



Talent is Overrated: What Really Separates World-Class Performers from Everybody Else

By Geoff Colvin

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Wall Street Journal and *BusinessWeek* bestseller

Asked to explain why a few people truly excel, most people offer one of two answers. The first is hard work. Yet we all know plenty of hard workers who have been doing the same job for years or decades without becoming great. The other possibility is that the elite possess an innate talent for excelling in their field. We assume that Mozart was born with an astounding gift for music, and Warren Buffett carries a gene for brilliant investing. The trouble is, scientific evidence doesn't support the notion that specific natural talents make great performers.

According to distinguished journalist Geoff Colvin, both the hard work and natural talent camps are wrong. What really makes the difference is a highly specific kind of effort—"deliberate practice"—that few of us pursue when we're practicing golf or piano or stockpicking. Based on scientific research, *Talent is Overrated* shares the secrets of extraordinary performance and shows how to apply these principles. It features the stories of people who achieved world-class greatness through deliberate practice—including Benjamin Franklin, comedian Chris Rock, football star Jerry Rice, and top CEOs Jeffrey Immelt and Steven Ballmer.

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Review

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"Provocative."-**Time**

"A profoundly important book."-**Daniel H. Pink**, author of *A Whole New Mind*

"What an exciting book!"-**Ram Charan**, coauthor of *Execution*

About the Author

Geoff Colvin, *Fortune's* senior editor at large, is one of America's most respected journalists. He lectures widely and is the regular lead moderator for the Fortune Global Forum. A frequent television guest, Colvin also appears daily on the CBS Radio Network, reaching seven million listeners each week. He coanchored *Wall Street Week* on PBS for three years. He lives in Fairfield, Connecticut.

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Geoff Colvin expands upon his FORTUNE article "What It Takes to Be Great" in this positive reinforcement manifesto. The author makes the point that it's not one's learned experience, or even natural aptitude, but the training process that creates the overachievers in our society. This takes into account the fields of sports, music, business, and even science. Like most self-help literature, Colvin backs his theory with faith and, coming from a business background, he recommends a systematic approach to training. The listener couldn't experience a smoother voice than David Drummond's to deliver the message. Years of voice-over experience ensure that his tone is measured, and he seldom wavers from his smooth self-assurance. J.S.H. © AudioFile 2009, Portland, Maine

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