running low on time.

Skyler Tanner: Hold on, hold on, my client texted me and canceled, so if you've got to go at 11:00, or for me four minutes, then great, but I have a little bit more time now.

Wayne Thacker: I'm fine. Yeah, I'm fine, or Lawrence, jump in there.

Lawrence Neal: No, you can. If that's the case, and Skyler's okay with that, then yeah, we can run over. So Wayne, yeah, please continue. What would you want to do, Skyler, run to a quarter past?

Skyler Tanner: Let's see. My 11:30 client is often late, but let's say quarter or 20 minutes past. That'd be fine.

Wayne Thacker: Okay, great.

Lawrence Neal: Great, thank you.

Wayne Thacker: Great. All right, so Skyler you just trained and performed this 25K run, so obviously you're out there from, I think, some of the training you did, you probably did a little bit of what most people would call some cardio training. Do you do any cardio training outside of just the strength training in the gym or do you promote it to some of your clients?

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Skyler Tanner: So what I tell my clients is that I want them doing more of the things they would rather be doing. What I want them to think about is rather than trying to optimize an enjoyable experience and make it miserable, like, "I want to go on this bike ride, and it's clearly going to be cardiovascularly beneficial," or, "I want to jump in a spin class with my daughter and have fun with that and maybe make it a regularly occurring thing." What I tell people that, I talk about the active [inaudible] type. I go, "As you get stronger, you're going to want to do something with this strength." That actually bears out in the literature to some degree.

Skyler Tanner: People who, when they start resistance training, all of the sudden they start doing more things. You see that on pedometer studies. As imperfect as they are, they're at least directionally accurate. I don't say, "You should do more cardio." I talk about how getting stronger improves the cardiovascular efficiency and efforts and activities of daily living, so they're not going to feel as out of breath. They'll probably end up doing more things because they're stronger and get a little bit more of that low-level cardiovascular activity just in the bargain.

Skyler Tanner: If they enjoy plodding on the treadmill or jumping on the bike or the elliptical for their head, and they like getting sweat and all that, by all means, go for it. Just understand that what I want them to do is not crowd out the quality of their strength training effort by doing too much of that around their workout. But otherwise, I'm not reinventing the wheel. Nautilus, years and years ago, that was their marketing message of look at all the time you'll have for other

things. Somewhere along the way it became doing anything other than this is a waste of time, and you're just going to wear yourself out and get injured.

Skyler Tanner: Now, at the University of Texas, two studies have been done looking at physical inactivity leading up to a structured bout of exercise. If you're sedentary, you reduce the efficacy of the exercise bout, as measured, not by the performance in the exercise, but by the lagging indicator of health improvements as a result of the exercise.

Skyler Tanner: They would pedal on a cycle odometer at 70% of their maximum heart rate for an hour, and it was a crossover design, so both groups did the same intervention in line. The group that did intervention A, the group that did intervention B for three days, flipped and did the opposite intervention the next week. It wasn't because you just got some non-responders on one group, and the responders on the other.

Skyler Tanner: What's been demonstrated is that if you're up moving around, 10,000 steps or over, just being physically active, and then you do a bout of exercise, you clear triglycerides from your blood due to a nutrition challenge, basically a high fat, high sugar milkshake, better than if you are physically inactive less than 4,000 steps a day, three days before that exercise bout, and then the same nutrition challenge. That makes sense.

Wayne Thacker: That does make sense.

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Skyler Tanner: The only difference is that the group that was physically inactive, they weren't exercising, they took 8,000 fewer steps and they were sitting more, they basically muted the health response of the exercise. Now this is very different than if you live in a hyperbaric chamber because Ken Hutchins tell us to line of reasoning that we get in a lot of this stuff. Even McGough has talked about that. He said, "You know what? I started my business, people think that just because I am the guy who wrote the book and they quote it to me chapter and verse, that my people come in, and they're perfect SuperSlow monks." It moves 10 up, 10 down, they breathe, they go to failure until they're quivering mass on the ground. And then they do nothing else. They do nothing else. That's not what happens at all.

Skyler Tanner: As you get stronger, you're going to want to do more stuff. We were joking about it on our little chat yesterday, but Bryce was like, "Skyler you've got it all wrong. The point of doing muscle-strengthening exercise is to do more muscle strengthening exercise." That's how a lot of us, that's what it is. What are you getting stronger for? So I can keep getting stronger. It's like, I get it. You don't want to waste your time, but I've been the same muscular size for I don't know how long, in spite of my best efforts to get more muscular.

Skyler Tanner: The reason why I did a 25K and I encourage my clients is, "You're going to want to do something with this. Let what you value determine what that is. If you're doing something that I think might be dangerous given what I know about your previous injury history,

then I'm going to tell you about it. I'm going to give you an idea of how to do it similar safely in a way that might be more enjoyable," but otherwise, if somebody was a swimmer and they got frozen shoulders from swimming, and they're urging me to get back in the pool, I'm like, "Well, don't do the freestyle. Maybe focus on breast stroke because of this injury history, but great that you want to take the strength and get back in the pool," because that brought them joy.

Wayne Thacker: Right. And that's what everyone wants. Everyone wants to just live their life. Like you said, initially, you've got to bring it back to them. Why are they in there? What do they want to do with this strength?

Skyler Tanner: That's important because customer service, I think Lawrence sent this out, but customer service is not catering to every whim of the client, that's important. I tell clients all the time, I go, "I'm not going to let you waste our time, but if some exercise just psychologically isn't jiving with you, you don't like something about it, we're going to find some version that you can bring some intensity to and progress over time," right? That's the negotiation, the client interaction. That's the customer service.

Skyler Tanner: It's like, "No, no, I know what you need, but if you can't get on board with the A+ solution, let's find a B+ solution, because you got to do some version of it long enough to reap the benefits." So it's that important interaction between satisfying what the client wants, but the client's paying you to be the expert.

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Wayne Thacker: That's right. Do you have clients come in that they can not get that intensity, it's just not in their nature? How do you work through that for that particular person?

Skyler Tanner: Sure.

Wayne Thacker: Maybe they're scared. Maybe they've had an injury. We have people that come in and they just refuse to push hard and bring that intensity level up, or maybe they're nervous, they've got an old knee injury or shoulder injury. How do you work through some of those for some of the new people out there?

Skyler Tanner: I definitely am on the longer is better rate of improvement. I micro-load in the gravity-based systems, even if somebody can drill themselves, because your workout is not divorce from the stressors of the rest of your life. For a lot of those Type A people, I actually just had a client come in yesterday whose husband trains with us. She's like, "Look, he comes home and he's thinking about quitting because he's a quivering mess." He doesn't train with me, he trains with Edwin. But he will not tell our trainer, he has too much trauma from being a fat kid. He also will work himself to death in his own career, right? She's like, "He's just going to die an early death, and that's the way it goes."

Skyler Tanner: But she's asking us to back the intensity off so he can stay with it longer. My Type A people, who are willing to kill themselves, I don't indulge them in that desire all the time, because that psychologically becomes unsustainable, even if physically they

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have no injuries. The willingness to bring it that hard every single time correctly, it's a tough nut to crack.

Skyler Tanner: I mean, those of us who were at the Rec Conference, I wasn't there last year, but the year before, 2018, the best part, "This is the type of outfit," Luke like slapping his dick on the table, "This is the type of workout all of clients go through." Like, "No, they don't because they don't have 12 trainers at each station drilling them and trying to beat them up." They don't do that. They do version of that certainly, but when you have a relationship with someone, you have a blink test. Oh, they can bring it today. They can't bring it today. I see they're already struggling. Or man, they're looking real linear, as they're working harder they seem to be able to match that effort rather than falling behind the eight ball. That's part of the relationship.

Skyler Tanner: That is the type of [inaudible] people always want to go, and you're normally holding them back, because they will break themselves. They need to be in it for the long game. The people who can't bring it, either because of motor issues, previous injury issues, because their intensity is not very high. They cannot bring it.

Wayne Thacker: Right.

Skyler Tanner: Then it's isometric holds. At the end of the work set, sometimes it is a drop set, sometimes it is, rather than doing a second set, I'd rather do a second exercise for the same area, so I'm trying to accumulate a little bit more work by way of that. It's important. You have to remember that if you look at the way these people train,

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especially when they first come in to you. I'm sending this little widget over to you called Just Load It, which is from the Science PT. It's a flowchart.

Skyler Tanner: If you think about it, instead of loading it for rehab, think about it as loading it for a client. It's kind of the same flowchart. You try and have them do an exercise. Do they have some hesitancy? Okay, do the exercise differently. Can you do a different exercise? Can you just do isometric holds? What are the things that you can do to get them to a high degree of effort?

Skyler Tanner: Dwayne Wimmer talks about this, he calls it, "We're trying to get to maximum effort rather than muscular failure," because it's a positive spin, but it's also the idea that it's not a finite point in space. Your maximum effort today is going to be very different than it is next week. It'll be self-similar, but it might be a rep low, it might be much higher because of the life that the person is bringing into the studio.

Skyler Tanner: Being able to adjust on the fly for that is something that you need to do. But for the clients who, if they're not injured, they're just really weak, psychologically treating them like they're injured and doing more holds and trying to get them to feel their muscles. I tell them, "Expand their discomfort." Getting used to what high effort feels like and learning to divorce that feeling from pain or injury or warning takes time. As long as they're working harder than they would be willing to otherwise without you there, there is an overload and there is a benefit.

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Wayne Thacker: That's good. That's good stuff. You mentioned earlier you are using the gravity-based machines. Will you talk for a second about how do you measure for a client? Do you measure time under tension, weight? What protocol do you go through there to measure for a client?

Skyler Tanner: Most of my clients do time under load. My next client, she is pretty controlled, and she prefers much more of a rep count kind of eight to 12 repetition kind of scenario, kind of much more classic hit lifting at about two to three seconds up. Lowering in four seconds. She was a skinny runner, and now she's a lean and strong runner in her late 40s, so she's just like drink the Kool-Aid. It depends on the person.

Skyler Tanner: Everybody starts off time under tension, and most people go off time under tension. I always explain to people, I'm like, "Look, I like Super Slow most of the time," just in my own personal workouts, because I can go in. I can get outside of numbers because I'm looking at everybody else's numbers all day long. I can pin on a weight, and I can just focus on what my body is giving me that day.

Skyler Tanner: But then, for them, it's going to be, I've got some people, Super Slow tyrannizes them physically, emotionally. They have a really hard time moving that slow. Others, it's all they want. They want to have that meditative horse and rider in perfect harmony communication with their body. So you trying to choose something else for them, they're like, "Eh, I like Super Slow." Like, "Cool." As long as you're bringing that high degree of effort, it's all good.

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Skyler Tanner: I'll use a force overload technique so our other protocols is like plateau breakers. A 30/30/30 for me is a huge plateau breaker if somebody's kind of bumping up against their weight limit. I can throw a 30/30/30 at them if they have good control, and magically they add time overload to their next workout. Or Owen Dockham on the EverStrong San Francisco page recently posted about using stage repetitions for one workout with a client with an overhead press, and then the next workout the time under load from the workout prior to the stage repetition went up 12%.

Skyler Tanner: Using that novelty to try to help a client continue to progress rather than a novelty for novelty sake is how we tend to do things. I always ask them at the end, "Do you feel like something happened? Do you feel like you got a really good workout?" And the answer's, "Yes," and over time they're generally moving up, it's all good.

Wayne Thacker: That's great. So time under load, do you also use time under load when using the ARX machines?

Skyler Tanner: The air actually primarily oscillate when we're using them between a countdown mode and the time trial. Typically we'll do countdown mode to a fixed minute or a minute 15 interval. When that well starts to run dry, we'll switch to a time trial mode. You've seen this, if people have a certain distance they have to go time-wise, they will sandbag just a little bit, and then magically their last negative is better than the two negatives prior to it.

Wayne Thacker: Right.

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Skyler Tanner: You know what I'm talking about?

Wayne Thacker: Yup. Oh yeah.

Skyler Tanner: So then you move to time trial and you say, "Look, you're going to match the force output. Hurry up and get it done. As fast as you can get it done, it'll be over with. If you can pull harder, pull harder. Hurry up and get it." I got that from a former, I guess he technically was one of my employees, Bo Alexander who has three facilities between Austin and Dallas called Adapt Strength and Conditioning. He has some ARX. He was a power lifter, so he's sort of like, "It's a rate of force development thing." When clients know that if they can dig harder, they can get it done sooner, they magically find a way to get it done sooner.

Skyler Tanner: I think that only works when your countdown mode is in a minute 15, to a minute and a half range. When it's under a minute, you've got a real fine margin for improvement. You don't typically see people who has a countdown mode of a minute, and then you go, "Okay, well let's do time trial," and they're magically finishing in 40 seconds.

Wayne Thacker: Right.

Skyler Tanner: That's a 33% improvement. It tends to work better with sort of maxing out a minute 15, minute and a half, and then switching to time trial mode for a few workouts, and watching the rate at which they're getting that output come way down or go way up, and then hence the time comes way down, and then going back to

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countdown mode. They now know what it's like to pull hard. And then going back to that minute and a half countdown mode, you see that number come up.

Wayne Thacker: Do you ever push a client past the minute and a half mark, minute and 45 seconds?

Skyler Tanner: The only time I do that is with, for my diabetic clients, I will use the leg press. I will do a concentric-only protocol. I will let that run longer because it's just less demanding physically, and I'm trying to empty the muscles of as much glycogen as possible, and do something called the Fenn effect. Concentric contractions are more energetically expensive than eccentric contractions, which is why eccentric contractions are stronger.

Skyler Tanner: It takes more energy to split, to break the cross bridges in a contraction, which is why we can lower more weight than we can lift. Energetically it's more expensive to create the contraction, which the cost is coming from glycogen. These people who I'm trying to create a sink for them to store glycogen, positive-only works, so push as hard as they can, relax through the negative. Push as hard as they can, relax through the negative. I'll have them run upwards of three minutes on that.

Skyler Tanner: They don't fall off nearly as much on their strength. The peaks are pretty consistent. It's an interesting protocol, but that's really the only exception, which I have them do really long time inner loads.

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Wayne Thacker: That's fantastic. Well, Skyler, happy birthday to your business, and congratulations on everything you've done, and thank you for letting me pick your brain today.

Skyler Tanner: Absolutely. Absolutely. I'm glad I could help. Yeah, I love all the resources Lawrence has. Lawrence, you have such a great resource, and one that I continually go to. But I do understand the other side of the equation when you hear somebody like Luke or Matt Hedman or Kyle Recchia with these large organizations. It's a perfect circle. You have no idea where you would even apply these ideas in your own business because it's in the same area, and yes, we're all doing training, but it's so dissimilar to how we in the business are also trying to work on our business.

Skyler Tanner: I hope some of this stuff, I hope some of what I've said today, you can kind of see the relationship between some of those other things that come from the people who are much further ahead on the path than we are, and see how I've tried to apply a version of it given the scale that we're operating at.

Wayne Thacker: You're doing a great job. I think the thing I'm most impressed with from your business is your ability to get referrals from your existing clients. This is, again, not just high-intensity training, but this is all small businesses. That's the coup de grâce if you will.

Skyler Tanner: Well, with the four minutes I have left, this is... Think about the lifetime value of a client. Take just somebody who's been with you a long time. I just had a woman sign up for a year in advance. She does twice a week, and then her husband does once a week, but it

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probably will switch to twice a week here pretty soon. She wrote me a check for \$8,000.

Wayne Thacker: Wow.

Skyler Tanner: What I think people have, you're talking about chasing the new client, and also, I think the inverse of that is being unwilling to spend money on your own clients. That idea of when I do that referral month in March, I am happy to have a referral, a good referral who signs up, costs me the monthly rate of a client who already exists, because the lifetime value of a client is so much more.

Wayne Thacker: Yeah, that's true.

Skyler Tanner: It's only flat revenue in the short term. Let's say I get five new clients and a year later, three of them have stayed on, okay, well, I've made my investment many, many times over. Then they probably refer people to me also.

Wayne Thacker: Yeah, that's great. That is something that it really looks like you're doing that really well.

Skyler Tanner: Yeah, I think that you play delight the people you already have. It's like Gary Vaynerchuk going on and on about entrepreneurs wanting to get investment, which means they are now indentured to somebody else monetarily, and not getting as excited about getting new business and having recurring customers. Cash is king, man. If I can get more out of the people I already have, that is huge. I can't trick them into getting rid of their money. They're doing it because

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they see the value in what we do, and so I focus on that because it's so close.

Wayne Thacker: Gary V. wants you to put out social media posts a day, though.

Skyler Tanner: Yeah, but again, I don't have to follow all of Gary V.

Wayne Thacker: That's right.

Skyler Tanner: To my point earlier, is what is the wheat for our situation, and what is the chaff? What is that? I don't need to take everything. He's just complaining about the investment culture of Silicon Valley. I think sometimes the version of that with us is always the new client, never delighting the client we already have.

Wayne Thacker: Do you ever run into Tim Ferriss there in Austin?

Skyler Tanner: I've seen his shiny bald head on South Congress a couple times while I'm driving by. I know about where he lives. When Tools of Titans came out, I got a marketing email that said I was one of his top 50 blog post commenters, which I thought was really funny because I don't post there. The few times I've posted, he accidentally sent people to my blog because I had shared a Super Size Mandor Lab condition. When he interviewed Morgan Spurlock, he sent them to my blog and gave me credit for it. I popped on there and was like, "Hey. Fan." I didn't do the study.

Wayne Thacker: Yeah, that's fantastic.

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Skyler Tanner: So I ended up getting this, "You can have my book in advance or a \$50 Amazon gift card." I'm like, "Give me the Amazon gift card."

Wayne Thacker: Please get Lawrence an autograph next time you see him.

Lawrence Neal: Yeah, I appreciate that.

Skyler Tanner: Well when I see him I'll walk up to him, and I'll probably have all three kids, and be like, "Hey, I'm one of your top 50 blog posters according to your marketing department."

Wayne Thacker: That's nice.

Lawrence Neal: Right. So guys, I'm just really conscious of Skyler's time. Skyler, thank you so much for taking the time to do this. Wayne, I think you're ready to start your own podcast. Man, you're far better at this than I am. Skyler, do you want to just talk about your new [HITuni course](#) quickly?

Skyler Tanner: Yeah, yeah. So the [HITuni course is called Running with Strength](#). It is a collaboration between myself and the team over at [HITuni](#), Simon and his wonderful wife Yanna. They came out to Austin last year. We fed them copious amounts of beef and tacos and took them to icy cold springs in the heat of the summer, and we filmed components of this course and we've been chipping away at it ever since this past year.

Skyler Tanner: It is in effect the distillation of everything that I have learned on my kind of transition, because I was a power athlete, I played basketball, we talked about that. Was a high jumper, and my wife

was a cross country runner. As a true hit Jedi, it was my job to make run of runners. Running, this is stupid. You're going to hurt your knees. Then I realized I didn't have any daddy issues, and I could make my own decisions and I got educated. That became, when I had my first child, one of the few ways my wife and I could spend time together, because she was just trying to get her own workouts given her own work schedule, was when we were pushing our son around Town Lake on Saturday mornings. It was a way to be with her, and also be active.

Skyler Tanner: Then I ended up jumping in a few Turkey Trot-type races, and really enjoying the effort and the challenge, and the competition again. Only this time competition against myself rather than innovation sport, like basketball, and the ability to not need a bunch of other people to do it. Then finding the work of Andrew Magnus, and Aaron Olsen, and my own background and my own training as a clinical exercise physiologist, kind of putting this stuff together and trying to figure out how do you take somebody who has this big foundation of strength, and understands intensity, and then transferring that into some like running, and where we use a lot of the same words, intensity and effort and maximum, but it's different. It's not sprinting, even when you're doing fast intervals. It's not sprinting. It's not as fast as you can go and then long rest periods. There's a whole different dynamic involved.

Skyler Tanner: How do I take people, bring them back to the skill of running, which is a very complex skill, and do it safety? Lawrence, you've done this. Nobody paid you. You didn't get a gold medal or a paycheck

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for doing those obstacle course races, and they bust your ass, but you're happy you did them when you're done. You had a good time, and typically you're out there with your friends, and you talk about, "Oh yeah, this obstacle kicked my ass," and this and that and the other thing.

Skyler Tanner: All week I've been talking with my cousin who ran this 25K with me about the mile 12 hill. So you end up talking about all this stuff. I mean, I'm literally sending you guys a picture of us right at the start of the race here. The terrain and the experience of having this discussion with your central governor and all these things, I really enjoyed that. I think there are a lot of opportunities for people to have this, so it was, "How can I help people who are reasonably strong transition to this with the lowest injury risk possible?" That is what the course is about. It just happened to line up with me doing well in this 25K, top quarter of the field, top third of my age group on less than an hour a week of training specifically for it. So here we go.

Lawrence Neal: That's awesome, Skyler. One thing I just wanted to read, which I took from the [HITuni website](#), which I thought was really interesting to those listening who are personal trainers, is that if you are a personal trainer, you will glean a greater awareness and understanding of the needs of clients who are runners. You will be better equipped to support and program appropriate training for runners in general.

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Lawrence Neal: I know for example that at Discover Strength, a lot of their clients in the beginning were marathon runners, because that's who they started targeting. I assume that they still have many marathon runners in their clientele. I thought this course may be very useful to a lot of the trainers there. If you're interested in buying the course, head on over to hituni.com and you can use the coupon code HIB10 for 10% off.

Lawrence Neal: Another thing I wanted to mention before I get your contact details, guys, is a quick word about the membership. So the HIT Business membership is where we help people grow their high-intensity training business. Both Wayne and Skyler are members. Some of the resources they mention on this episode are in there, so if you're interested in getting access to those, go to HighIntensityBusiness.com/membership. So those resources include the monthly Q&As with the likes of people like Luke Carlson and Mike Petrella, the Discover Strength hiring process, and of course Skyler's Getting Things Done minimalist course, which is pending. I'm just waiting for him to get that done. When are you going to get that done for me, Skyler?

Skyler Tanner: Well, when are you going to release that business podcast that we did that'll correspond with it?

Lawrence Neal: Which business podcast? Didn't I already release that one?

Skyler Tanner: I don't know. I don't know. Did you?

Lawrence Neal: Oh, no, that one is-

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Skyler Tanner: I remember you saying it would be coming out at the end of October is what you told me.

Lawrence Neal: Yeah. You're talking about for the public podcast, right? The one on rush factor. Was it the one on rush factor?

Skyler Tanner: It was one on rush factor, but didn't we do one on the... See, there's so many podcasts out there in podcast land. I can't keep up with it.

Lawrence Neal: Right. Let me check that and come back to you. I need to check.

Skyler Tanner: I've got the video about two-thirds of the way done. I've got a condenser mic being delivered today.

Lawrence Neal: Oh, cool. Cool.

Skyler Tanner: I was surprised you didn't have a condenser mic with the pop filter.

Lawrence Neal: Oh, I did. I did used to have a pop filter, but I just got rid of it because I didn't find it made any difference for me.

Skyler Tanner: See, your plosives are not as explosive as mine.

Lawrence Neal: There you go. But no, you might be right about what you said, so let me check that and come back to you. Wayne, best way for listeners to learn more about you and your business?

Wayne Thacker: People can get on our website. It's QuickFitIndiana.com. I'm looking for feedback, so all the other high-intensity trainers out there, please connect with us. I built the website myself. Skyler and so many out there were wearing all the hats, and so I built the

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website from scratch using Wix, I believe. So just trying to figure this thing out along with the rest of the community out there.

Skyler Tanner: Cool.

Lawrence Neal: Awesome. And you, Skyler?

Skyler Tanner: Yeah, Skyler@SmartStrengthAustin.com. You can shoot me an email. SmartStrengthAustin.com, one giant word, no hyphens is a way to check out our website, which actually I did not build. I had a company called Sweti Services do it for me. I highly recommend them. It's S-W-E-T-I. They are a marketing company that only deals with fitness websites. They tend to get more boot camp-type businesses, but nonetheless, they are really communicative, and Maddie, who's been my project manager through this whole thing, I could not recommend her more highly. They do a really, really good job, and have a good lay of the land as to how to do this stuff. Highly recommend them.

Wayne Thacker: Excellent.

Lawrence Neal: Awesome. For everyone listening, to find the blog post for this episode, please go to HighIntensityBusiness.com and search for episode number 238. Until next time, thank you very much for listening.

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