

## Keys to Success

Olympian and 2010 Pan Pac gold medalist Chloe Sutton's Keys to Success:

**1. Be there!** Don't miss practice. You have to make it a priority. We all have lots of things going on in our lives. We have school, friends, family and hobbies, on top of trying to become a champion swimmer. Juggling it all can be hard at times, but if you make swimming a top priority, then getting there should never be a problem. For me, going to practice is automatically a set-in-stone appointment in my agenda and everything else works around swimming. There have been a few times where I have been sick or unable to get to practice and I have had to miss. In my mind, on that rare occasion that I cannot make it to workout, all I can think about is how every yard that I am missing my competitor is in the pool making progress and getting faster, while I am doing nothing.

**2. Get comfortable being uncomfortable.** This is another way of saying that you need to work hard. If you want to reach your goals, you're going to be uncomfortable at times, and you have to be comfortable with that. You have to be willing to pay the price if you want to receive results in return. You can't just float through each practice and expect to break any records at the end of the season. Becoming a champion isn't going to be easy, but that's what makes the rewards so satisfying. No pain, no gain.

**3. Be good to your body.** Listen to it. When you're eating, sleeping and swimming are the times when you should be listening the most. You need to put the right fuel in your body so that it functions properly. You need to get enough rest so that your body can recover from your challenging workouts, and you need to communicate how you're feeling with your coach so that you push yourself, but not so hard that you get injured.

**4. Have short term goals as well as long term goals.** Have things that you can accomplish each day in practice and throughout the season so that you always have something to lock your eyes onto. Staying motivated can be hard if you only have one end goal in mind, especially mid-season when your big meet seems so far away. Having a few small goals at each practice can help bridge the gap and make getting to your end-of-season goal a lot easier.

**5. Keep it positive.** Stay away from negativity. I am a big believer in positive thinking. If your mind is in the right place then your body will follow. If you're thinking about how hard a set is or how much you dislike what you're doing, chances are it is going to get even harder and less fun because that's what you're dwelling on. Directing your thoughts so that you are thinking about the benefits that you are getting out of a particular practice or set can help make everything so much easier. At competitions, sometimes people can talk themselves out of swimming fast by making excuses for themselves. When you do this, you are simply setting yourself up for disaster. Prepare for races and step on the blocks knowing for a fact that you are going to swim your very best. Put your heart into each race and go for it.