



Talent is Never Enough

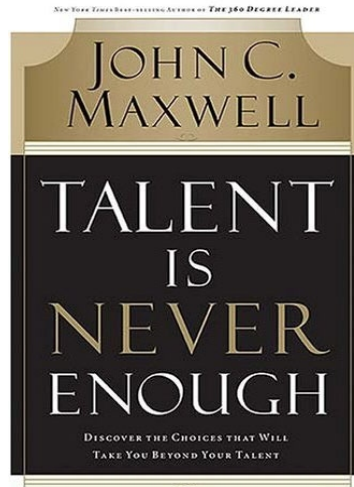
Discover the Choices That Will Take You Beyond Your Talent

By John Maxwell, Thomas Nelson, 2007

New York Times best-selling author Dr. John C. Maxwell has a message for you: **TALENT IS NEVER ENOUGH.**

People everywhere are proving him right. Read the headlines, watch the highlights, or just step out your front door. Some talented people reach their full potential, while others self-destruct or remain trapped in mediocrity.

What makes the difference? Maxwell, the go-to guru for business professionals across the globe, insists that the choices people make – not merely the skills they inherit – propel them to greatness.



About John Maxwell



Called the nation's foremost expert on leadership, **John Maxwell** was born in central Ohio five and a half decades ago. He credits his excellent leadership instincts and his early leadership training to his father, Melvin Maxwell, whom he followed into the ministry. For over twenty-five years, John led churches in Indiana, Ohio, and California.

In 1985, John Maxwell founded The INJOY Group, a collection of three distinct companies that employ 200 people and provide resources and services that help people reach their personal and leadership potential. In addition to building a successful organization, John has authored more than thirty books, including the New York Times best sellers "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" and "Failing Forward".

<http://www.johnmaxwell.com/>

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Why You Need this Book

This book offers time-tested wisdom and attributes that you need to maximize your potential and live the life of your dreams.


It's what you add to your talent that makes the greatest difference. You can have talent alone and fall short of your potential. Or you can have talent plus, and really stand out.

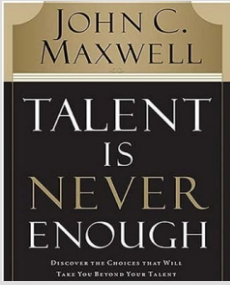
You will learn how:

- Belief lifts your talent.
- Initiative activates your talent.
- Focus directs your talent.
- Preparation positions your talent.
- Practice sharpens your talent.
- Perseverance sustains your talent.
- Character protects your talent... and more!

Belief Lifts Your Talent

It's called the guarantee. At the time, many people said it was just big talk. Not true. It was a mark of the confidence possessed by the person who uttered it. That strong sense of belief made him a legend and his team members champions. What could it for you?

 **About the Book**



Author: John C. Maxwell
Publisher: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2007
ISBN-10: 0785214038
ISBN-13: 978-0785214038
272 pages

If you want to become your best, you need to believe your best. You need to...

1. Believe in Your Potential. Your potential is a picture of what you can become. Inventor Thomas Edison remarked, "If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astonish ourselves."

2. Believe in Yourself! It's one thing to believe that you possess remarkable potential. It's another thing to have enough faith in yourself that you think you can fulfill it.

3. Believe in Your Mission. What else is necessary to lift a person's talent? Believing in what you are doing. In fact, even if the odds are against your accomplishing what you desire, confidence will help you.

Initiative Activates Your Talent

If the momentum gets strong enough, many of the problems take care of themselves and talent can take over. But it starts only after you've taken those first steps.

When it comes to initiative, there are really only four kinds of people:

1. People who do the right thing without being told.
2. People who do the right thing when told.
3. People who do the right thing when told more than once.
4. People who never do the right thing, no matter what.

Anyone who wants to become a talent-plus person needs to become the first kind of person.



Here are some suggestions to help you as you strive to become a talent-plus person in this area:

1. Accept Responsibility for Your Life.

Greek philosopher Socrates said, "To move the world we must first move ourselves." Show me those who neglect to take responsibility for their own lives, and I'll show you people who also lack initiative. Responsibility and initiative are inseparable.

2. Examine Your Reasons for Not Initiating.

Chinese philosopher Mencius made this point: "If your deeds are unsuccessful, seek the reason in yourself. When your own person is correct, the whole world will turn to you." If you lack initiative, the only way you will be able to change is to first identify the specific problem.

3. Focus on the Benefits of Completing a Task.

It is extremely difficult to be successful if you are forever putting things off. Procrastination is the fertilizer that makes difficulties grow. When you take too long to make up your mind about an opportunity that presents itself, you will miss out on seizing it.

4. Share Your Goal with a Friend Who Will Help You.

No one achieves success alone. As the Law of Significance states in The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork, "One is too small a number to achieve greatness."

5. Break Large Tasks Down into Smaller Ones.

Once you remove some of the internal barriers that may be stopping you from taking initiative and you enlist the help of others, you're ready to get practical. Many times large tasks overwhelm people,

and that's a problem because overwhelmed people seldom initiate.

6. Allocate Specific Times to Tasks You Might Procrastinate.

It's the start that often stops people. So how do you overcome that difficulty? Try scheduling a specific time for something you don't like doing.

7. Remember, Preparation Includes Doing.

Desire isn't enough. Good intentions aren't enough. Talent isn't enough. Success requires initiative. Michael E. Angier, founder of SuccessNet, stated, "Ideas are worthless. Intentions have no power. Plans are nothing... unless they are followed with action. Do it now!"

Focus Directs Your Talent

Focus does not come naturally to us, yet it is essential for anyone who wants to make the most of his talent. Having talent without focus is like being an octopus on roller skates. You can be sure that there will be plenty of movement, but you won't know in what direction it will be. Talent with focus directs you and has the potential to take you far.

Make focus your friend. Here's how:

1. Be Intentional – Make Every Action Count.

People who are undecided about what they want to do or where they want to go cannot tap into their strength of will – or their talent. As a result, they will merely drift along.

2. Challenge Your Excuses.

We all have reasons for not doing what we ought to do. We don't have enough time. We don't have enough resources. We don't have enough help. We have problems. We have



shortcomings. We have distractions. Should we let these things get us off track? No!

3. Don't Let Yesterday Hijack Your Attention. Too many people yearn for the past and get stuck in it. Instead, they should learn from the past and let go of it.

4. Focus on the Present. Your focus needs to remain in the one area where you have some control – today. What's ironic is that if you focus on today, you get a better tomorrow.

5. Stay Focused on Results. Anytime you concentrate on the difficulty of the work at hand instead of its results or rewards, you're likely to become discouraged. As a result, you will accomplish less and less. By focusing on results, you will find it easier to stay positive and encouraged.

6. Develop and Follow Your Priorities. Management expert Peter Drucker said, "Concentration is the key to economic results. No other principle of effectiveness is violated as constantly today as the basic principle... Our motto seems to be, 'Let's do a little bit of everything.'

7. Focus on Your Strengths, Not Your Weaknesses. Focusing on weaknesses instead of strengths is like having a handful of coins – a few made of pure gold and the rest of tarnished copper – and setting aside the gold coins to spend all your time cleaning and shining the copper ones in the hopes of making them look more valuable. No matter how long you spend on them, they will never be worth what the gold ones are. Go with your greatest assets; don't waste your time.

8. Delay Rewards Until the Job Is Done.

Pay now and play later. Too often people want the rewards before the results, and for that reason they don't stay as focused as they could be.

Preparation Positions Your Talent

Preparation positions people correctly, and it is often the separation between winning and losing. Talent-plus people who prepare well live by this motto: "All's well that begins well."

Sports have always been an area in which you can see the value of preparation. Consider the routine of professional golfer Tom Kite. It contains three main steps. Use it as a guideline, not only when playing golf, but also in other situations when you need to prepare yourself:

1. Assessment – Am I Evaluating Correctly?

Good preparation always begins with assessment. If you don't accurately evaluate where you need to go and what it will take to get there, then you're likely to get into trouble. In golf, good players typically ask themselves these questions to assist in the assessment process:

- Where do I need to go?
- How far is my goal?
- What are the conditions?
- What will it take to get there?

2. Alignment – Am I Lined Up Correctly?

A good golfer can perform the assessment process flawlessly and still miss his or her target horribly. How? By lining up poorly. Psychologist James Dobson said, "What is the use of climbing the ladder of success only to find that it's leaning against the wrong building?"



3. Attitude – Am I Visualizing Correctly?

You have to believe in yourself and what you're doing. You have to be able to see yourself doing it with your mind's eye. If you can't imagine it, you probably will not be able to achieve it.

Practice Sharpens Your Talent

Successful people understand this. They value practice and develop the discipline to do it. If you want to sum up what lifts most successful individuals above the crowd, you could do it with four little words: a little bit more.

If there is one more secret to successful practice that will help you to sharpen your talent, it's summed up by the phrase "a little extra." Here's some points in the area of practice:

1 A Little Extra Effort. All accomplishments begin with the willingness to try – and then some. The difference between the ordinary and the extraordinary is the extra! A little extra effort always gives a person an edge.

2. A Little Extra Time. Successful people practice harder and practice longer than unsuccessful people do. Success expert Peter Lowe, who has gleaned success secrets from hundreds of people who are at the top of their profession, says, "The most common trait I have found in all successful people is that they have conquered the temptation to give up."

3. A Little Extra Help. Anybody who succeeds at anything does so with the help of others. Alex Haley, the author of "Roots",

used to keep a reminder of that in his office. It said, "If you see a turtle on top of a fence post, you know he had help getting there."

4. A Little Extra Change. To sharpen your talent through practice, you need to do more than just be open to change. You need to pursue change – and you need to do it a little bit more than other achievers.

Perseverance Sustains Your Talent

Perseverance is not an issue of talent. It is an issue of time. It is about finishing. Talent provides hope for accomplishment, but perseverance guarantees it.

Playwright Noel Coward commented, "Thousands of people have talent. I might as well congratulate you for having eyes in your head. The one and only thing that counts is: Do you have staying power?"

Right thinking always precedes right action. If you want to be able to sustain your talent, then take the following steps:

Purpose: Find One. It is very difficult for people to develop perseverance when they lack a sense of purpose. Conversely, when one has a passionate sense of purpose, energy rises, obstacles become incidental and perseverance wins out.

Excuses: Eliminate Them. One of the most striking things that separates people who sustain their success from those who are only briefly or never successful is their strong sense of responsibility for their own actions. It is easier to move from failure to success than it is from excuses to success.

Stamina: Develop Some. Former world



heavyweight champion boxer Muhammad Ali, called "The Greatest," asserted, "Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them – a desire, a dream, a vision. They have to have last-minute stamina, they have to be a little faster, they have to have the skill, and the will. But the will must be stronger than the skill."

Character Protects Your Talent

Never forget that talent is a gift – either you have it or you don't – but character is a choice. If you want it, you must develop it. Here's how:

1. Don't Give Up or Give In to Adversity.

It takes character to weather life's storms. At the same time, adversity develops character. Author and activist Helen Keller, who could not hear or see, remarked, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved."

2. Do the Right Thing. Doing the right thing doesn't come naturally to any of us. As America's first president, George Washington, said, "Few men have virtue enough to withstand the highest bidder." Yet that is what we must do to develop the kind of character that will sustain us.

3. Take Control of Your Life. It's true that in life we must face many things outside our control. But know this: while your

circumstances are beyond your control, your character is not. Your character is always your choice.

The Last Word on Talent

Whatever talent you have you can improve. Never forget that the choices you make in the end make you.

Choose to become a talent-plus person. If you do, you will add value to yourself, add value to others, and accomplish much more than you dreamed was possible!

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