

How to become an Expert

Coms 142 – Film as communication

Spring 2022

- How to practice determines everything.
- If you look at the greatness in almost any field the one common denominator is the amount of time they have, and continue to spend in *deliberate* practice.
- The right sort of practice carried out over time leads to significant improvement. We create our own potential.
- Deliberate practice causes both the body and the brain to grow.
- Purposeful practice has very specific, well defines goals.

Deliberate Practice

- Practice doesn't make perfect ...
- ...it makes permanent.
- Only perfect practice makes perfect.
- Focus on what you're doing.
- Process feedback.
- Fix.

- Intense focus is critical.
- Getting out of your comfort zone is important. We need to push ourselves until it becomes comfortable.
- With deliberate and purposeful practice not only your body, but your brain also changes and adapts.
- In most areas we learn enough to get by and don't continue to challenge ourselves ...
- ...that's ok.

At what price?

- Expertise comes at a price.
- There are only 24 hours in a day.
- To become one of the best in any field other areas in our lives will usually suffer.
- Free time.
- Other skills.
- Relationships.
- You can't be elite and be well-rounded. If you want to be among the top persons in a field balance in life is not going to happen as skills require upkeep.

The Feedback Loop to the Top

- MENTAL REPRESENTATION leads to >
- INFORMED and DELIBERATE PRACTICE leads to >
- IMPROVEMENT leads to >
- REFINED DELIBERATE PRACTICE leads to >
- MENTAL REPRESENTATION and on and on.

Good, Better, Best

- Deliberate practice is intense and not usually fun.
- The most dedicated are willing to pay a price even when they don't feel like practicing.
- Berlin University of the Performing Arts (violin player).
- The University graduates some of the best musicians in the world.
- Studies showed that one thing separated the good, better, and best students...
- The amount of time they spent in solitary practice..
- 2,000 hours.

Good, Better, Best

- Those that put in even more hours ended up being at the very top of their class.
- The same study was also carried out with five world-class ballet companies with the same results.

Malcolm Gladwell

- 10,000 hour rule.
- Incorrect.
- Some skills take a lot less time.
- Some skills a lot more.

Roadblocks

- Finances.
- Health.
- Time available.
- Age.
- Other factors.

Starting?

- As early as humanly possible helps tremendously.
- For most physical activities we reach our physical peak at 20 years of age.
- Women's Figure Skating???
- Better and better coaches are critical to improve skills.
- Children must develop their own motivation .. It needs to come from within them.
- They need to start to identify with their skills.
- For them to reach the very top of their field it might mean 4 to 5 hours a day as they get older and are aiming to be elite.

Steps?

- 1. Find a coach who knows the best way to develop your skill.
- 2. Stay outside your comfort zone to improve.
- 3. You need well defined, specific goals designed to improve some aspect of your target performance.
- 4. Be fully engaged.
- 5. Learn to love love feedback.
- 6. Have a clear picture of what you are trying to achieve.
- 7. You need to constantly strive for the next level of mastery.

Progressing

- This isn't gaining knowledge ...
- ...it's an active development of skills.
- Knowing doesn't mean anything if it isn't translating into action!
- It's better to train for a shorter period at 100% concentration and effort than a longer period at 70%.

Stick with the 3 “Fs”

- Focus.
- Feedback.
- Fix.

How to Stay Motivated

- 1. Choose an activity that you truly, deeply want to be better in.
- 2. Set aside a fixed time to practice.
- 3. Get more and better sleep.
- In the Berlin University study it was found that the best students got an average 5 more hours asleep a week than those less skilled.
- 4. Plan your day overall.
- 5. Limit practice sessions to no more than one hour at a time.
- 6. Be constantly aware of your improvement.
- If you find yourself not improving you've probably set too high an immediate goal.
- 7. Surround yourself with like-minded people.

Whiplash

- Apply everything you learned in this lecture to the film.
- What parts of the lecture were represented in the film and how?
- What parts of the lecture were not represented and why?
- Did anything in this lecture contradict actions in the film? If so what and why?