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WHAT DELIBERATE
PRACTICE MEANS
FOR YOUR BUSINESS



What Deliberate Practice Means for Your Business (and your success overall)

When we think of the greats, we think of undeniable skill. The Michael Jordans, the Jennifer Hudsons, the Shonda Rhimeses—each person found success in their respective field, because they were already good at it, right?

We see the end game with this athlete, this musician, and this writer. We see the slam dunks and the sold-out concerts and the successful television shows, but we rarely consider what life looked like in the years that preceded the big moments. Yet one of the biggest predictors of success has very little to do with talent alone. Practice continues to serve as one of the greatest indicators of mastering a skill, and is instrumental in helping your business continue to grow in both lead generations and as a whole. With deliberate, reflective, and purposeful practice, your cold calling talents will improve and excel, and will speak for themselves in the results.

A 2014 study explained that deliberate practice made a 26 percent difference in games, a 21 percent difference in music, and an 18 percent difference in music. This might not seem like a difference, but if given the opportunity to increase and improve your talents by an average of 21.6 percent, would you take it?

These people all took the chance, which means they all made the decision to devote themselves to deliberate practice. They recognized that success would not fall into their lap, rather, they would have to keep trying again and again to make something out of their talents. Skill by itself is a lump of clay—what you do with that clay is what makes all the difference. See how these talents were purposefully molded and crafted into something greater, and how you can do the same.





Imagine being a high school basketball coach and turning away Michael Jordan. But in 1978, a 15-year-old Jordan saw a list of names announcing the starting varsity lineup, and his name wasn't there. As he later stated in interviews, Jordan went home and cried with disappointment.

After the initial shock and grief, Jordan turned this rejection into motivation, practicing harder and going further with his athletic talents. He made the varsity team the following year, and the world watched in awe as he continued to make waves (and wins as well).

Lesson Learned: Rejection is so much more common than success. In cold calling, you will undoubtedly be rejected, and it will undoubtedly sting.

Each time this happens, think about what you did well, and what you would do differently. Never beat yourself up over a loss, instead, turn it into a tool for how you'll grow in the future. Had Michael Jordan stopped the moment he was turned away from the team, he wouldn't have become the legend he is remembered for today.

If you had recognized the name Jennifer Hudson in 2003, it would have been from hearing her perform as a singer on a Disney cruise ship. A year later, her vocal talents continued to gain recognition as she made it onto American Idol. Hudson made it past the audition stage and even became a finalist, only to be eliminated. Had she won, she might have never had a chance to audition for "Dreamgirls," which meant she would have never won a Golden Globe and an Oscar. These days, Hudson finds herself in the role of a judge on vocal talent show "The Voice."

Lesson Learned: Growth is rarely linear. Growth and success are messy, they take time, they're never overnight, and they're full of setbacks. The only way we turn growth into something tangible is through repeated and deliberate practice. It's amazing to think of the things we want the most, and when we haven't gotten them, those losses have sometimes turned out to be for the better. When the client you've been working on for some time finally turns you away, figure out how to keep moving forward. Some of the best moments have grown from some of the worst.



One thing was certain in Shonda Rhimes' life—she was always writing. She went to school for English literature and creative writing, wrote in advertising, attended a screenwriting program at the University of Southern California, got a writing fellowship, and even sold a screenplay. Rhimes' screenplay never was produced, but she kept on writing, eventually writing "Crossroads," "The Princess Diaries 2," "Grey's Anatomy," "Scandal," and so many other critically-acclaimed shows.

Lesson Learned: Spend time doing what drives you, and invest in your practice by learning as much as possible. Rhimes never stopped writing, and was dedicated to maximizing her writing knowledge, knowing that she always had something to learn. In your cold call skills, just as with any skill, you can always be learning and practicing. Seek out training opportunities, sales seminars, and anything else that can bring you the knowledge you need—you'll never know what you might pick up that makes the difference in your lead generation talents.

In order to make the most of deliberate practice and to continue honing your skills in cold calling, here are three crucial takeaways that can take your abilities to the next level.

Consistency. Spend time practicing every day, in some fashion or another. At home, practice your tone and your sales pitch. Record yourself, listen back to how you sound, make notes of what worked and what didn't. The more time you can devote to your practice and the more you can create it into a habit, the more you'll begin to notice improvements.

Reflection. Be open to constructive criticism, and be able to give it to yourself as well. After every interaction you have with a client, note something that went well and something that didn't, until reflection eventually becomes second nature.

Learn. Not a single person or case study mentioned above would say that they are perfect, and needn't continue practicing and learning. Take advantage of every learning opportunity that comes your way, and make those opportunities for yourself as well. From signing up for corporate sales training, or hiring someone to facilitate training for salespeople at your establishment, learning can only help.

Deliberate practice is the only way that anyone who has achieved success has done so. Decide today how deliberate practice can make an impact in your cold calling, commit to it, and witness firsthand the results that come from striving to be better.

Sources:

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