

QUOTE ANALYSIS VOLUME 1

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“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” – Benjamin Franklin

This quote has been spread around in numerous locations, and is worth taking a closer look at. When you fail to prepare, you are looking to take from the system, as opposed to giving in to it. You go into a presentation with the idea that you can put less effort out and get adequate results anyway. A person that doesn't prepare should fail, if the system he is dealing with has integrity. This also reminds us that the majority of a presentation has already been set up before it occurs. In relation to my article that said most items around us are heavily engineered, the presentations and products we see before us are the culmination of hundreds or thousands of hours of effort. This is good news for active and productive individuals, but is not appealing to indolent individuals that want to get the same results.

The viewpoint to take from this quote is that your mind should be clear when it is time to present. There shouldn't be an item you are looking to finish during a presentation or product release, because your audience will end up directly taking notice of it. We tend to focus on things that seem out of place, so if you have 10% of your product looking unfinished, the audience will assume the project is not going smoothly. When you prepare by going overboard, it is very unlikely that your product or presentation will come out looking rushed, because people will be processing that you did more than the minimum throughout the process.

The simplicity of the quote is a defining aspect of its message; it shows a direct cause-and-effect relationship. There are numerous occasions in life where preparation is the difference between success and embarrassment. Although some processes can work out smoothly without preparation, due to serendipity, using those as a basis for one's decision to prepare or not is similar to watching the video of a lottery winner before buying lottery tickets in order to distract yourself from the probabilities against winning. Playing the risk game with your own productivity creates a high chance for time to be wasted.



“If I can picture that, I bring a picture back.” – O’Shea Jackson

This quote is powerful in the sense that it empowers its reader. If you can envision something, like a goal of yours coming to fruition, you can get to the point where you can take a picture of your victory moment. It might take months to get to the point of interest, but it is worth it when the real-time image is formed. This quote gives energy to the reader of it because it provides your mind with the sense that a key step on the way is getting a mental taste of success with a focused imaging of the end-product.

This says quite a bit about the pictures and trophies we obtain. They are visual representations of that which we could only process mentally until they were acquired. The anguish that comes from the time and effort spent leading up to the end result is actually the relevant part, but the result at the end is needed in order to make it the relevant part. Without the final step acquired, all the rest of the work can feel like wasted time, instead of worthwhile pioneering.

This is a quote to bounce around in your thoughts, every so often, during your focused period of time, so that you can create a picture frame with your fingers that your mind can fill in with a tentative image of the end of that step.



“Real education must ultimately be limited to men who insist on knowing, the rest is mere sheep-herding.” - Ezra Pound



There is a direct message being described here, which is that the very few who are highly determined to acquire education are the ones that society would benefit most from providing an education to, while the rest of the people are to be allowed to watch from the sidelines. The provision of education is wasted on those who are not really interested in learning the material.

This concept can be extended to the thought that only those who are 100% directed towards a goal are the ones who should, and will, obtain it. A person who puts a goal on the back burner, leaves it for a later week, thinks that he can get the chance to do it later, or works toward the goal lightly is indirectly saying that the goal isn't that relevant to him. Most of the time, when someone says "I really plan to do it soon" more than once, you can expect that the goal is not high on their priority list, regardless of the amount they discuss it.

Education Continually Evolves

Education has to be grasped for, because the information behind it is continually changing, so it is impossible to work linearly towards obtaining knowledge in a category. By the time you end up understanding 20% of a specific category of learning, 30% of the research in the category may then be updated. This is why people that are not reaching out for their education will soon be out of the loop, because their routine towards it is not sustainable, and they are easily derailed from keeping up. If education were at a standstill, people could learn a certain amount of items and then be completed. Also, competition comes into play here, as you might learn X items, but if someone else learns X + 2 items, you are once again at a disadvantage, and need to educate yourself further to stay relevant.

“Real education must ultimately be limited to men who insist on knowing, the rest is mere sheep-herding.” - Ezra Pound

Strictness Helps Education Transmit More Efficiently

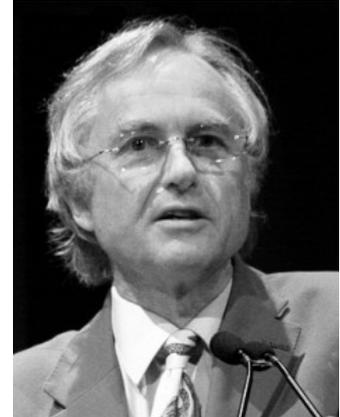
If the opportunity for education was removed for those that weren't battling to acquire it, we would see less **frustrated** individuals, because much of that frustration comes from spending time on learning that one is not actually planning to use much of for future actions or efforts. At the end of Richard Dawkins' TED speech about atheism, he concluded with “Let's all stop being so damned respectful.” Although his speech was about a different subject, it relates in that harshness can be more beneficial than friendliness for both the acceptor to educational facilities and the mindset of the one wanting to be educated. There has to be passion on both sides for the transfer of knowledge to occur.

Academic Admissions

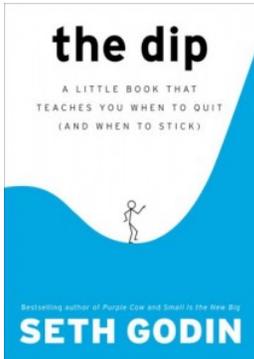
The most successful academic institutions commit a plenitude of effort to their admissions processes, in order to keep out those that are trying to “game” the institution, or those that are not really interested in the institution but applied leisurely. The push-pull effect shows up here, in that the more someone is pushed away from reaching a goal, the more they will pull back towards it, if it really is their goal.

Knowledge Has to be Applied

The way to use this information is to judge which knowledge you are passionate about seeking, versus the knowledge you are seeking for ostentatious or ancillary purposes, and to remove those educational pursuits that you don't plan to make use of. If one person learns ten things they don't put to use, and another person learns one thing that he does put to use, one of them will get a set of results while the other is limited to bragging about the knowledge he has in fact wasted. To repeat that point for memory purposes, something that you learn, but don't make use of, is worthless to you.



“Real education must ultimately be limited to men who insist on knowing, the rest is mere sheep-herding.” - Ezra Pound



Books Connecting To This Issue

Quite a few books have a message that relates to this concept. Seth Godin’s The Dip speaks about how if you are not passionate enough to get through the dip that shows up as a difficult test during your efforts, you are better off not pursuing that path. In the same way, if you don’t see yourself building and building upon knowledge in a category you are planning to learn in, you are better off not heading in that direction. Leo Babauta’s The Power of Less says to do less, in order to get more done; this relates here in that doing a small amount of learning in a subject, and then applying that learning passionately, is worth loads more than learning heavily about a subject and not applying that learning to a product, creation, or service.

Reality Show Similarity

Relating to pop culture, American Idol has Simon Cowell, Hell’s Kitchen has Gordon Ramsey, The Apprentice has Donald Trump, and any successful reality interview/selection show has a well-known judge on their show who represents the idea that if you are not passionately reaching towards your goal, and in the right category that suits your strengths, you will be admonished or removed from the selection process. TV judges, university admissions personnel, hiring managers, and research grant providers are all examples of people that work to lead passionate and fitting people towards their goals, and to keep any other individuals out of their way.



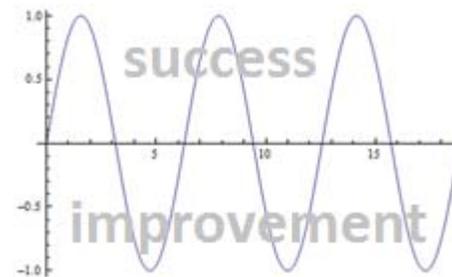
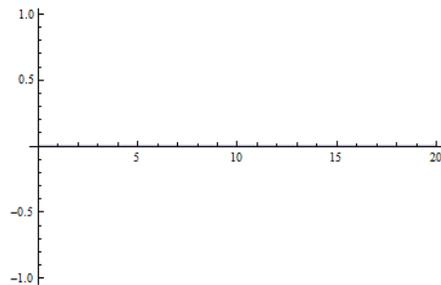
“If everything seems under control, you’re just not going fast enough.” – Mario Andretti

This quote sends a similar message to the one that tells us to remain comfortable being uncomfortable. Anytime you get the feeling that you are in a zone of security or structure, it is time to agitate it. Allowing comfort to settle in is what causes long periods of dormancy. The mindset to maintain is one of energy, uncertainty, slight anger, and similar feelings of discomfort. Having this set of feelings will help to keep you on the right track, as you won't become absorbed by your temporary fortuitous condition.



The optimal way to go through the day is to always leave yourself slightly overextended or ready to take on more. If you reach a point where you are on top of everything, you might start to get the good feeling associated with it, and then will not want to change things up. Avoiding this is important to not getting stuck in a relaxed position that is only useful for letting time glide by. To continually progress, you have to add on an item or two when you are very close to mastering the items you have started on.

Since being out of control is not something that is in line with our natural interest to remain at a harmonious equilibrium point, it requires a desire for spontaneity. This means acting on impulses after making an educated guess about their possible positive worth. It is said that the part of life to focus on is the journey, and the journey will be a short distance if comfort is maintained throughout the travel. The ups and downs of a life of pushing the envelope transforms a linear voyage into a sinusoidal expedition, with peaks of success and troughs of improvement taking the place of time mundanely floating by.

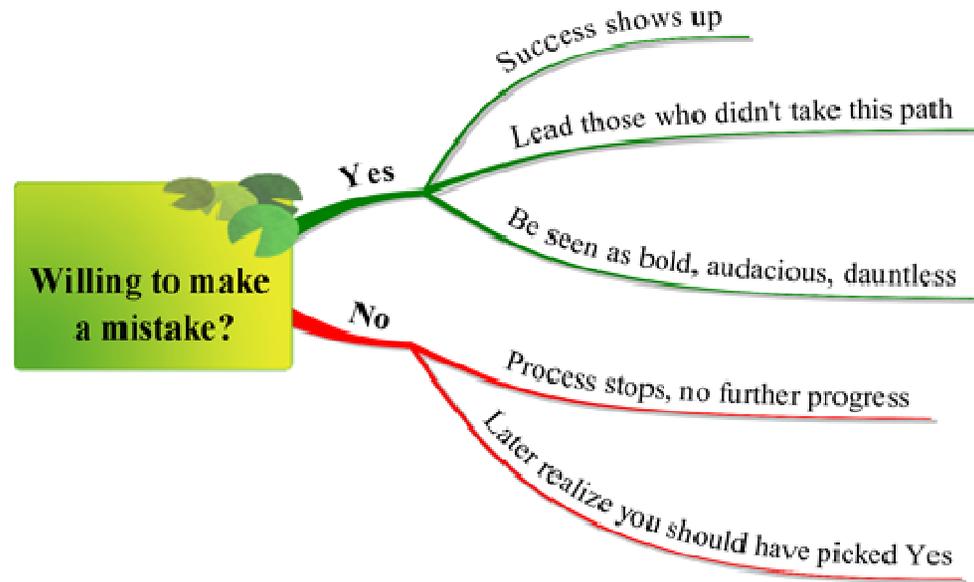


“The man who never makes a mistake always takes orders from one who does.” – Daisy Bates

This quote should be enough to get readers of it into action. It can be seen as a threat in a way, pointing out that any avoidance of activity that could lead to a mistake is acceptance of being led by another person who was willing to go through that type of mistake. The point here does a fine job of keeping your thoughts in line with the understanding that there are others at the same point as you, and the ones who are willing to err, while progressing forward, are the ones who can lead individuals that were not up for the challenge.

This also informs/reminds that people who are rising quickly in their field of interest are making mistake after mistake, and are more than fine with it, as those mistakes are irrelevant when compared with the progression enabled by them. Leadership can be thought of as one person handling those who didn't aspire to travel through the mistakes that he did. It also tends to be the case that the leader is not too different in ability from the others, but that the key point of willingness to err and come out wrong is what distinctly separates the two groups.

You would do well to look at people that are at a similar decision-making point, and ask yourself if you would be alright having them as your superiors. If this is not the case, the decision of whether to accept mistakes as possible outcomes, and progress forward, should be clear.



“He who hesitates is a damned fool.” – Mae West

Hesitating is a guaranteed loss every time it is done. Hesitating can be thought of as directly subtracting time from your day. Time spent hesitating is time you can't get back, and it doesn't provide any useful value for the decision you were making. There is a clearly defined separation between hesitation and thinking things through, and you can quickly feel when it is hesitation taking place. At that time, you have to remind yourself of quotes like “Be bold” or “Just do it” and skip the hesitation.



Hesitation won't help in a basketball game, business meeting, school presentation, social interaction, or decision-making process. You can then use this seemingly obvious point to cut off anything in your day that seems like hesitation. This leads to all self-asked questions coming to a quick ‘yes’ or ‘no’ result. It is useful to repeat to yourself that there are no benefits to hesitation, so behaviors of yours that seem to include it are to be decided upon instantly when the next chance arrives.

In a professional basketball match, hesitation leads to the ball being stolen, the 24-second clock running out, or a missed easy scoring opportunity. In a business meeting, hesitation to bring up your points of interest will leave you questioning if they are valid, and whether you are in a position that you can handle. An academic presentation can turn out unfavorably if you hesitate when making a point, as the audience will then assume the presence of a problem due to lack of preparation or understanding.

The negatives that come with hesitation include missing an opportunity, seeming to lack self-confidence, losing your train of thought, and gaining stress due to failure to decide. The positives that come from instant decisions are endless, and one that most people would be glad for is that others will pick up on your quick decision-making instantly. You will be remembered as the one that valued and saved everyone's time by providing your input at the earliest opportunity. People keep instant decision-makers in their minds for participation in their future group projects, since they know they are less likely to hold up production.

“When ability exceeds ambition, or ambition exceeds ability, the likelihood of success is limited.” – Ralph Half

This quote sends a vital message about how we should approach our forward movement. When you have a large amount of ability, but your ambitions are low, your ability is wasted. It is not used, and can deteriorate over time. At the same time, when you have much more ambition than your level of ability, you end up sitting back in amazement at the amount and level of work ahead of you that is needed to be completed in order to satisfy your ambitions. Your time is wasted yet again, as you get stuck at many steps along the way.

The key point here is to look to match your level of ability with your level of ambition. This can be done on either side of the issue. Ambition is the more controllable feature, so that is the one you would want to work with in the short term. Matching it with your level of ability involves noticing how you are currently feeling with the effort you are putting out. If you feel like there is much more than you are able to handle on your list of items to complete, you have to knock most of them off. They are probably not getting accomplished in that case, so they are prime targets for removal. Work that you are not working on only removes your enthusiasm.

At the same time, if you currently have less ambition than you feel your level of ability could handle, all you have to do is take an item you are working on already and expand on it. Adding new items to your list might seem appealing on this situation, but it is probably the case that you would benefit more by expanding on those items you already have put some effort towards. We tend to be very quick to add new items to our queue to complete, but slow to remove them, when in fact the speeds of entry and exit for assignments should be fairly close.

When your levels of ambition and ability do come close to each other, you are then only a period of time away from accomplishment and victory.



“It’s not about timing; it’s about preparation.” - Unknown

For those of you who are looking for that rare opportunity to show up, go ahead and cancel that thought process. When you follow that line of thinking, you end up waiting and waiting for an idealistic occurrence to arise, and when it does, you probably will not be able to handle it, and will then have to wait for the next rare opportunity. This quote lets you know that you have to cut off that process of waiting for the right opportunity. The rare opportunity will have less likelihood of translating into something useful if you are searching for it or viewing it as your only chance.

Waiting Has No Value

If preparation is the relevant factor, as the quote alludes to, you are gaining no value by waiting for the right instance to arise. Your mind might tell you that waiting is the deviously advantageous way to avoid spending time on an opportunity of low importance, but from an outside perspective, you are performing no actions while you are waiting. Someone else, who is working on being in the right position to receive the opportunity, will then acquire and be able to handle the special chance, while you will end up waiting for the next one. Keeping this quote in mind cuts out your waiting plans, and it sets the priority back where it should be, which is on making actions.



A catcher in baseball would look ridiculous if he always waited in a certain spot for the rare chance that a ball would come straight to him. We expect a baseball catcher to fully prepare for his position by improving skill in estimating where and how fast the ball will go, and to run there and set up at an appropriate speed. In the same way, if you want to get a book deal, waiting for a publisher to approach you, or waiting for a rare occasion where you run into a publisher, will leave you in a reactive state for quite a period of time, as compared to a pro-active state where you prepare for the opportunity and seek out communication opportunities with publishers.

An added point is that it should certainly not be about timing. If all opportunities went to those who waited for them to arise, the most successful people would be people that waited the longest, and that doesn’t make sense from a business/social standpoint. Therefore, people who wait are penalized for wasting their time, which is only as valuable as they allow it to be. If you spend focused time preparing for your public presence, your time in the public eye will be worth substantially more than that of someone going public and expecting beneficial items/occurrences to be provided to them.

“First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you. Then you win.” – Mahatma Ghandi



This quote by Ghandi has been heard by many, and there is much to gain from it. It provides a sequential set of responses that you will have to deal with as you build up in some category. Having an idea of the stages gives you a sense of what to expect during your expansion, so that you are much better able to control how you handle the effects. Without keeping this set in mind, you might end up becoming unhelpfully angry at any of the stages before the victory would set in. I will use an example of starting an online rare books store.

First they ignore you.

At first, no one would know about your online business. Some people would run across it, and then actively ignore it, as it would seem to be irrelevant and lacking in acceptance by the public. Others would see it, and instead of telling others about your useful creation, pretend as though nothing of value was seen.

Then they laugh at you.

Soon after, some people would start to make comments that don't help your building of the business, like "Aren't there already other rare books stores online?" or "You don't have a chance in that industry." These comments would fit into the category of them laughing at you. They will come in many forms, and the indirect forms are the ones that can halt your efforts the most. Overarching lines like "Don't you think demand for rare books is decreasing?" can be used by others to halt your progress.

**“First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Then they fight you. Then you win.” –
Mahatma Ghandi**

Then they fight you.

The next step would be competitors of your category starting to use methods to topple your efforts. This is a standard response that shows up because you may start taking their customers. The “struggles” of rising are only there because other individuals purposely place them there to keep you from entering their domain. Some examples would be someone hacking into your rare books website, talking negatively about you on a book reselling site, or talking condescendingly about your site on their book reselling site.

Then you win.

The last step, if you were able to handle each of these previous steps, would be success in your chosen field.

Another way to make use of this quote is to think of it in reverse. If you don’t want a competitor to get to the final stage, you might want to refrain from performing the actions in the previous stages. Ignoring a new competitor might be fine in the short-term, but in the long-term, it could result in your efforts being overtaken because you weren’t staying percipient. If you laugh at new competitors, you are actually energizing them to work harder. That is not beneficial for your business undertaking. After that point, their efforts may be at the same level as your efforts, and you will have no choice but to battle them. The victory would then go to whoever was more prepared.

“To be understood, first seek to understand.” – Stephen Covey

A large portion of social communication involves understanding concepts brought up by others. However, there can be a tendency to want to have your own ideas understood first, which can be seen as pushy, and is not likely to occur when others get a feel for your motives. An optimal way to get others to understand what is on your mind is to work in reverse, by first focusing on understanding their position and views.

It Starts When The Conversation Starts

The idea behind this arises from the initial response. When someone tries to get you to understand their mindset, without consideration for your mindset, you feel that they are inconsiderate, or possibly view you as less relevant than them, and then ignore their communication on purpose. It is a natural evolutionary response, because those that don't start to ignore these people can end up getting used repeatedly.

Fair Trade/Creation Of Value

It can be thought of like social monetary dealings. Smooth communication would be akin to each person starting with \$10 of value before the communication, and ending with \$11 of value. On the other hand, when one person tries to forcefully get their thoughts in first, it is like trying to get a \$1 worth of information created from the other person, without showing any intent to provide a \$1 of value in return.

“To be understood, first seek to understand.” – Stephen Covey

Who Isn't Listening To You?

A way to check if you have been taking more than you have been giving is to assess how your communications go with certain people. If you notice that there are people who are not initiating conversation with you like they were in the past, it is highly likely that you did not want to find out about what was going on in their minds, while concurrently you were releasing your thoughts to them as though your thoughts were more valuable than theirs. The only way to rekindle relations with these people is to present yourself to them in a manner that shows you seek to understand them first. You can only belittle someone for so long.

“How Are You Doing?”

This is often true with people wanting to inform others about their day. They can overwhelm the other person with facts, without thinking about how the other person is seeing it. The other person might end up leaving soon after out of frustration. In this case, it is beneficial to stay within limits of discussion, as the other person will be wondering when they will have the opportunity to voice their views. Although a certain amount of people can be overpowered in most communications, it is not a sustainable process to do so, and you never know when a person who is important to you will give up communicating with you, due to your inconsiderateness for their time and attention. Similar to it being easier to prevent sickness than to treat it, it is harder to gain back their positive spirit after you have let them down, as opposed to maintaining balanced relations from the start.

“The mind, ever the willing servant, will respond to boldness, for boldness, in effect, is a command to deliver mental resources.” - Norman Vincent Peale



Obama’s book is called “The Audacity of Hope“. Sir Alan Sugar once told an apprentice “Be bold” when he was hesitating to voice his opinion(In a past comment I also pointed out that not voicing your opinion causes your blood pressure to slightly rise.) “Go big or go home” is a well-known saying about bringing effervescent potency to something, or not doing it at all, leaving out the ineffectual middle-ground. Here I discuss boldness and the responses associated with it.

Boldness Leads To Rewards Every Time

One key point to set the stage is that boldness is rewarded time and time again. Before I point out any examples, think about the examples of boldness being exemplified during your day. Either you or people that you saw or dealt with brought boldness in some fashion. How did people respond when they did so? I have seen that the majority of cases where boldness was shown resulted in positive or highly positive results. A select few resulted in minor negative results in the short-term, but then the results turned out favorably for those dauntless individuals, as they bounced up from their mistake with vigor. This is doable because actual errors are very minor entities, but being scared to make them is a much larger issue.

To Stick Your Neck Out Or Not

Think about the people that you see praised for their efforts. The majority of the time, if you take away the boldness they implemented to do something quicker than others, or stick their neck out in public, or do something that the others around them wouldn’t have even risked doing if left for 10 hours, they would then have very little to be praised for. Example after example shows the bold person moving ahead. Ask a question in class and you are now more likely to do well in the class because:

“The mind, ever the willing servant, will respond to boldness, for boldness, in effect, is a command to deliver mental resources.” - Norman Vincent Peale

1. You get your question answered.
2. You show everyone in the class that you are looking to pass.
3. You show the teacher that you value your position as a student with an opportunity.
4. You asked what 10 other people wanted to ask, and they now partially look up to you for that, and are more likely to study with you or help you out.

Those all came from asking a question.

Boldness Represents Acceptance Of Accountability

Connecting back to the quote at the beginning of this article, boldness is an indirect signal that you will be providing mental resources, and are allowing yourself to be held accountable for what you are about to do. Accountability is a large part of boldness, or else everyone would be bolder and not back up their initial claims.

Communication/Discussion Example

You are interested in jewelry, and have your own jewelry site. You are walking through a bookstore and pass someone reading a jewelry book. Your level of boldness determines what comes of that situation. People who are not bold won't even see the opportunity there, or will pass by the person and feel quite disappointed for not talking to them. A bold individual, or a regular individual that decides to be bold, will create something of that situation. Talking to the book reader could present the opportunity to bring someone to your jewelry site, find out information about jewelry, get a testimonial, find a member for a future meeting, etc.

“The mind, ever the willing servant, will respond to boldness, for boldness, in effect, is a command to deliver mental resources.” - Norman Vincent Peale

When you don't take this opportunity, there is only one person in the world who will know of your weakness, and that will be yourself, which will result in disappointment. If you see the person reading a book on something that relates to your own site, but don't mention anything, he has no way of knowing all the ideas floating in your head. Boldness is the separator between opportunities created and opportunities missed.

Bold Social Networking In Public

We can see that people are becoming more and more connected through numerous technologies and methods of socialization. At the same time, people remain very hesitant to say what is on their mind in public. The one bold person out of ten people is rewarded with tremendous amounts of attention and communication, but what about those other 9 people? Everyone is able to see what lavish rewards bold people get, but not everyone skips right into presenting themselves equally as bold. Keeping in mind the wonderful benefits that bold people get should be enough to motivate emulation of their action.

Here I will run through a list of boldness examples that come to my mind:

1. Zappos CEO Tony was on the show The Apprentice a few weeks back. It is crucial to realize that it is just as likely that he was not on the show, and that another individual from another company was in his place; however, he was likely provided the opportunity to appear on the show, and boldly went through the procedure to heavily endorse his brand. Boldness like this is not to be ignored. Another person placed in his position might have gotten scared of not representing his brand properly, or some other self-created fear.
2. The first person who responds to a question or comment gets the most feedback and chance for learning. On sites, the first comment on an article tends to be viewed and analyzed the most. Someone who lacks boldness might end up taking long enough on their weak comment to have it show up as the 5th comment, so they will lose both on the listing of their comment and the potency of their presented opinion.
3. In real-time chat, people who lack boldness are easily identified, as their factual responses come quite slowly, and they use qualifiers in their statements to protect from damaging the other person, which actually ends up damaging their message transmission

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4. On Twitter, Ashton Kutcher has currently created a pseudo-battle between himself and CNN Breaking News to become the first account with 1 million followers. Although there is no relation between his writing material and that of CNN breaking news, and the battle was completely created out of thin air, his boldness in creating hype around it has netted him hundreds of thousands of followers on his account. While another person is probably quite disappointed for hesitating, Ashton has gotten more followers in a few days than most will ever get on Twitter.

5. The musician John Mayer made a comment on his page that said “Some girl just knocked on my car window at a red light and handed me her demo. That’s how you DO IT!!” He showed exuberance at the fact that someone had the boldness to present their material to him directly. That quick bold action is worth more than a month of generic processed action with no vigor behind it. Had the girl seen John, and then hesitated, and then gotten too afraid to give him her demo, one huge opportunity would have been lost.

A Little Boldness Will Set You Apart

Boldness is quite rare in our times, which is why it is so easy to stand out. A small action can propel you up in an instant. Hesitation is the enemy of what boldness can be. When you hesitate to do something, you have made a choice to give up any benefits that boldness would have provided. Hesitating, even for a second, is a conscious decision made by you that communicates your giving up of any shot of acting boldly.

Implement Your Idea Boldly Or Consequences Show Up

As an ending note, this should be one that will prompt you towards boldness. There has certainly been a time when you had an idea and someone else had an idea that was very similar to it, if not identical. They were bold and released it before you. They ignored the possibility that it wouldn’t be received well, because they knew that that was irrelevant, and ignored any unconstructive criticism, because it was not transmitted with good intent. They then received accolades and kudos for their effort, while you got nothing for being afraid of the backlash, disappointment, feedback, and other issues that were made large in your mind, but were actually the smallest problems one could imagine. Don’t let that happen again.

Closing Remarks

Thanks go to:

- Chris Guillebeau and his Ebook [279 Days To Overnight Success](#) for inspiration on the design
 - o <http://chrisguillebeau.com/3x5/overnight-success/>
- Ming Chuah for feedback that resulted in implemented changes
- Mike King for his concept of a compilation-type resource, as seen on the Free Resources page at <http://learnthis.ca>
- Those who provided tidbits of information or guidance along the way

This compilation represents all 11 Quote Analysis articles written up to this point at Timeless Information, with material added to better convey concepts and fit the design.

Feel free to download it, send it to others, print it out, link to this post, etc.

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You can post a comment at: <http://www.timelessinformation.com/quote-analysis-volume-1>

Or contact at: <http://www.timelessinformation.com/contact>

“Don’t wait. The time will never be just right.” – Napoleon Hill