

Honing One's Craft - The 10,000 Hour Rule

By Rex Tucker

What does it take to be a great success or excel at any chosen field – to be an expert?

Talent, gifted skills, intelligence, great ambition and drive, hard work, paying your dues, being in the right place at the right time, a little fate or maybe a little good luck comes to mind.

Being excellent at performing a complex skill requires a love of practice. This reasoning surfaces again and again in studies of expertise. In fact researchers over the years have settled on what they believe is the magic number for true expertise: 10,000 hours.

Yes, 10,000 hours is the magic number for greatness – 10 years, 1,000 hours per year, with an average of 3 - 4 hours per day honing one's craft or skill.

“The emerging picture from such studies is that 10,000 hours of practice is required to achieve the level of mastery associated with being a world class expert- in anything” according to neurologist Daniel Levitin. “In study after study, of composers, basketball players, fiction writers, ice skaters, concert pianists, chess players, master criminals, and what have you, this number comes up again and again. Of course, this doesn't address why some people get more out of their practice sessions than others do. But no one has yet found a case in which true world-class expertise was accomplished in less time. It seems that it takes the brain this long to assimilate all that it needs to know to achieve true mastery.” says Daniel Levitin.

The ages 5 to 8 are the critical years of development. The love to practice and train, striving to get better, getting rid of bad habits, and willing to sacrifice are essential to success. Young players must steadily increase their practice time; make it a way of life and a daily routine. Players require special programs, select groups, all – star squads,

extraordinary opportunity that give them a change to succeed. For many cases in hockey - the backyard rink as helped many a superstar.

An enormous amount of time is required to become an expert in any chosen field. It's all impossible to reach that number all by yourself by the time you are a young adult. You have to have parents who encourage and support you. Probably the greatest example was Walter Gretzky – where would Wayne be without Walter?

There are four stages of mastering a skill.

Stage 1 - Unconscious incompetence: know nothing about the skill

Stage 2 - Conscious incompetence: know enough to know you are not very good

Stage 3 - Conscious competence: can do the skill quite well

Stage 4 - Unconscious competence: don't even think about what you are doing (mastery level)

There are many stories of skill development. Here are a few inspiring stories.

In the early days, the Beatles worked in Hamburg Germany and played 8 hours per day 7 days a week to master their musical skills. Paul McCartney and John Lennon teamed up in 1957, 7 years prior to being a big hit in the USA in 1964. Arguably their greatest work St. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band came out in 1967....10 years later!

Bill Gates would leave his parent's home between 1 to 2 am in the morning and travel to a nearby computer room and return home at 6 am. He practically lived in the computer room - 20 to 30 hours a week programming as an 8th grader. Bill's mother often wondered why it was so hard for him to get up in the morning to go to school! Bill had a unique passion for programming and computers.

cont. p 38

Don't let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put the passing time to the best possible use.

~ Earl Nightingale

The 10,000 Hour Rule (Cont'd from 14)

Michael Jordan was quoted as saying "I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game – winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over again in my life that is why I am a success." Remember he got cut from his high school basketball team!

The fear of failure often prevents success. We often feel like failures because we measure our success against the standards of other people. When others seem to be succeeding without trying, we feel like quitting. When it gets too hard, we feel like quitting. When people have unrealistic expectations of us, we feel like quitting.

The true definition of success is accomplishing something "you" intended to do. Success is all about intention. If you intend to do your best at everything that you do, then you can truly say you are a success, regardless of the outcome. The secret to success: Stop comparing yourselves to others, make a plan to accomplish what you intend to do in this lifetime and do it to the best of your ability.

When conducting my power skating programs, I often have kids ask me if I played in the NHL. Guess they are somewhat impressed by my skating. Unfortunately, I didn't have the childhood background and opportunities to gain access to this elite hockey world. You could say I am a bit of a late bloomer! Performing skating demonstrations over 500 hours each year – year after year certainly helps hone one's technical skating skills!

Passion brings perseverance and will help set knowledge on fire! It's easy to learn something you're passionate about. People like to be around others who are passionate. However, people often base their apathetic attitudes on old truths. Often looking at the obstacles, citing statistics for proof to show your passion is unjustified. Saying you will never beat the odds.

I tell kids all the time - find something in life you are passionate about, dedicate the necessary hours, do things to the best of your ability and you may find you may have tremendous success. The key is to do your very best and enjoy what you are doing. You never know where it may lead you - maybe to the expert level. One thing is certain you must dedicate the time, energy and passion - otherwise it's only a dream !

NOW HIRING



TUCKER HOCKEY IS HIRING ENTHUSIASTIC AND PASSIONATE PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS FOR YEAR ROUND HOCKEY PROGRAMS

QUALIFICATIONS:

- POWER SKATING BACKGROUND
- NCCP CERTIFICATION PREFERRED
- PLAYED MIDGET AAA, JUNIOR A LEVEL HOCKEY OR ABOVE

PERSONAL TRAITS:

- PASSION AND LOVE FOR THE GAME OF HOCKEY
 - STRONG TEACHING SKILLS
 - EXCELLENT PEOPLE SKILLS
- WILLINGNESS TO LEARN - THE "TUCKER HOCKEY WAY"
 - FLEXIBLE AVAILABILITY
 - OWN TRANSPORTATION

EMAIL DETAILED HOCKEY RESUME TO
PROGRAMS@TUCKERHOCKEY.COM

ONLY THOSE SELECTED FOR INTERVIEWS WILL BE
CONTACTED. THANK YOU, IN ADVANCE, FOR YOUR INTEREST IN
TUCKER HOCKEY.

Dream (Cont'd from 31)

In 1973, a retired former Detroit Red Wing had come out of retirement to play with the Houston Aeros in the new World Hockey Association (WHA). His motivation is to play professional hockey with his two sons, Mark and Marty. His name is Gordie Howe. In 1976 I was drafted into both the National Hockey League (NHL) to the Pittsburgh Penguins and into the World Hockey Association (WHA) to the Houston Aeros. During that summer, at a critical time in my hockey contract negotiations, I was asked by the GM of the Pittsburgh Penguins "if I am going to come to play in the big time in the NHL or go to that other league". Instead of choosing a team or a league I chose to play with Gordie Howe, in Houston, in that other league (WHA).

That was the best decision I ever made in my hockey career. Playing hockey with Gordie Howe was the most amazing experience. I got to live my impossible dream.

My seemingly impossible dream as a young boy was to be a hockey player, to someday play in the National Hockey League (NHL)! Dreams start somewhere. I am so glad that I dared to take that first step to talk with Gordie... If I didn't, who knows what would have happened.