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# Bounce: The Myth Of Talent And The Power Of Practice

'A must-read for anyone who believes hardwork will achieve success'  
Duncan Bannatyne



Matthew Syed  
**Bounce**  
The myth of talent  
and the power of practice



## Synopsis

Essential reading following an astounding summer of sport; if you've ever wondered what makes a champion, *Bounce* has the answer. This edition does not include illustrations. What are the real secrets of sporting success, and what lessons do they offer about life? Why doesn't Tiger Woods choke? Why are the best figure skaters those that have fallen over the most and why has one small street in Reading produced more top table tennis players than the rest of the country put together. Two-time Olympian and sports writer and broadcaster Matthew Syed draws on the latest in neuroscience and psychology to uncover the secrets of our top athletes and introduces us to an extraordinary cast of characters, including the East German athlete who became a man, and her husband and the three Hungarian sisters who are all chess grandmasters. *Bounce* is crammed with fascinating stories and statistics. Looking at controversial questions such as whether talent is more important than practice, drugs in sport (and life) and whether black people really are faster runners, the mind-bending *Bounce* is a must-read for the hardened sports nut or brand new convert.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It's hard to resist comparing this book to Malcolm Gladwell's *The Outliers*. In *The Outliers* Gladwell helped spread the fame of the work of Anders Ericsson, FSU expert on how people acquire expert intelligence. Indeed, the phrase "10,000 hours" is now so ubiquitous it has become a cliché, although people often forget that it refers not just to practice but to **STRUCTURED** practice. While *The Outliers* excels in its writing and infotainment value, *Bounce* seems more instructive. It's hard to finish *Bounce* and not feel like there is a lot more you could do if you just applied yourself. Syed mixes personal experience, anecdotes of others, and empirical data to hammer home the point that living with a "growth" mindset is richly rewarding. Syed does an excellent job of explaining how some people continue to reach new thresholds in their pursuits while many others plateau early. I often give this book as a gift to nieces, nephews, and friends' children who are entering college, telling them I wish I could have read (and believed) this book when I was their age.

I read a lot, a lot, and this is one of the most significant books I have read. Anyone striving for high performance, in any field, as well as anyone raising or teaching children should read this book. I've been very interested in reading one of the books which are based, at least to a degree, on the work of Anders Ericsson and purposeful practice being more important than talent you are born with. Reviews of the other books, such as *Talent Is Overrated* by Geoff Colvin, *The Talent Code* by Daniel Coyle, and *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell have put me off. Each book seems to take a somewhat different view of the importance of various aspects that have been shown to lead to superior performance -- purposeful practice and opportunity (such as having a good coach available) being the primary aspects. *Bounce* also delves deep into the psychology of people who persist enough to become superior performers. There are many psychological points, which anyone can develop, which lead to someone bouncing back from difficulty and doing well. With practice being so important to superior performance, you must have persistence or you won't get in the practice. Highly recommended. I've already given it as a gift and will be giving out more.

The talent myth pervades our thinking in various forms, e.g., musicians, leaders, etc. are "born--not made." While one should acknowledge the existence of those rare individuals who seemingly possess superhuman aptitudes, according to the author, most "experts" in whatever field reach the pinnacle through a combination of factors--factors within the reach of mere mortals! This is good news and awfully encouraging to anyone willing to obtain the proper tutelage and engage in "purposeful practice" over the long haul. This book lit a fire under me to develop a plan and "do the time" in

purposeful practice in order to master the guitar. Woodshed, here I come!

The book is well written, one might say it reads itself. Moreover, after several months since I read the book, I can safely say it changed my mindset. I have changed the view of my peers, my superiors and myself. I have changed my approach to several aspects of my life (study, work, sports,...). I really love the fact, that author took care with providing lots of references to his claims. I would further recommend the second book by Mathew Syed Black box thinking. The overlap is very subtle, which is rare in the self-development literature (it's often pointless to read several books by the same author). In summary, it's fun and full of useful information.

I can't tell you the impact this book has had on giving me perspective on my own development and training as a tennis player. It has allowed me to see that the process wasn't as random as I had thought; that the hard work; delay of gratification and attention to detail allowed me to see things that other tennis players didn't simply because I employed 'purposeful practice' at every and all moments I was involved in the sport. This book goes into great detail about how a work ethic, allows ANYONE the opportunity to succeed by dispelling so many myths on why players, musicians, athletes, people in all sorts of industry become successful. Just loved his analysis referring to countless studies and real life examples of Earl and Tiger Woods, Mozart and his father, David Beckham and his work ethic. the wonders of the Polgar Sisters in chess. And the one common thread that one and all had to success? Read the book and find out for yourself. You won't be disappointed. And you might even find out something about yourself in the process. A wonderful read by a columnist for The Times (London); commentator for the BBC; a graduate of Oxford University and a two-time Olympian.

I read it twice already. The concepts are concrete and practical. The bottom line success has a formula, and anyone can achieve, but you have to put in the work needed.

One of the best books i've read in a long time.

Insightful and a great read.

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