EXPLORING THE MYTH OF TALENT

ROB STOKOE
Exploring the Myth of Talent
Few of us truly get to know our full potential
We have been taught that we inherit traits like intelligence from our parents.
Do you view talent as rare gift bequeathed to a lucky few?
Every child is valuable, every child is important, and all children should be encouraged to develop to their highest potential.
Yesterdays thinking...
Genes Dictate
Genes Instruct
Genes Determine
Genes influence everything, but...
...they actually determine very little
Greatness isn't born, it's grown!
Your individual differences in talent and intelligence are not pre-determined by your genes.
..they develop over time
If we are not determined by our genes, our genome, then...
...what are we?
I am my connectome

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmxpftPFXZg
The human brain is the most complex of all organs. It contains around 86 billion neurons and 100 trillion synapses.
The development of your brain occurs through your active engagement in everyday experience.
Talent is not a thing, it’s a process.
Talent is a set of skills you develop over time through effort and desire.
Each of us is a dynamic system, we are creatures of development
Intelligence represents a set of competencies in development

Sternberg 2005
No-one is genetically doomed to being average
Each of us, every brain is one of a kind!
Has humanity reached the pinnacle of its development?

No, people are getting smarter!
Current difficulties in reading largely originate from rising demands for literacy, not from declining levels of literacy.
How smart can we become?
98% of current IQ test takers outperform the test takers of 1900

Flynn 2007
There has been an 18 point increase in intelligence (IQ) over 2 generations, that’s on average 3 points every 10 years!
KEY TRIGGERS

○ Speaking to children early and often
○ Reading early and often
○ Nurturance and encouragement
○ Setting high expectations
○ Embracing failure
○ Encouraging growth mindset

Hart & Risley
In professional homes children can be exposed to 1,500 words per hour more than children from a less advantaged situation.
That’s **8 million** more words every year
What does this mean for us?
What are the guideposts to excellence?
FAITH: Believe that every child has enormous potential.
Effort: Develop a deep belief in the value of hard work and setting high expectations
Persistence: ‘It's not that I’m so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer’

Einstein
No age related level of achievement is either a golden ticket or a locked gate
You have to teach them that they are in charge of their intellectual growth

Carol Dweck
In life, in learning, any meaningful success requires effort.
You earn your intelligence
The development of genuine expertise requires struggle, sacrifice as well as honest, often painful self-assessment.
There are no shortcuts
Whatever you wish to do well, you must do over and over again, reaching beyond your current level
Ignition
motivation with vision, external or from self

Deep Practice
slow, deliberate, repetition, error-focused

Master Coaching
individualized, information-specific

Daniel Coyle(2009)
To grow talent; effort in the form of deliberate practice is essential
Over time “deliberate practice,” can produce changes in the brain.
To succeed you must be ready to fail. Then to embrace any failure and learn from it.
Try Again
Fail Again
Fail Better

Samuel Becket
You never fail until you stop trying

Albert Einstein
Key attributes
Always striving to improve
Never complacent
Always looking ahead
Know where they want to go
Key attributes
Focus and Concentration
Great Feedback
Practice, Practice, Practice
Accept that it’s really hard work
Becoming BRILLIANT takes time
To separate the best from the rest,
Every child is a seed of wonder, full of potential, full of the capacity to grow and learn, with the innate power to shape their lives.
To discover your child’s potential add water, love, perseverance and lots and lots of time!

Patrick Bateson
You are absolutely unique...

...........just like everyone else
Thanks for listening
Appendices


• Ericsson, K. A., 1996, ‘*The acquisition of expert performance: An introduction to some of the issues.*’ In *The Road to Excellence: The Acquisition of Expert Performance in the Arts and Sciences, Sports, and Games*