



# How you learn has more to do with your business success than any talent you were born with...

Andy Murray, Mo Farah and Usain Bolt are world class because of their talent and hard work.

Or is it something else?

Richard Branson, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg have been so successful in business because of their talent and hard work.

Or is it something else?

What if their success is a result of a way of working? A formula you can use. A formula your people can use. A formula your children can use.

Such a formula explains how Simon Clifford helped an U14s football team from Chapeltown in Yorkshire beat the Irish and Scottish national U14s teams.

OK so it might be a stretch to think this formula can turn you or me into the next Zuckerberg.

But what if it can bring a 10% or 20% improvement in business profits? Why not apply this proven way of working to the mission critical jobs in your business and improve your results?



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## In a nutshell

You and your business achieve more only when your skills improve.

To improve skills and expertise we must practice at the edge of our current skill level and we must fail more often!

## Usain Bolt's genes are just so overrated...

The science of success suggests genes have little to do with success.

World class Kenyan long distance runners aren't genetically wired for long distance running success. They're so good because, to get to school when kids, they ran longer distances at high altitude – up to 20km a day. This made their lungs 30% better at oxygen uptake and made them better long distance competitors.

98% of Jamaicans have the gene ACTN3

which is associated with sprinting success. The thing is Kenyans have an even higher frequency of the ACTN3 gene but have no sprinting success. 82% of Europeans also have the ACTN3 gene. But how many successful European sprinters can you name?

It's not the gene that matters, it's Bolt's and his Jamaican team's obsession with sprint training that delivers them repeated gold medal success.

## Here's a proven solution for your business...

**Deep practice** requires you to **reach** and **repeat**.

Apply the laws of deep practice and you'll build skill and expertise and outperform your competition.

## Is this your untapped competitive advantage?

The science says it's not genetics that determines someone's skill and capabilities. It's their depth of practice.

In sport, **repeated** practice is expected. In fact, if you want to be any good, you need to practice more often than you play.

Business is different.

In business, practice is seen as a cost. And if costs are to be kept to a minimum, practice is often avoided.

If you think differently and apply a little **deep practice** (practicing at the very limit of your capabilities) every day or every week, your skill and expertise will improve. So will your results!

## The key is smaller and heavier balls...

In 1997 Simon Clifford borrowed £5,000 to fund a trip to Brazil to learn about 'Futsal' (Futebol de Salão – football in a room). Why?

Because the Brazil national football team had more players in the world's top football leagues than any other. They had also won the World Cup more times than anyone. How come?

All over Brazil kids play futsal. Small room-sized pitches and a heavier ball.

Brazilian futsallers make more mistakes. There's just no room in this five a side game. Passing lanes are ridiculously tight. Defensive pressure is constantly tight also. Players have to either dribble or accurately thread a pass to a team mate.

Not until they're 12 years or over do the kids get to play football as we know it. They make football look easy (because, compared to futsal, it is).

Clifford brought futsal to Chapelton, and coached the U14s team using futsal. They went on to beat both the Scotland and Irish national U14s football teams.

## Here's the science behind what's happening...

**Insulation** is happening.

Insulation of your brain circuits.

Insulation means speed and precision.

Like the cable on your TV is wrapped in insulating plastic. Every time you perform an action or skill the relevant brain circuits are wrapped by an extra layer of **myelin insulation**.

For bare brain circuits – no myelin – the signal speed in the brain is 2 miles per second. For fully myelinated circuits, the signal speed is 200 miles per second.

Brazilians, Kenyans and Jamaicans are brilliant at adding more myelin to their football, running and sprinting brain circuits. Plumbers myelin-wrap their plumbing brain circuits. Sales people myelin-wrap their sales circuits. Engineers myelin-wrap their engineering brain circuits.

Myelin builds a better, faster brain and a better, faster business too.



*Reaching, failing and reaching again is a common thread of deep practice.*

## Accelerate your performance and your business results...

Dan Coyle for his inspiring book 'The Talent Code' visited the hotbeds of talent production. He posed the question:

***"What if you could do a month's worth of practice in just 6 minutes?"***

Coyle was looking for the common threads to explain exceptional levels of performance in these hotbeds.

The small island of Curacao has a population the size of York or Basildon but it provides 1 in 9 of the major league baseball players in the USA. Spartak is a small run-down Russian tennis club that has provided more top 50 tennis players than any other club. 21 of the top 100 women golfers are from Korea. And there's Chapelton too!

They all use deep practice.

## Common threads of success...

***"When you operate on the edge of your ability, when you are reaching, failing, reaching again, learning velocity goes way up. It goes way up."*** – Daniel Coyle 'The Talent Code'

Myelin and skill improvement respond best to being stretched. To falling over. To reaching at or beyond the edges of your ability.

A baby learns to walk quickly because they are constantly reaching for the next, better level of toddling! They fall over a lot. They get lots of coaching. They keep stretching themselves till they have mastered walking. Then they reach again and start learning to run, skip, jump!

When we struggle we get smarter, faster, better. Check out the downloadable tools to see how struggle really works.

What are you doing to reach beyond the edges of your and your team's skill level?

## Rules to accelerate learning and performance...

### 1. REPETITION AT THE EDGE

Myelin and skill improvement requires repetition but as Coyle puts it:

***"Spending more time is effective – but only if you're still in the sweet spot at the edge of your capabilities, attentively building and honing circuits."***

And if you practice at the edge of your current skill level you'll fail, you'll fall over often like a staggering baby does.

### 2. CHUNK IT

'In 7 weeks learn a year's worth of material' is the de facto motto of the Meadowmount School Of Music.

This humble school has given us four of the world's best violinists including Yo-Yo Ma.

At Meadowmount they are experts at chunking:

- **One big chunk** – look intently at the whole piece of music or task in the round
- Practice the **smallest chunks** – short sequences of notes or sub-tasks – practice in random order
- **Slow it down** – going slow allows you to recognise and attend to errors – going slow helps you build a working blueprint of the skill

Chess masters are also masters at recognizing chunks of master games and practicing those chunks. They make a move (the smallest chunk) and compare it to the winning move and work out why the move works.

How can you chunk important jobs or tasks in your business and perform deep practice on these chunks to improve your skills and your results?

## TIME TO DISAGREE

### “Constantly reaching for faster and better is tough. I’m not sure I or my people are up for that!”

The social psychologist Dr Carol Dweck has studied motivation for 30 years. *Motivation* is key to deep practice success.

Dweck gave some children a fairly easy puzzle. Afterwards they were given one of two verbal responses:

1. “You must have worked really hard”
2. “You must be smart at this”

When given a further test the praised-for-effort group (1) improved scores by 30% whilst the praised-for-intelligence group’s (2) score dropped by 20%.

The learning - *acknowledge effort not intelligence* to motivate people to struggle.

More on this in the downloadable tools accompanying this Business Bitesize where you’ll discover what the world’s best ever coach across all sports says to his people.

### “Encouraging people to make mistakes can cost me customers, revenues and profits, not improve them.”

Investing 1 of your 40 hours a week working with one of your people at the edge of their skill level is just 2.5% of your time.

And why not coach deep practice with your people as they work on-the-job?

You could get them to be 10% better at their job. Together you could get them to be faster and do more. They could do more so you do less or you can go do other more valuable work.

Andy Murray knows he’ll fail to win if he fails to practice with his coach’s feedback.

Time to start to reach and repeat with your team whilst working on-the-job?

### “We’re busy enough already without putting two people on one job.”

Teaching people to drive or fly is fraught with danger. But repetition is achieved without risking lives in simulators or dual-control cars.

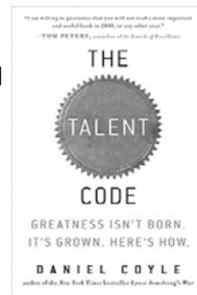
How do you take this idea and apply it to just 1 hour of practice a week and drive your business forward?

### “Please tell me more”

Daniel Coyle’s book is rammed with inspirational stories and detailed insights.

It’s why Tom Peters, (world renowned business author) said: “You will not read a more important and useful book”.

Want more? See some examples and try some exercises to make more of deep practice – check out the downloadable tools here...



**Get Your Bitesize Support Tools Now**

### Use the Business Bitesize Support Tools And Resources

to help you make the most of this edition of Business Bitesize – go here: [www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands](http://www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands)

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## 4 helping hands for you...

Deep practice – ‘Reach and Repeat’ can transform your success and the success of your people and your business.

1. Ruthlessly eliminate passive learning
2. Embrace struggle – reach at the edges of your skill level
3. Embrace repetition – practice often with a coach
4. Coach well – praise the effort not the intelligence or ‘natural talent’ – give factual feedback

### ULTIMATE ARGUMENT:

“How do I know the constant reaching at the edges of my skills and repetition will grow my business?”

You already know that in a fast moving business world you need to improve just to stand still. Doing the same old, same old will mean the eventual demise of your business.

By helping your people (and yourself) improve skills and expertise through deep practice you set yourself up for success.

**STOP** allowing yourself to freewheel and miss out on the value of repeating deep practice.

**START** encouraging yourself and your people to make mistakes and use those errors to signpost better performance.



## Your next steps:

Deep practice helped a small Yorkshire town's U14s football team beat the national U14s sides of Scotland and Ireland.

Talent in your business is not the issue. Deep practice – 'reach and repeat' is the key to your success.

Use the deep practice insights in this report, in the accompanying tools and in Coyle's brilliant book to build success in your business.

## Start by gently pushing your people to make more mistakes...

You know you're working at the edge of a person's capabilities when they make mistakes.

Work alongside your people as they make mistakes and you can encourage their efforts and offer guidance for improvement.

## More tools and information for you:

As well as the steps on this page, use the insights, stories and tools by downloading the supporting resources at the URL link below.

# Repeatedly practice at the edges of your skill level to improve your results...

The hotbeds of success all over the world aren't full of genius people from a world beating gene pool. They succeed because they struggle every day to improve their skills and expertise at the edge of their current skill level, with the support of a guide or coach.

You can adopt this approach for yourself and your business when you:

- 1. Ruthlessly eliminate passive learning** – do rather than watch
- 2. Embrace struggle** – reach at the edges of your current skill level, make mistakes, see mistakes as an opportunity to improve
- 3. Embrace repetition** – repeat regularly so that you build the myelin in your brain and the speed and accuracy for skill improvement
- 4. Coach well** – praise the effort not the intelligence or 'natural' talent – give factual feedback like the best coaches do

**Find more insights, exercises and examples of deep practice by downloading the support tools and resources from the URL link in the box below.**

**And why not get Daniel Coyle's book or check out his website for greater insight for the success your business deserves?**

**YOUR SUPPORT TOOLS ARE HERE: Go to the link below and you'll find a selection of practical support tools to help you work out how to apply deep practice for yourself and your people so that you can build a hotbed of talent in your business.**

Find the support tools to help you here - [www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands](http://www.businessbitesize.com/pentlands)

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