

6 ways to get better at anything

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Do you get bitter or better?

It's natural to get annoyed when things don't go your way.

Over looked for a promotion, unsuccessful with a sales pitch or a personal relationship heading south?

You have 2 choices when faced with things not going your way.

1. Get bitter or 2. Get better.

The only difference is a simple "e". Who would have thought that 1 little letter could make such a difference in your life.

I am very lucky in my work that I get exposure to a broad range of people. Just about all of the high performers I work with have 1 thing in common. They have the desire to get better.

This article sets out 6 straight forward tips for how you could get better at anything.

As you read it you might want to think about how you could apply it to something that you are looking to improve. You might want to become a more engaging presenter, a more confident umpire or more driven in your work place.

1.

Change your mind set.

If you listen to your words they say so much about what will happen in the future.

It's your thoughts that determine your words and your words drive your actions. Your actions will ultimately become your habits and your habits will become your values.

It all starts with your mind set. For example if you keep saying that you are unlucky I doubt that you will become very lucky. If you can mentally shift your thoughts into positive words you are well on your way.

Sayings I hear a lot from high performers include: "I'm working really hard on this skill at the moment". "I'm making progress in this area". "It's not easy but I know I can crack it". "Here's my plan to improve in this area".

Be resilient. Hang in there. If you want to get better I suggest that the best place to start is to listen closely to everything you say.

It's not as simple as saying I am now a better leader because I keep telling myself I'm getting better at leading others. However it's a damn good start. Be confident.

If you don't believe in yourself, you're always looking for the negatives in others.

Wayne Bennett.

High performers are always working on improving their thinking as well as their skills. What are you working on improving?

2.

Think about how you will feel if you get better.

What difference will it really make to your life?

Why do you want to get better?

Write it down.

If you remind yourself regularly why you want to get better it will definitely help you. People who write down their goals and refer to them regularly are far more likely to achieve them than those who don't.

If you are good at visualising things then try and use that gift you have to see yourself performing the new skill in a better way.

Some people spend their wasted lives worrying about things they cannot change. There's a rule to helping people: the one you are trying to help can't be fighting against you – first off he's got to want to help himself.

Wayne Bennett.

3.

The law of Association.

Without doubt this is one of my favourite laws. High performers are very selective about whom they associate with. If you want to become a better golfer, play golf with better players. Watch what they do. If you want to become a better presenter hang out more with the people you know who present well.

Generally speaking if you associate more with people who are better than you in the skill you are looking to improve, then over time you should get better at that skill. Almost by osmosis.

When trying to develop a better attitude, it's important to keep away from people who continually knock what you're trying to achieve. Small people do that, while the greats make you feel like you too can become one of them. If you can't keep away from small people, just teach yourself to ignore them.
Wayne Bennett.

4.

Get proper feedback and act on it.

If you don't receive proper feedback how do you really know how you are traveling?

I am sure that there are lots of people who would be willing to provide you with feedback.

Why not ask the right people for proper feedback. Record what they say. If it's written down you will be far more likely to stick at it.

Always seek to lengthen and strengthen your own line, rather than shorten your opponent's. If you put all your attention into your own improvement, you will have no time to worry about things that may be outside your control and distracting you from what you need to do or where you want to go.

Justin Langer.

Here's a little tip to. Listen closely to the feedback.

My brother is a GP. I once asked him what percentage of his patients he thinks follows the advice that he gives them.

Have a guess what he said. About 10%. Why see a doctor or any health professional if you aren't willing to follow the advice given by them?

5.

Practice properly.

If you practice doing something properly, you will be more likely to get better at that skill. There is an old saying that says “practice makes perfect”. However, that saying is a little misleading. Perfect practice will be more likely to improve the skill you are working on.

Remember when you went to primary school and you learnt your times table. Over and over again. How did you learn how to speak French or play the piano? Over and over again. One of my old cricket coaches, Jim Watkins, called repetition the mother of skill.

The greatest thing we can do is prepare properly and play flat out and let the rest look after itself. Wayne Bennett.

Combine proper practice with quality feedback and the right mindset and you are well on your way to getting better.

With practice, there needs to be little or no thinking. Thinking, with practice, transforms to instinct. Wayne Bennett.

Most of us will never get the things we want unless we are willing to put our heads down and backsides up, and work hard, day-in-day-out, at what really matters. Justin Langer.

6.

Be patient.

I left this to last. If you've read this far, yes you are being rewarded.

Congratulations.

We live in fast moving times where people want and expect things to happen for them very quickly. New skills take time to embed. It's not as simple as getting a quick nip and tuck or a new tattoo on your derrière. Be realistic about your time frames. From my experience most people quit too soon. The usual excuses bob up about "being too busy", "change of circumstances" or "not a priority any more".

Take one small step at a time and you will get that little bit closer to the goals you are trying to attain. Often, these goals take a long time to be achieved, but by conquering haste and working patiently, the rewards are usually worth every ounce of the effort. Justin Langer.

So there you have it, 6 tips' for how to get better at something.

1. **Change your mindset**
2. **Think about how you will feel if you get better**
3. **The law of association**
4. **Get proper feedback and act on it**
5. **Practice properly**
6. **Be patient**

A final thought or two, this from George Allen.....

Desire, dedication and enthusiasm are the things that dominate in life, whether it be in sport or the business world. If they can maintain those three qualities, they can have the things they want. They will have learnt a work ethic that will always make them employable and always sought.

The challenge for all these young men is to maintain those qualities. It's not complex. Sure, it can be helped by coaches and family, but always it will be up to the individual to make the sacrifices, to supply the enthusiasm and desire to be the best. To give 100%. We only fail because we give up trying.