

Observe many top weightlifters approaching the bar, and taking their stance. Fixing their gaze above the horizontal they lift their chest extending the spine and neck. Arms waver at their sides in a slow rhythm exemplifying the old Russian technique for relaxation. The objective is to relax prior to the final priming of the body to explode out of the “lifters wedge”. Here is a little known technique, at least in North American lifting culture, to enhance the relaxation phase – The Fat Tongue. As the lifter leans back the tongue is relaxed as it falls to the back of the mouth, hence the name.

This technique can enhance training resulting in faster gains. Try the following pull-up routine. Assume you can do 10 pull-ups. If you keep training to your max reps of 10, no doubt you will be stuck at 10 reps. Instead, grip the pull-up bar and the first move is to centrate the shoulder blades resulting in a stiffening of the back and core. From this pre-tensioned position, perform two explosive pull-ups. Un-rack from the bar, lean back slightly, let the arms hang and waver, and create the fat tongue. Relax for about 30 seconds. Re-grip the bar and repeat the explosive technique for another two pulls followed with the relaxation technique. Repeat the entire regimen for 5 sets. Notice that you feel primed and excited rather than exhausted.

This and other techniques of performance enhancing “priming” are found in “Ultimate back fitness and performance” (www.backfitpro.com).