

## Talent: Why we are willing to bleed for it

When I was 11-years-old, I won the South African Skateboarding Championships. That's the press-release version of the story. The behind-the-scenes version, however, goes like this: Between the ages of 8 and 11, I skinned my shins and knees so many times that I now have permanent marks. My bruised and bloodied hips would have had any social worker hell-bent on removing me from an obviously abusive home. (video)

 By [Douglas Kruger](#) 13 May 2013

I once landed wrong trying to jump the staircase near the Wimpy in Margate and took most of the skin off my back. For a couple of weeks, every time I turned from side to side it would re-open bleeding scabs that would ruin my school shirts. The lifeguard station was nearby when it happened, and the medic carried me into his little sickbay room, saying, 'Dude, that was totally awesome!'

The part that I remember, though, is winning the SA Championships. And that's not surprising, because it fits in with our current understanding of how talent works.

### Four major elements

Talent can be reduced to an equation with four major elements. The first and most important of these elements is 'yearning.'

To become talented at something, anything, you have to dearly *want* to! This is why your high-IQ child, who is good at Maths when she puts her heart into it, generally winds up failing the subject nevertheless; she has all the capacity in the world, but absolutely zero yearning to become good at it.

It also explains why an 11-year-old boy is willing to break his body in half, then get up and do it all over again. Blood and broken bodily bits are not enough to halt him in the pursuit of his passion. Disinterest, it turns out, is much, much more effective a deterrent. Injury and abrasions create anger, passion and further yearning to overcome. Disinterest kills pursuit stone dead.

### The genesis of talent

Yearning, then, is the genesis of talent. Its presence makes almost anything possible. When we yearn, we find ways around any obstacle; we overcome any hindrance. The absence of yearning represents a full-stop in human development. Any hindrance becomes a mountain; any obstacle an excuse to throw in the towel.

A person who yearns becomes a sponge, soaking up ways and means and growing ever fuller. A person who does not yearn, quite simply cannot be taught. When the doors are closed, the winds may batter against them for years, to no avail.

After yearning is established, the next three parts to talent are:

- Input
- Deliberate practice, and
- Sustained endeavour

Learn how each of these fascinating components work, and can be taught to your families and your employees, in this video from a live presentation, '20 Minutes on Talent':

## ABOUT DOUGLAS KRUGER

Douglas Kruger is the bestselling author of nine business books with Penguin, including the global release: *Virus-Proof Your Small Business*. Meet him at [www.douglaskruger.com](http://www.douglaskruger.com), or email [info@douglaskrugerspeaker.com](mailto:info@douglaskrugerspeaker.com).  
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