

The Million Dollar Minute

By Douglas Niedt

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Persistence

I'm Douglas Niedt. Thanks for joining me for this Million Dollar Minute. I'd like to talk about Persistence and determination. For the entrepreneurial guitarist, the one inevitability in life will be episodes of recurring crises. In between each crisis you will be faced with a continual succession of problems and difficulties. The more opportunities you explore, the bigger your goals, the more determined you are to succeed, the more problems and crises you will experience.

As you pursue your dreams and goals you will be discouraged by many things. Criticism is one. Failure is another. In fact, sometimes it will seem like a demon has been specially assigned to you to throw as many discouraging experiences in your way as possible. It will be the old "everything that can go wrong, will go wrong." You will find yourself frequently asking, "Why me?" The only way to get through difficult times is with persistence and determination. My favorite quote, and one I live by to a great extent, is by Calvin Coolidge:

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

The world is littered with talented people who did not persist, who didn't put in the time, who thought they could ride in on talent alone. The ones that succeeded showed up and stuck with it the longest. Persistence trumps talent. Persistence trumps education. Persistence trumps genius. Doggedness delivers massive returns. Persistence is the absolutely indispensable element that goes hand-in-hand with all great success in life. Not only that, your persistence is the true measure of your belief in yourself and in your ability to succeed.

Perseverance means never giving up. It means continuing on a journey to achieve a purpose, or continuing to pursue a course of action in spite of opposition. Difficult goals and incredible dreams take time. Impossible ones take a little longer.

Every time you look a crisis in the eye and conquer it you become stronger and better able to deal with the next crisis. Eventually you become hardened to adversity and you will never give a second thought to quitting, regardless of the difficulty. No matter what is thrown at you, you will find a way around it or hit it head on with unrelenting effort.

The courage to persist in the face of adversity and disappointment is the one quality that more than anything else will guarantee your success. Your greatest asset will be your willingness to stick with it longer than anyone else. During the bad times, in the midst of doubt and fear, you may feel like you are trudging through deep mud with a heavy weight on your shoulders. Ninety percent of the perseverance battle is knowing that what you are doing is right and worth the fight. Remember your mission. See the vision in your mind. Know where you are going and where you want to be. Don't give up. As Thomas Edison once wrote, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." You will face adversity many times throughout your career. Tough times don't last. Tough people do.