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How Zapier’s RevOps team automates lead management Using AI & Zapier in Marketing, Sales, & RevOps Create your first Zap with ease Home Productivity Productivity tips Productivity tips Copywriter. Designer. Illustrator. Filmmaker. With how competitive the world has become, it’s no wonder why we're obsessed with titles. Focusing on a speciality makes you more appealing to employers and shows clearly where your skills lie. It's easier to focus on doing one thing great. Yet a growing crop of research and anecdotal evidence suggests that creative cross-training—spending time and energy on unrelated tasks, hobbies, and interests—can actually supercharge our ability to learn and grow, making us even better at all our work. It's not just talking about complementary skills, like boxers taking ballet training to work on their footwork (I hope you’re picturing Tyson in a tutu right now like I am). Even completely unconnected tasks can empower and strengthen our ability to perform our main creative job. Here's the excuse you need to branch out and try something new. Steve Jobs From the day we start kindergarten, it seems, we’re told to pick a niche or a specialty. "Do you want to be a firefighter, or a doctor?" they ask. That's increasingly not how we work. As the And.co team found in their latest survey, 61% of freelancers ’specialize’ in two or three talents. Cognitive scientist Art Markman calls these people "Expert Generalists." They're often the best workers—they "have a wide variety of knowledge… [and] are able to use this knowledge to suggest new ways to look at problems [and] are also good at translating across areas of expertise." The wider range of knowledge you have, the more dots you'll have to connect—which is how Steve Jobs explained creativity and innovation. "Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things. And the reason they were able to do that was that they've had more experiences or they have thought more about their experiences than other people." That's where hobbies and outside interests come in. Whether you spend your leisure time shooting pool with friends, playing guitar in a blues band, or knitting crochet cats, you probably think your hobby has no effect of the rest of your life. But according to San Francisco State University assistant psychology professor Dr. Kevin Eschleman's study on the correlation between hobbies and job performance, that’s just not the case. Practicing your hobby "gives you a sense of mastery," Eschleman explains. "You’re developing new skills, new thought processes and really challenging yourself to learn something new and develop your skill set."