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INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES  
AND CREATIVE THINKING

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# Greetings from **IMPACT**



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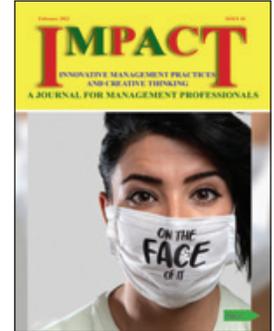
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Dear Readers,

Covid19 has now appears in various variants and avatars. Many World citizens are feeling jittery again. The booster dose also has created lot of debates. Why? What for? What if, if we don't take? Questions Questions and Questions galore without getting any convincing responses from the world medical fraternity, raises more doubts and speculations.

China now is the only country which has put a lid and no voices are heard about the Covid and its various avatars.

Another debate as usual is raging apart from covid is on our Union budget 2022. Every Channel both radio and TV have their own panellists doing the analysis, whether it is a populist or non populist budget; Whether it is citizen friendly or capitalists friendly; Senior citizens are crying to high heavens about not having any advantage for them. Political Party spokes persons have their own interpretations and add fuel to vociferous heated debates. Media is very happy that they are able to increase their TRP ratings with Breaking News and shouting anchors.

Net result, as usual gullible public are the losers and are being taken for a royal ride by the politicians and the media savvy activists.

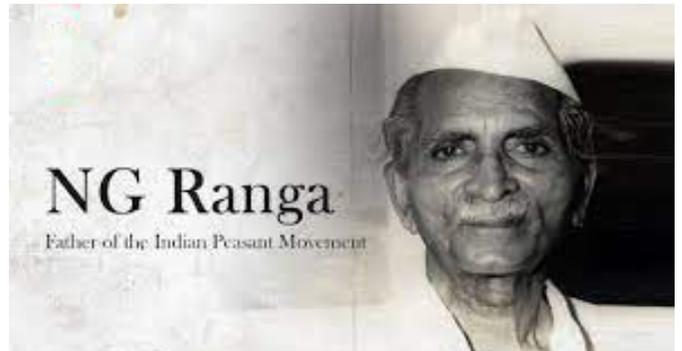
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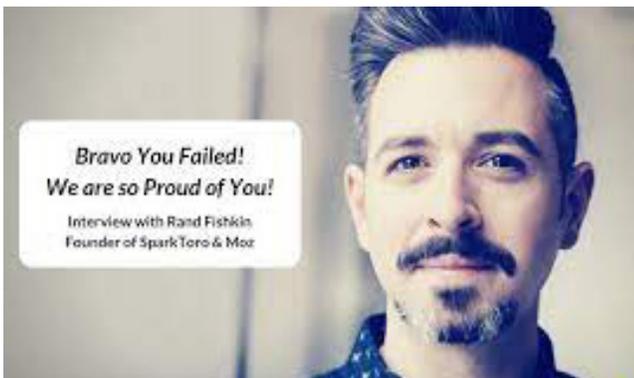
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# Let's Continue to Wear Our Masks

The situation of Covid has improved in our country now. The number of new cases has come around 12000 and odd every day and death cases plummeting to less than 400. Major festivals are over with less infections despite huge crowds in markets and political rallies in different parts of India. The tourist season has begun to prosper once again with many youngsters resorting to “ Pandemic Revenge Travel”. The schools have started functioning to almost full strength in the majority of the States. The fear of the Third Wave is slowly dimming with people looking forward to the dawn of the Happy New Year 2022.

## Covid Appropriate Behavior

Now the most important question arises:

What about the CAB- Covid Appropriate Behavior?

What about washing hands every now and then?



What about maintaining a respectable distance from your own friends and relatives when you come across them in the parks?

The most crucial one- WHAT ABOUT WEARING THE MASKS?

I can visualize the faces of many people shrinking while thinking of the discomfort while putting on a face mask. How difficult to breathe? How unintelligible to the listener when you speak with your mask on? How painful it is on the ears while continuing with the mask during long journeys?

Well, this list is endless.

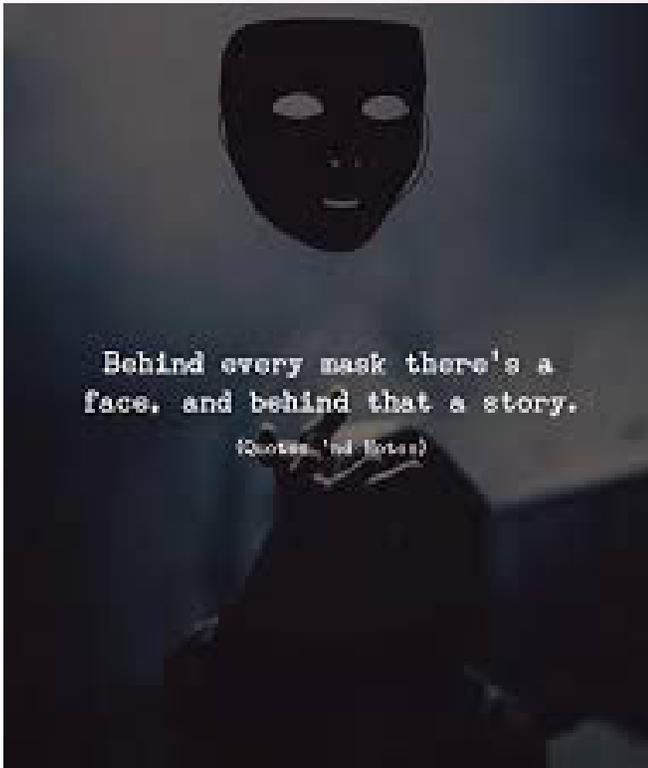
Many persons have already discarded the mask while they go to parks or nearby places.

Some wear it only while going to Malls or crowded markets- of course here also many only hang the mask around their necks as an additional dress just to raise it to your nose when needed or many just wear it over their mouth leaving the most important part which takes the virus- the Nose.

Well, I have no answer or solution to these queries.

I find the situation quite amusing.

Some elderly people are following the CAB even now very sincerely, whereas some oldies have considered themselves impenetrable to the Covid.



Similarly a few youths are highly careful in observing the rules whereas some of their tribe are back to their good old days.

## Some Suggestions

I am thinking of my youthful days- I have crossed 75.

I recall how my mother would never allow me to enter the house without washing my hands, legs and face whenever I return from outside.

I recollect how I would never touch my own sister after coming to age in family gathering, forget hugging and playing with other girls.

Excepting shaking hands with the same age boys, never there was any occasion of hugging and all. For elders, either it is a polite “ Namaste” or solemnly touching their feet.

Are these not a part of the present social distancing?

If I catch any fever or cough, all my personal belongings like my towel, eating plate, tumbler, bed

sheet etc would be segregated and I would be kept aloof in a corner till I became ok. If this is not self-isolation or quarantine, then what is it?

If any vaccination or inoculation program was brought to the school, I was asked to be the first in the line despite some side effect like mild fever. Is this not similar to the present jab campaign?

Well, what is the harm in returning to this old culture or continuing with the new covid culture?

Now the most significant issue has come- what about the face mask?

There is no city or town now with fresh and clean air- leave the “ Toppers- Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore”.

Is it not better for our own lungs and health if we put on the mask at least while crossing or travelling on the busy roads? I learn that the Japanese used to have a mask always much before the Pandemic in Tokyo itself which is supposed to be one of the clean cities.

I leave the decision to you for these suggestions.



## An Interesting Thought

This led me to an interesting thought.

Are we not covering our emotions some times to our own friends, children or relatives?

Are we sharing all our emotions, difficulties or illnesses to all people?

Are we not shouting an enthusiastic “ Hi” to our near and dear even when we are really going through tough times?

Do our children reveal all their problems to us, especially when they are in the foreign land? They only send the photos during their week end picnics.

We don't know their real lives. All we know is what they show through their masks.

We take part in the joys of our colleagues whatever may be our inner emotions.

When we think deeply, this kind of masking is required for a peaceful living. If every one starts showing their true feelings, life will become a hell. This is what the Psychologists and Management Experts too advocate to us as a Principle of Life.

Let's not impose our unfortunate happenings to one and all, excepting to the nearest ones. Let us spread cheer, happiness and sunshine. Then only people



will look forward to our company. Otherwise, they will avoid us calling us as Dooms Day forecasters.

I recall the words of Charlie Chaplin “ I always play and laugh in the rains because the rain water will wash away my tear drops and nobody could notice it.”

To keep the mental balance in life, let's continue this emotional mask every day, whether we wear the Covid mask or not.

The world is full of nice people.

If you can't find one, be one.

## Just for a Smile!

Teacher in the class- How many letters are there in the English Alphabet?

Student who is the son of an Auditor-

23 without GST.

26 with GST.

### R. Venugopal

*Mr. Venugopal has served in LIC of India from 1968 to 2006 for 38 years and retired as an Executive Director.*

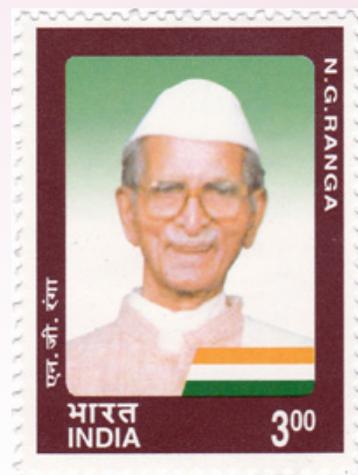


# Prof N.G. Ranga, The Unique Statesman

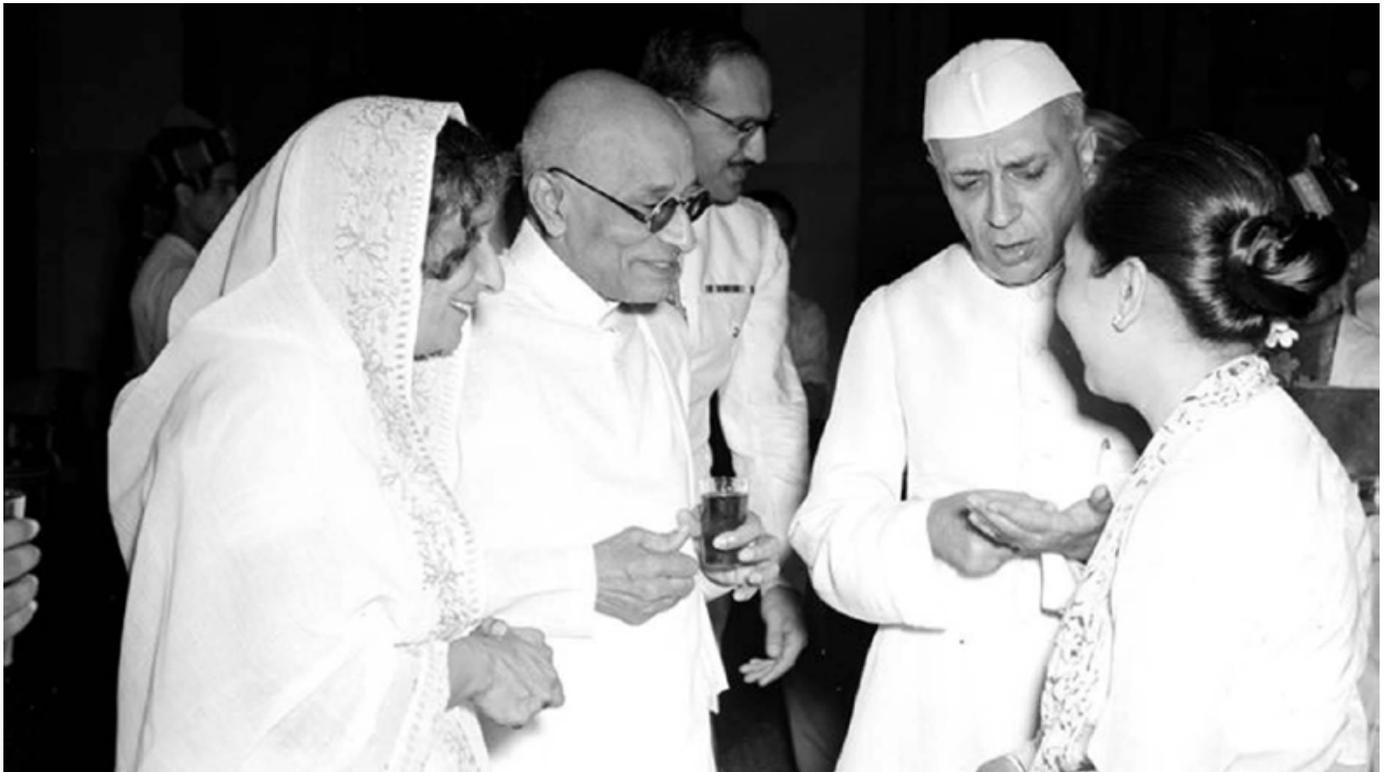
While I was with Rajaji, I had the privilege of closely moving with Prof N.G. Ranga who was the Chairman of the Swatantra Party between 1962 – 1972. A student of Prof Harold Laski in the London School of Economics, N.G. Ranga used to be a ‘Guest Professor’ in Economics in Pachaiyappas College, for sometime. A nine time member of the Lok Sabha, he preferred to be in the opposition, always championing the cause of the farmers. But still, the respect he used to command from the Treasury Benches including Prime Minister Pandit Nehru and others, was a legend in those days. On one occasion, when Pandit Nehru wanted to copy in India the Collective farming of the Russian type, Prof N.G. Ranga was furious because individual farmers in India would lose their freedom as well as their incentive to farming. After registering his strong protest in the Lok Sabha, against ‘Collective Farming’, he scathingly chided Pandit Nehru by saying “In Pandit Nehru’s regime, Indian farmers have become ORPHANS”. Everyone in the ‘House’ expected P.M Pandit Nehru to hit back at



the opposition leader Mr. N.G. Ranga. But it did not happen. P.M Nehru calmly stood up and said “As long as Prof N.G. Ranga is in this House (Lok Sabha), Indian farmers can never be orphaned”. Such was the respect P.M Nehru had for Prof N.G. Ranga.



Whenever Prof N.G. Ranga would come to Chennai, he would bestow on me the honor of staying in my Nungambakkam residence as my guest. I used to be thrilled in those days, because, to seek Prof N.G. Ranga’s blessings, persons like Mr. N. Rosiah (who later became the C.M of united AP and Governor of Tamilnadu), Mr. Rajagopal Naidu of Chittoor, the leader of the A.P Swatantra Legislature Party and others bigwigs used to come to my house. On one occasion, before I dropped him at the Meenambakkam Airport as he urgently wanted to participate in the Lok Sabha proceedings, the office bearers of the employees of the Food Corporation of India suddenly rushed to my house (I was an M.L.A at that time) and said “Sir, our colleagues are on a hunger strike in protest of a wrong G.O by the Union Food Minister Mr. C. Subramaniam. Can you please persuade Prof N.G. Ranga M.P to address us, on



his way to the Airport, so that he can raise this issue in the Lok Sabha in the afternoon?” When I conveyed this to Prof Ranga, he immediately agreed. He talked to the F.C.I Employees who were on hunger strike; thereafter I dropped him in the Airport. That afternoon, setting aside all the rules, the Speaker allowed Prof N.G.Ranga to raise the issue in the Lok Sabha. In his own inimitable style, Prof Ranga said, “How can my distinguished friend Mr. C. Subramaniam the Food Minister allow the employees of the Food Corporation to go on a hunger strike without

taking food?”. The wrong order was immediately withdrawn, and the announcement came in the A.I.R 6pm News . As I was sitting in my clinic and seeing my patients, a large number of F.C.I employees came and thanked me!.

During every election campaign of his, Prof N.G. Ranga would never talk ill of the opponents. He would just explain his political stand and conclude by saying “Only if you trust me, please vote for me”. And, he would always win.

Today, it is hard to come across a Statesman like Prof N.G. Ranga who belongs to a vanishing tribe!

**Personality of the Day**
**BIAS Classes**

### N G Ranga



- + 7 November 1900 – 9 June 1995
- + Farmer leader, Freedom fighter and Parliamentarian
- + Founding President of Swatantra Party
- + Considered as Father of Indian Peasant Movement
- + Worked as Professor of Economics at Pachaiyappa's College, Madras
- + Joined Freedom Movement on Gandhiji's call in 1930

### Dr.H.V. Hande

*Former Health Minister of Government of Tamilnadu.  
Founder & Director of Hande Hospital.*





# The Godfather of SEO

## Interview with Rand Fishkin

To say that Rand Fishkin is the ‘Godfather’ of the SEO industry may not be technically true, but it kind of feels that way.

He’s been a thought-leader in the digital marketing and search space since as long as I’ve been in the game (12+ years for me which is an eternity in anything digital these days), so if there were a Mount Rushmore of SEO (or digital marketing), he’d probably be on it.

He’s been showing people like me how to slay the dragon that is Google for years, and lots of folks owe their ability to have careers in the digital marketing space directly to his efforts.

Not only that, but he also Co-Founded a pretty well-known SaaS company called Moz along the way (with his Mom I might add), and built it into one of the best and most respected digital marketing platforms to this day.

Recently, he Co-Founded a new startup company called Sparktoro, aimed at helping marketers,

public relations professionals, and entrepreneurial teams learn more about the audiences they want to reach.

He also just wrote a book entitled, ‘Lost and Founder: A Painfully Honest Field Guide to the Startup World,’ in which he shares his experiences and lessons learned.

I connected with him to talk about everything ranging from his time at Moz, to the founding of Sparktoro, his book, as well as to get his thoughts on a number of subjects including funding, venture capital, content marketing, personal branding, gender-equality, and more.

## On the beginnings of Moz (formerly SEOMoz)

Jake: You co-founded SEOMoz (later shortened to Moz) way back in 2004 with your mom. Can you tell us about the early days of SEOMoz?

Rand: Sure, so it started as side-project – it was just a blog – that I built to mostly share my frustrations and experiences trying to learn SEO.

We had accumulated a lot of debt as a little mini web-design/consulting shop, and we were trying to get clients, we couldn’t afford to pay our SEO sub-contractors, and so I had to learn the practice myself, then try to do it, and had a difficult time.

The industry was very secretive in those days. People held their practices really close to the vest.



That didn't sit well with me, and I wanted to make something that would be transparent, open, and accessible for everyone to learn SEO.

That kind of became my mission as the site got bigger, went into 2004-2005, and then we shut down the old business (the consulting business) and started just taking SEO clients because the blog had sort of taken off.

Then, I was getting invited to speak at events starting in '05, and those led to some clients which then helped us dig our way out of debt.

It was interesting times.

Definitely very, very different than what Moz became as a software company where it was just me, my mom, and Matt (Inman) our programmer who later went on to found The Oatmeal.

Just the three of us kind of making it work the best we could, living on tiny salaries – next to nothing. I'd moved in with my girlfriend – who became my wife – Geraldine, so it was different days.

Jake: So I've read, and I'm admittedly a slow reader, the first couple of chapters of your book 'Lost and Founder' and anecdotally kind of know some of the background stories of what you're talking about in terms of where you started in the beginning and being kind of rough and maybe running into a few "leg-breakers" here and there.

And so, I guess what point did you realize things are going to be okay and maybe this (SEOMoz) is going to be successful?

Rand: Hmmm, that was probably 2007 when we launched our software. I mean we didn't even really think of it as a software launch, right?

We basically had some tools that we'd built for ourselves, Matt said that our servers couldn't support it if we opened it up to everyone.



So we built a little Paypal paywall that you had to Paypal us \$39 a month to get access to it, and that subscription – 6 months in – was doing as much revenue as our consulting business.

And that was probably the time when I thought, "Oh! This might really turn into something!"

Jake: Yeah....lightbulb!

## **On the success of the Moz blog and content marketing**

Jake: So, you mentioned your blog taking off.

Can you talk about the process of making SEO – which wasn't transparent at the time – and go through the story of the blog taking off?

Rand: Yeah, I think that there's not a lot of, "Oh, this made the blog huge – this one thing!"

We had a few big successful pieces, one of them was 'The Beginners Guide to SEO,' the other one was the 'Search Engine (Google) Ranking Factors,' which again sort of took off and many people have since copied and made great versions of.

I would say the big thing about the blog that made it successful was that we/I had time.

I started blogging in 2003 about SEO. It wasn't really until 2005 or 2006 – 100's of blog posts in – that I started getting a feel for what resonated with



the audience, what was actually useful, what made sense to publish (and not).

If you go back, you can still see in the archives those early, early days of SEOMoz, you'll see that those posts are not particularly great or useful, they're not all that readable, the writing isn't terrific, the topics and headlines aren't great, but then it slowly, slowly, slowly gets better.

I think that's a part of why so many content marketing campaigns fail is that a company says, "Okay. Now we're going to invest in content marketing," and expect that 6 months in they're going to have ROI. Nope, that's crazy!

You know, I don't expect to have ROI day 1 with any sort of inbound or organic marketing practice. Those are things that you build up slowly over a long period of time.

You start to grow a brand, you start to get good at empathizing with your audience and figuring out what they want, publishing good stuff, getting better as a writer and publisher, getting better as a promoter of that content, building up a network that will help you grow out that content.

It's a flywheel, and it's very hard to get it started, and once it gets turning, it's relying on inertia to keep moving faster and faster.

Jake: Yeah, when I worked in "agency world" – I've spent 10-11 years in agencies – that's what I would tell my clients, right?

It's like a 401k versus stocks. Stocks would be pay-per-click, right?

You can invest in stocks and it's a little bit risky, but once you sell those stocks and turn it off it's gone.

Whereas if you keep investing in your 401k it's going to keep growing and growing and growing slowly (you won't see the gains [right away]).

Some of them wanted to stocks and not the 401k, but.....it is what it is.

Rand: I think in marketing, and to your analogy, the reason that so many long-term content marketing plays work so well is because those people have patience, because they've invested over a long time, and because very few people are willing to have that patience and that tolerance.

There's not a lot of executive teams out there that will say, "Sure. Take the first 6-12 months to just learn. We don't expect that you're going to be great at it. And then next year we'll start to see some returns from this."

Unfortunately, very few people are willing to invest there, but that is a good thing for those of us who do because it means a lot less competition.

Jake: Yeah, absolutely!

## **On fundraising (failures and successes)**

Jake: In 2007, and again in 2012 and 2016, you went through the process of fundraising, and that's something that many startups struggle with.





we were flailing around looking for anything, we bought a bunch of other companies, tried to launch a whole bunch of new products, tried to make all these different things work, and in the meantime weren't investing in our core SEO software and were getting passed by other people in the market.

By 2015-2016, we were seen as no longer the market leader in SEO software and that was really hard.

### **On acquiring other companies and the impact to the business**

Jake: So, you mentioned it a little bit. You went through the process of acquiring a couple companies, Followerwonk and GetListed.

So, is there anything you learned from both of those acquisitions in particular, and how did they end up working out?

Rand: Yeah, I mean I think that the big lesson that I learned is: unless you are the runaway leader in your field, can continually invest in being the best, and you have sort of a department or division that is just running very, very smoothly, you probably should not try to take on new things, right?

You should be great at the thing that got you where you are, you should continue to invest in that.

You better stay ahead of your market, because frankly in B2B software switching costs aren't nearly as high as people think they are.

And folks are very happy to move over to a new platform or a new piece of software if it does a better job than what you're doing – especially in SEO which is so competitive.

There's only a few positions on page one, so anything that gives you a boost you're going to go to.

GetListed obviously turned into Moz Local which is a good product and a decent business, but I think that and Followerwonk, Moz content and investments (we were trying to sell our API), and then we were trying to build a sales team, do enterprise, and expanding our conferences from Mozcon to Mozcon Local...it was just too distracting.

We were selling eight different things instead of one thing, and that was really more than our team, our audience, and our platform could support.

### **On pivoting from a consulting to a SaaS business model**

Jake: Okay, I feel like we've covered a lot and I'd be remiss to not talk about the fact that when you started you did consulting, right?

And then you eventually shifted to a SaaS product in addition to some of the stuff you just mentioned.

Can you talk a little bit about the evolution of what went into going from the consulting to the SaaS model?

Rand: Yeah, well like I said it was very accidental for us.

We had some tools, we didn't know if they'd be popular, we weren't intentionally trying to build them for an audience (we'd built them for ourselves), and we launched them.

We were as shocked as anyone that they did so well, and I think that it was probably only 6-7 months in once we looked at the numbers and went, “Whoa! This is a lot of money coming in!,” and these investors started reaching out that we said, “Okay, I think we’re on to something. We should probably learn something about the SaaS field.”

So, it’s very different from an intentional transition where you say, “Okay, I want to build a product business, and how can I do that?” Yeah...we’re not quite that story.

I think what made it work however, is that we’d already attracted the audience that was NOT our core customer for consulting but WAS our core customer for our software product.

And that was just by virtue of this kind of intersection of my passion for talking about SEO and the history of the blog there.

I think that very few consulting companies are attracting a large audience of people who would buy software that they would build, right?

I think most content marketing efforts are intentionally designed to attract your core customer, not some other person who might be a customer for something else you might build in the future.

And so I would certainly urge anyone who’s thinking about making that transition [to] find a way to build that audience first. If you have a way to reach them, your costs of customer acquisition are much, much lower.



If not, you could launch a great product – I’ve seen tons of consulting services do this where they launch a great product for people they think are going to be great customers, but they can’t find them, and attract them, and retain them affordably.

You know, it just costs them so much money to get every new customer and they can’t find enough of them.

## **On doing a round of layoffs and stepping down as Moz CEO**

Jake: Bouncing around here a little bit, and I’m not actually sure which one came first (I might have to go and look), so couple things happened kind of in the later stages of your existence at Moz so:

(1) you went through a round of layoffs, and

(2) you also made the decision to hand over the CEO duties to Sarah Bird.

So, I’m just wondering, what went into kind of both of those decisions?

And for people that are maybe kind of struggling themselves in terms of those types of decisions (running the business, managing the business), what advice would you give based on how you approached those situations?

Rand: Sure.

Jake: Tough question, sorry!

Rand: No, totally fair. So let’s see.

I would say with stepping down as CEO, I wrote about this in the book, but that decision was based almost entirely on my mental and emotional state at the time.

I talked to some of my exec team members and they were kind of like, “Hey, you’re – you know,

whatever's going on with you – you're depression, your anxiety, all this kind of stuff is really negatively impacting things.”

And I think I felt like the only option I had was, “Well, I should put someone else in the CEO role. If I take the stress of that out, I'll be able to get better.”

I'm not sure that that was actually the only or right move. I certainly could have stepped back in my duties and responsibilities and asked some other people to step up, but I just didn't think about it at the time. I felt like I had to go all the way.

So I had some conversations with our investors and I said, “Hey, I want to make this transition, and I want to make Sarah CEO.” They were comfortable with it and so I stepped down in 2014 and Sarah took over.

My big goal as CEO at the end of 2013 and entirely 2014 was ‘Let's return to profitability’ – get profitable again so that we never have to raise any more money and we don't have any risk of layoffs and that kind of thing.

And I think Sarah was much more classic venture-model-minded, and she was like, “No. We have a lot of money in the bank. Let's spend it. Let's try and grow this thing. Let's invest in a lot of these other products. We're going to spin out these products from Moz Pro and make content and Followerwonk and Local all their own separate things.”

I think that proved to be really, really challenging and then 2.5 years later we met with the board and made the decision to do layoffs. We were just burning so much cash.

And you know, all of these businesses were making money and growing, but just not fast enough. And so, yeah. We shut everything down except Local and Pro and then basically focused on those businesses.



In end of 2016 into 2017, I just had a lot of conflict with the CEO and so in 2018 left the company sort of pseudo-voluntarily.

## On leaving Moz

Jake: Yeah, I did want to ask about that. So in your farewell post to directly quote it you said, “On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is fired and escorted out of the building and 10 is left entirely of his own accord on wonderful terms your [my] departure was around a 4.”

So, I don't want to get into anything personal or not public, but is there anything you can share from that?

Rand: I mean, just that you know, the way I wrote that was the best that I can do to describe things, right?

If a 5 is sort of right in the middle, this was a little on the not good side of that. And certainly, I think it was a very, very painful hard ugly experience going through it.

I have a lot of regret and some anger and resentment too, but at the same time starting a new company has proven to be a really great thing.

And so far – knock on wood – Sparktoro has been kind of charmed.

[I] found a great Co-Founder, we've had some great early press and amplification, a lot of people who've checked it out who follow the blog and who've signed up to get emails.

We launched a little side-project called Sparktoro Trending which is kind of designed to be like a Hacker News or tech meme for marketing and that has gone very well (a few hundred to a few thousand people visiting that every day already).

That's made me feel good about (I mean that's a side project) the product that we're eventually going to be building through the company.

So, yeah some sad things around leaving Moz then some hopeful stuff around the new company.

### **On his Moz legacy and whether or not he believes it was a success**

Jake: Yeah, so last thing about Moz and I promise we can move on and put a wrap and talk about some of the other stuff, but you know, you turned Moz into a really, really successful company.

If you look at the revenue, you grew in 2008 from almost \$2M to almost \$47-\$48M almost 10 years later. That's (over the course of time, like a 401k it grew steadily – maybe not as fast as you wanted it to – but that's) wildly successful.

So, what are you most proud of with respect to Moz?

Rand: Okay, so first off. I'm most proud the people we've helped.

You know Jake when we started this call/interview you mentioned, "Hey you/Rand/Moz have been really influential in my career and have helped me grow as an SEO and a web marketer."

That's what I'm most proud of.

I am most proud of being able to help so many people learn this practice that was so hard to learn when I was getting into this field. That made me feel like I really accomplished something positive with the company.

The assertion that Moz is very successful I think is fundamentally flawed though.

So Moz has many characteristics of a successful company and would absolutely be considered wildly successful if it were privately-held (with no institutional investors is what I mean).

Once you take institutional investors you are only consider – you know – success becomes a very clear line of demarcation, right?

There's not successful over here and there's successful over (t)here, and not successful is, 'You have not returned capital to the investor in the quantity that they need to make their fund dynamics work.'

And over (t)here is, 'You've done that' right? You've returned – whatever it is – depending on the fund size, how long it takes, and how much money 3-50x the amount that was invested.

And Moz, maybe hopefully will over a 10-15 year lifespan will potentially return probably on the lower end of that (3-5x) if we're lucky, if Moz does well and continues to grow, then manages to survive this competitive field that it's in, and has a successful acquisition or maybe an IPO a long time from now.

It's possible, but I would say that is still a very risky bet.

Jake: That's actually a really good point of clarification because folks like me look at it from the outside and make some assumptions but kind of what the reality is is much different it seems like.



Rand: Yeah, I mean I think that people who say, “Oh, Moz is a wildly successful company,” forget that it needs to return that capital, right?

And that you know – it’s not like Founders and employees make a lot of money you know make more than just normal salaries.

In fact, probably lower than most market salaries than what they’d make at Amazon or Google or something because they hope that their stock options will someday be worth something, but that’s all resting on this (hopeful) transaction in some future time frame.

And Moz has only had one serious acquisition offer in early 2011 that would have been extraordinary but I turned it down.

I thought that it wasn’t for enough money at the time, I think I was greedy and cocky, and young and foolish, and yeah – that ended up probably being a huge mistake.

Jake: Hindsight’s 20/20.

Rand: Yeah, yeah. Well, I just hope — this is why the book exists, right?

‘Lost and Founder’ is out there so if you are starting a company, or you’re joining an early-stage company, or you’re thinking about doing some of these projects or products, you will make mistakes!

You will make terrible, dumb, stupid mistakes that you will beat yourself up for. I guarantee it. But you don’t have to make exactly the same ones that I did!!

## On is new book, ‘Lost and Founder’

Jake: Yeah. So assuming somebody has not yet or everybody (well, maybe not everybody), but at least everybody in the SEO space probably has heard about the book ‘Lost and Founder’.

So, assuming that you’re not in the marketing space, but you’re a startup Founder and entrepreneur or looking to become one, if you pick up ‘Lost and Founder,’ what should you expect to get out of it?

Rand: I mean I think the two biggest things are, from people who’ve read it or sort of had the experience, or tweeted about it, or shared their experience from reading it, that the two biggest things seem to be:

(1) I feel less alone. I feel like someone else, ‘Oh this other person who is relatively high-profile.... their experience is similar to my own.’

And I think that is a really powerful thing, to not feel alone, to feel like everyone makes these mistakes, everyone goes through these hard times, no one has a perfectly blessed experience.

(2) I think the other thing is that there’s just a lot of individual lessons that resonate with people. It’s always different, right?

For some people, it’s the chapters on hiring, management, and how to build a great team.

For some people, it’s on building values and culture.

For some people it’s the marketing chapters, right?

The flywheel versus the growth hack kind of stuff.

For other people, it’s been the services and product-based business or how to build a network in your early years when you may not have one.

For some folks, it's the later chapters on focus and layoffs and depression.

So the book is not about one thing, and so I think that everyone has something different that resonates with them strongly, and that's been kind of cool to see too.

Jake: Excellent, yeah I've read – like I said I'm about 1/3 of the way through, and some of the early material (especially), there are kind of a few funny anecdotal stories that you go through – especially the one with the debt collector. Although I'm sure that probably wasn't so great for you, [it's] probably funny to look back on it.

But yeah, the stuff that you went you went through and that other Founders might go through, kind of going all the way through the process for me was pretty enlightening and definitely in line with what we hear all the time on this side [Startups.co].

Whether it be Founders who are kind of sharing their experiences with us [Startups.co] or our own Founders who are kind of veterans of many, many businesses for many, many years themselves – so you know I'm just the lowly marketing guy – but I know kind of hear a lot of that, and a lot of it I think is definitely going to resonate with anybody who picks the book up for sure.

### **on founding Sparktoro**

Jake: So, you kind of touched on Sparktoro — that's your new company!

You just close, very recently, \$1.3M in angel investments, 75% close-rate on your email (to investors)...can you talk a little bit about Sparktoro?

Rand: Sure, yeah.

So, one of the problems that I saw very often in my career at Moz was for folks who didn't already have

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WHICH PROVIDES \_\_\_(benefit)\_\_\_

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a lot of search volume for the products or services they were offering.

They needed other ways to do their marketing other than search, right?

SEO is not going to help you if no one is searching for what you are selling. You have to go out to your market and try to get in front of them and reach them.

And when I observed people doing that practice – especially the last 6-12 months – as I was thinking about this problem more heavily and my next adventure, the issue that I saw as folks would say, “Well, I need to reach this particular market. Who are the people, and what are the publications, and the podcasts, the news media, the websites that these people visit, the blogs that they read, the YouTube channels they subscribe to, the people they follow on Instagram/Twitter/Facebook/Linkedin...”

And that practice is **TOTALLY** manual! Totally manual!!! It’s just ridiculous.

People will go to Google and then they’d search for their topic, they click a bunch of things, they find a bunch of links, they put them all into a spreadsheet, then they go to Twitter and search around there, they look for people with high follower counts, they go to LinkedIn and do the same thing, then they go to YouTube and do the same thing, and they go to Instagram and try to do it, but Instagram search kind of sucks so they just have to follow hash-tags...

Oh my God! Are you kidding me?!? That is ridiculous! I mean, it looked like SEO in 2002 or 2003 when there were NO tools to do this stuff.

And so people are like, “Yep. Everyday I go to Google and I search, and then I put the rank in [be] cause there’s no rank-tracking system. And then I tried to figure out what the SERP (Search Engine Results Page) looked like, and I’d take a screenshot every week and send it to my client...”

That kind of stuff. That’s exactly what this process looked like to me and I thought, “Okay. I/we can build software that can help with this where you enter the audience you want to reach or the topic you’re targeting and we can go out and get great data for you about who are the people in that field and what do they pay attention to, what do they follow and amplify and listen to across all these different channels and sources so that you can build this list of ‘Here are the publications of people that influence my audience,’ and then you can go do your marketing. That’s advertising, organic marketing, or going to their events, trying to do a guest editorial piece, whatever it is.”

### Rand on making Sparktoro’s funding documents available to the public

Jake: You made the decision to make Sparktoro’s funding documents public, which as I understand it is not a normal thing.

So, what went into that?

Rand: Yeah...

So with Sparktoro we raise a very, kind of unusual round.

I think you can gather from our conversation that I have some frustrations with the venture model and the binary outcome/success requirements, and I didn’t want to do that. I didn’t want to hamstring Sparktoro in that way.

I believe that there's a big market here. I think that Sparktoro could be a business that's as big as Moz is, or even bigger. But, what if that's not the case?

What if I find out that the market taps out in the \$3-10M in revenue per year range and growing after that is really hard?

Well, what is Sparktoro has 5 or 6 employees and is doing \$5-6M in revenue and has great margins but it's not getting super-high growth?

That still could be an extraordinarily successful company if only you structure the investment in the right way, right?

And so, the way that Sparktoro works is that rather than saying, "Hey investors. You only ever make money if we have a huge exit," it says, "You make money if we have that huge exit – just like you would with any other investment, but you can ALSO make a lot of money if Sparktoro is profitable. And in any year that we're profitable you can choose to re-invest the dollars into growth, or if we don't see a ton of growth opportunity with just raw dollars, we can say 'We're going to pay out dividends.'"

And basically our salaries (mine and my Co-Founders), as well as our ability to benefit from Sparktoro's profitability is limited until we pay back our investors 1x the \$1.3M that they put in and then after that everyone participates prorata in the profitable growth of the company.

So any profits are sent out to everyone.

So, you know, [if] Sparktoro makes \$1M in profit and a couple hundred thousand of that goes to investors as well.

First, the \$1.1M goes back to them, then a couple hundred thousand goes to investors.

So, over the course of 10 years this company could return many multiples of your capital every year as

opposed to in a "fingers crossed, I hope they sell one day."

Jake: So, I guess my question is, why the transparency?

Rand: Oh, yeah.

Because I hate that the venture model is the only one, right?!?

It's not [technically] the only one, but all the angel documents that you'll see out there for fundraising, all of the open-source documents, they're all designed to – you know the seed round stuff, the convertible notes – they're all designed to price when you do the venture round, right?

And so success for many, many angel investors is, "Do the companies that I invest in – are they able to raise venture?"

And so, this company [Sparktoro], I don't want to raise venture.

I know there's lots and lots of companies and entrepreneurs who think the same way that I do.

In fact, almost all of the investors that I raised from think, "Hey, there's another way here. There should be another way to do this."

And that's exactly what my goal is behind open-sourcing these docs, it's [so] that other people will take a look at the documents and say, "Hey, I don't have to pay a lawyer \$10,000 or \$15,000 to come up with a structure. Here's a structure that a bunch of notable investors have already said they believe in, and this company has done it, and so I can use a system like this to structure my investment round."

And hopefully it saves a lot of people time, money, and effort.

Hopefully, it also gets a few people thinking about how they want to build their businesses differently.

Jake: Excellent! Yeah, that's awesome.

I think transparency, I mean you seem to be transparent in many of the things you do, and I think that's definitely something from an industry-standpoint that I tend to agree with the philosophy.

It may be helpful and may help break down walls for other folks facing the same problems.

## **On finding his Sparktoro Co-Founder, Casey Henry**

Jake: Last question[s] on Sparktoro, and this one is more specific to how did you find your Co-Founder?

Any advice from you in terms of what synergies – if somebody is a sole proprietor, bootstrapping, or going it alone – what did you look for in a Co-Founder?

And what made Casey Henry a good fit for you?

Rand: Yeah.

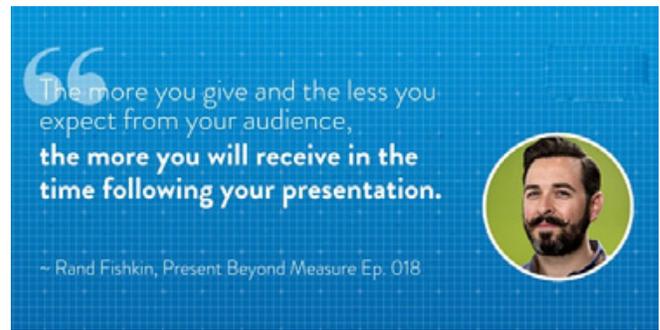
One thing certainly was someone who shared my values and the way that I like to work.

So Casey and I are both passionate about this alternative form of fundraising, and building up the company with profitable growth.

We both like small companies, companies that don't need to be hundreds of people. I think we both like things, sort of 50 people and under.

We both wanted to build a remote-work culture. So, have people who are able to work from home and be flexible.

Casey is kind of a stay-at-home Dad, or the primary parent at home for his family for a lot of stuff, and I think enabling that kind of thing is something we're both passionate about.



And we also have a lot of the same beliefs around what makes for a great employee, what makes for a good team, and what doesn't.

And then I think Casey is also someone who bolsters my weaknesses. You know Casey is very strong on the technical side.

He's sort of a very talented full stack engineer, [and] has done both lots of front-end and back-end work which means that we don't have to contract a lot of that stuff.

He can manage everything from the WordPress blog to the actual crawling of the data and building the databases for the system that we want to build.

And I can continue to do my sort of product design and product marketing, as well as being (a little bit) the face of the company and managing a lot of those sides.

So we complimented each other well on the skills side, but also on the values and beliefs side.

Jake: Awesome! Yeah, absolutely 100% important that you guys are kind of able to fill each other's gaps right?

Bolster each other.

## **On the impact of personal branding in business**

Jake: Personal branding... so this is definitely something that at least in my opinion your personal

brand – you’ve been the face of (now) 2 companies, maybe even an industry or two (between digital marketing and SEO)...

So, how important is personal branding to growing a business in terms of ‘do you have to have to have a well-known personal brand to build a business’ or can you ‘grow a business while staying behind-the-scenes and not as much in public?’

Rand: Yeah, absolutely!

I think personal branding is something that came because I like writing and sharing (and I happen to be good at it), but there’s a million ways to build a business and not need to be that personal face.

So, I certainly wouldn’t encourage anyone who doesn’t want to be to do it. It’s only as valuable and useful as you have passion for it.

And I think I’m not a reluctant personal brand, but I...it’s not something I intentionally invest in, right?

I don’t try to be like, “Oh, well is this going to be good for the brand of Rand?”

I don’t think I’ve ever particularly thought that way. It just happens to be the case that the way I do things which is, “Is this something that will be useful to be lots of people and where I create it, share it, and amplify it.”

And that happens to attract also a reasonable degree of following.

Yeah, I’m sort of weird.

I’m like a pseudo-introvert where I really like to be alone and that’s kind of where I get a lot of my energy from and then, you know I can go on stage and do great! It’s after I get off stage that I’m not as good.

Jake: Yeah, I totally get that. I’m definitely [a] very shy, introverted person which I think has to do with

not wanting to go to and/or speak at conferences despite the fact that I’ve got a lot of experience, brings me a lot of anxiety, but then when you finally push me up there I can do okay.

Rand: Yeah, yeah. Haha. I’m fine on the stage.

It’s like when you get off stage, and then you’re meeting tons of new people, and then you know those people are like, “Oh yeah! We met like 6 years ago at this event!” “Oh no, I forgot your name! Terrible!!” You know that... I have a really tough time with that.

Jake: Yeah, I definitely am right there with you!

## **On gender equality in the workplace, HARASSMENT, and more.**

Jake: Last question, and this is definitely related, definitely off on a tangent...

So, just in following you I know that you’ve been a huge advocate for women’s rights, equality in the workplace, definitely with today’s political climate a lot of talk around this between the #metoo movement and everything else going on.

Can you speak a little bit to that, especially as it relates to somebody running a business and kind of factoring those things in as they grow their team?

Rand: Sure.

I think that the statistics are obvious and clear, right?

Gender-diverse teams dramatically out-perform non-gender-diverse teams.

And, Casey knows that I attempted to recruit several women to Co-Found with me, but I think that that’s going to be something that we try to invest in very early on as well.

But the other thing, besides just the statistical benefit, I think that one thing that I do worry about is, I worry that/about many men (myself included).

For a long time, I never thought about how my experiences, my success was sort-of so dependent on my gender. I'll give you an example, right?

I have never had to think twice about, "Hey, should I go to this conference that's in this city where I won't know anyone, and can I go out drinking with all of these guys after talk, and what am I wearing, and how will they treat me, and 'Oh, this guy invited me to his room to chat more about this potential partnership. Could that mean anything but let's chat about a potential partnership?'"

I have NEVER had to think about that! And women that I talk to, there is constantly that voice in their head that's like, "Man, what is this going to be like?"

And just that psychological...even if nothing bad actually happens, and something bad almost always has happened to almost every woman I've talked to.

There's no one who has like, "Oh no, it's always been great for me."

There's always like, "Yeah, a few times, here or this or that..."

Jake: Yeah.

Rand: But even just the pressure of having to think about that every time.

Investors...most of the investors that I've met, the venture capitalists, the folks who I've pitched, they were connected to me through CEOs that I'd often meet through social events, through conferences and events, that kind of stuff, right?

I'd go down to Silicon Valley, I'd speak at their company, and then we'd like go out for dinner

that night, and then we'd maybe end up back at somebody's apartment drinking, and no problem, right?

I didn't have to think twice about it.

And you know you read books like Emily Chang's 'Brotopia' and you see just the insidious nature of this stuff, and as a guy you just don't have to think about it so of course you think it's easy.

Of course you think it's equitable because for you it seems simple.

And I think that we, especially those of us who are in marketing, right?

Our whole job is to have empathy for our audience, empathy for other people, we can put ourselves in their shoes so we can understand their behaviors, their buying habits, what they act like, what they do.

And I think for men – we need to be able to do that for women, for people who are white, we need to be able to do that for people of color, for people who are fully-abled, we need to be able to do that for people who are not fully-abled, for people who are young, we need to be able to do that for people who are old, right?

So, I think that that's just something fundamentally comes with the territory of being a human being, and if you're not behind that...well, we're not friends.

Jake: Haha.

Rand: You're not cool in my book! You're out!!

Jake: Yeah, absolutely definitely agree. I've never had to worry about that.

In fact, one of the things that I think I've noticed working in the digital marketing space, especially

with women on the digital marketing teams, [is they are] constantly feeling “mansplained” to – even by their own [team members]!

And I’m like, two years ago I didn’t even know that [“mansplaining”] was a real thing!

Rand: Yeah!!!

Jake: And then I’m like, “Wait a minute. Have I ever done that to someone? If so, I’m mortified! Mortified, so yeah...gosh!”

Rand: Yeah, and I feel like, I mean it’s one of those crappy things where I think even when your intentions are good sometimes you – due to historical gender dynamics – just fall into patterns.

And so I think that being aware of it, that’s the wonderful thing about all of this. I think you and I, and the generations to come, right?

They’re aware of it. People are talking about it, we know what it is, it’s entered the lexicon,

and so I think that is the first step to making a change.

You have to talk about it to know about it so hopefully there’s progress there.

Jake: Yeah, absolutely!

About the Author: **Jake Stoops**

*Jacob Stoops is a Senior SEO Manager at Search Discovery, former Director of Search Marketing at Startups.co, as well as former Associate Director of SEO at Razorfish. A long-time digital marketer with over a decade of SEO experience, he’s worked with some of the biggest brands in the world to grow their organic traffic.*

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# Neuroscience in Skills Development

## Introduction

A skill is an expertise, which is acquired by the person by learning and it is an ability in which you put your time and efforts to develop. Skill development is a process of identifying our skill gap and ensuring us develop these skills. Our skills determine our ability to execute plans and achieve our goals. Low skills leads us to inequality thereby losing our chance to success in any field of activity.

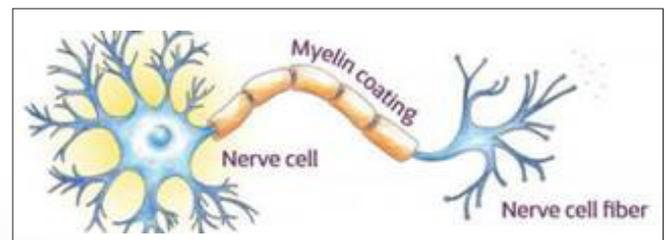
The difference between talent and skill is that 'Talent' is something that one is born with; it is your natural ability to do something without really thinking about it. 'Skill', on the other hand, is something that you acquire after putting in a lot of hard work. It is therefore crucial that the development of any skill is done properly in the formative years. Skills development is globally considered as key for productive employment. When done right, skill development can reduce un- and underemployment, increase productivity,



and improve standards of living. Recent years' research studies have thrown light on the part of our neurological network and their primary role in developing a skill in human beings.

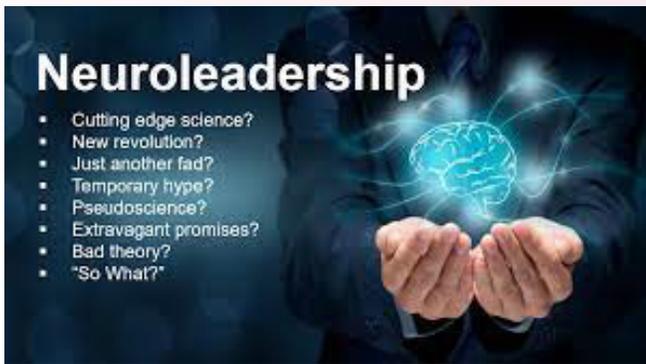
## Neuroscience in human learning

“Myelin is the key to talking, reading & learning skills, being human” - Dr George Bartzokis, Prof. of Neurology of University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).



**Myelin is simply a fatty tissue insulation around the long arms of the neuron cells.**

While they still consider neurons and synapses to be vitally important, the traditional neuron-centric worldview is being fundamentally altered by a Copernican-size revolution. Neurons and synapses can indeed explain every class of mental phenomena: memory, emotion, muscle control, sensory perception, and so on. This humble-looking insulation, it turns out, plays a key role in the way brains function, particularly when it comes to acquiring skills.



## What is happening during the skill development?

Our brain is an amazingly sophisticated super-computer, made up of a combination of grey and white matter. The grey parts are your neuron cells, and you've got around 86 billion of the little guys up there! When different parts of the brain communicate and coordinate with each other, they send an electrical signal down the nerves and spinal cord into various parts of the body. This creates the movements in order for us to play our instruments effectively and accurately. Obviously these impulses are highly refined and very specific, but this accuracy is made possible by the white matter in our brain – Myelin - a fatty tissue that coats much of the long arms that extend out of our neuron cells, kind of like the insulation around an electrical cable. These long arms are called axons, and carry an electrical charge from one neuron to the next in the chain, like a domino effect.

To be precise, three simple facts:

1. Every human movement thought or feeling is precisely timed electric signal travelling through a chain of Neurons – a circuit of nerve fibres.
2. Myelination is the insulation that wraps these nerve fibres and increases signal strength, speed and accuracy.
3. The more we fire a particular circuit, the more myelin optimizes that circuit, and the stronger, the faster and more fluent our movements and thoughts become.

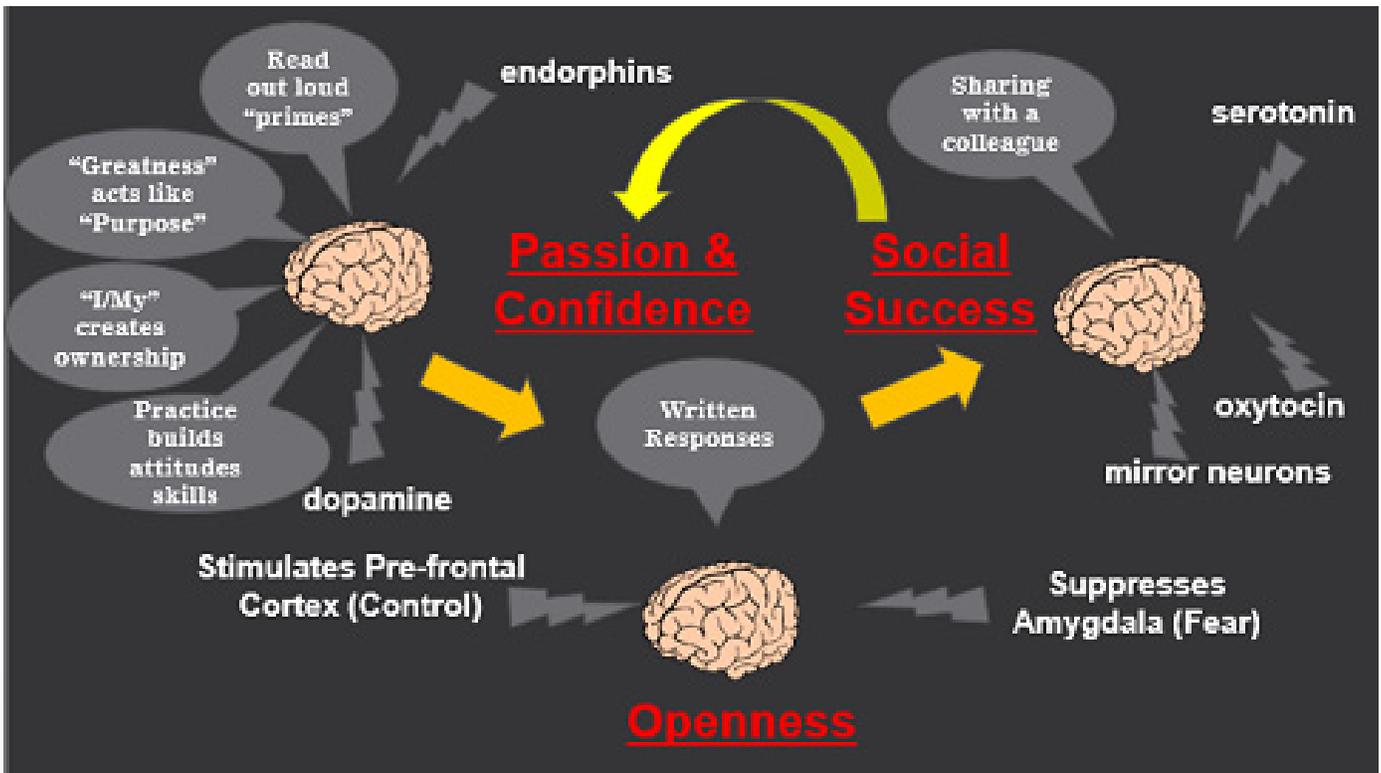
“Everything neurons do, they do pretty quickly. It happens with the flick of a switch”, Fields said referring to synapses. “But flicking switches is not how we learn a lot of thing. Getting good at piano or chess or baseball takes a lot of time, and that’s what myelin is good at.”

What do good athletes do when they train? Bartzokis said, “They said precisely impulses along wires that give the signal to myelinate that wire. They end up, after all the training, with a super-duper wire – lots of bandwidth, a high speed T3 line. In other words, a dense fat that wraps like electrical tape around a nerve fibre, preventing the electrical impulses from leaking out. That’s what makes them different from the rest of us.” As myelination progresses, the neural traffic that once trundled along at two miles an hour can, with myelin help, accelerate to two hundred miles an hour. This is the learning moment, when the circuits fire (and oligodendrocytes provide support) and start wrapping the nerve fibre with myelin. Hence nerve firing grow myelin; myelin controls impulse speed and impulse speed is Skill. “Signals have to travel at the right speed, arrive at the right time and myelination is the brain’s way of controlling the speed”.

## Example: Skill development in sports

When athletes commit to deep, concentrated practice, they fire signals to their nerves, thus growing myelin around those nerves. The more myelin they produce, the more skill, or muscle





memory, they develop. ... The more myelin wraps around it, the faster the signals travel, creating more muscle memory. Myelination bears the same relationship to human skill as plate tectonics close to geology, or natural selection close to evolution.

When Ricardinho and Ronaldo played Futsal, they were firing and optimizing their circuits more often and more precisely than when they play outdoor game. They were growing more myelin.

The best way to build a good circuit is to fire it, attend to mistakes, then fire it again, over and over. Struggle is not an option...it's a biological requirement. Wrapping myelin around a big circuit requires immense and time. If you don't love it, you

will never work hard enough to be great. (Eg. Lance Armstrong, Tour de France Cyclist). The more we develop a skill circuit the less we are aware that we are using it. We are built to make skills automatic, to stash them in our unconscious mind.

Myelin speeds the conduction of nerve impulses by a factor of 10 compared to unmyelinated fibres of the same diameter. Decreases reaction times to stimuli: Promotes the ability to escape from sudden predatory attack.

**Then, how do you get more myelin in our brain?**

No surprises here...through REPETITION!

One simple example is writing out our own name by hand. Through practising multiple times each day, we are able to spell it correctly and legibly. Soon we will be able to link the letters together and make it look even better. Eventually we won't even need to think when writing out our name, it will just happen automatically, just as it does for anybody.





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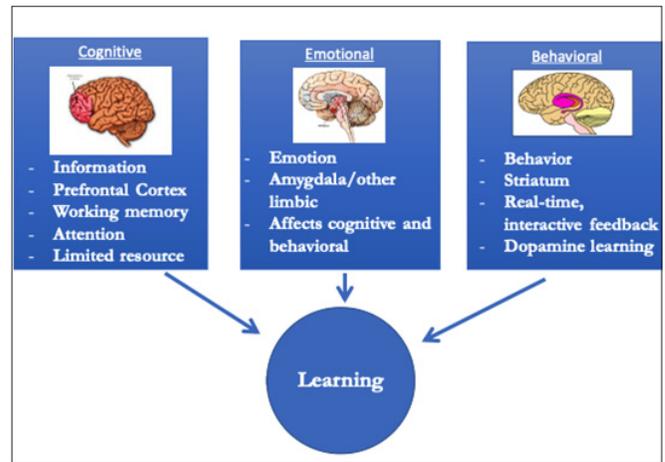
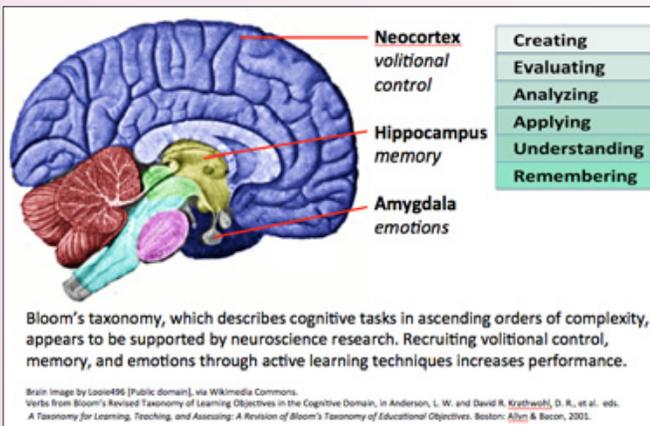
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What our practice is doing is helping the brain coordinate itself and become optimised for the skill of writing. This coats more and more layers of myelin around the nerve axons in a process called myelination. The more we practice the same skill, the more myelination occurs, and the smoother, more natural and efficient the skill becomes.

But there's one very important point about myelination – our brain doesn't choose the most efficient pathways to myelinate, it strengthens the pathways that are simply repeated the most! If you practice poor technique or do not correct our mistakes, then our brain will strengthen those same pathways to make them habits. As many of us already know, unwanted habits are hard to get rid of, so we have to correct errors as soon as possible in order to myelinate the more efficient neural pathways.

So remember: practice doesn't make perfect, **ONLY PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!** Greene and Bosler define effective practice as



“Consistent, intensely focused, and targets content or weaknesses that lie at the edge of one’s current abilities.”

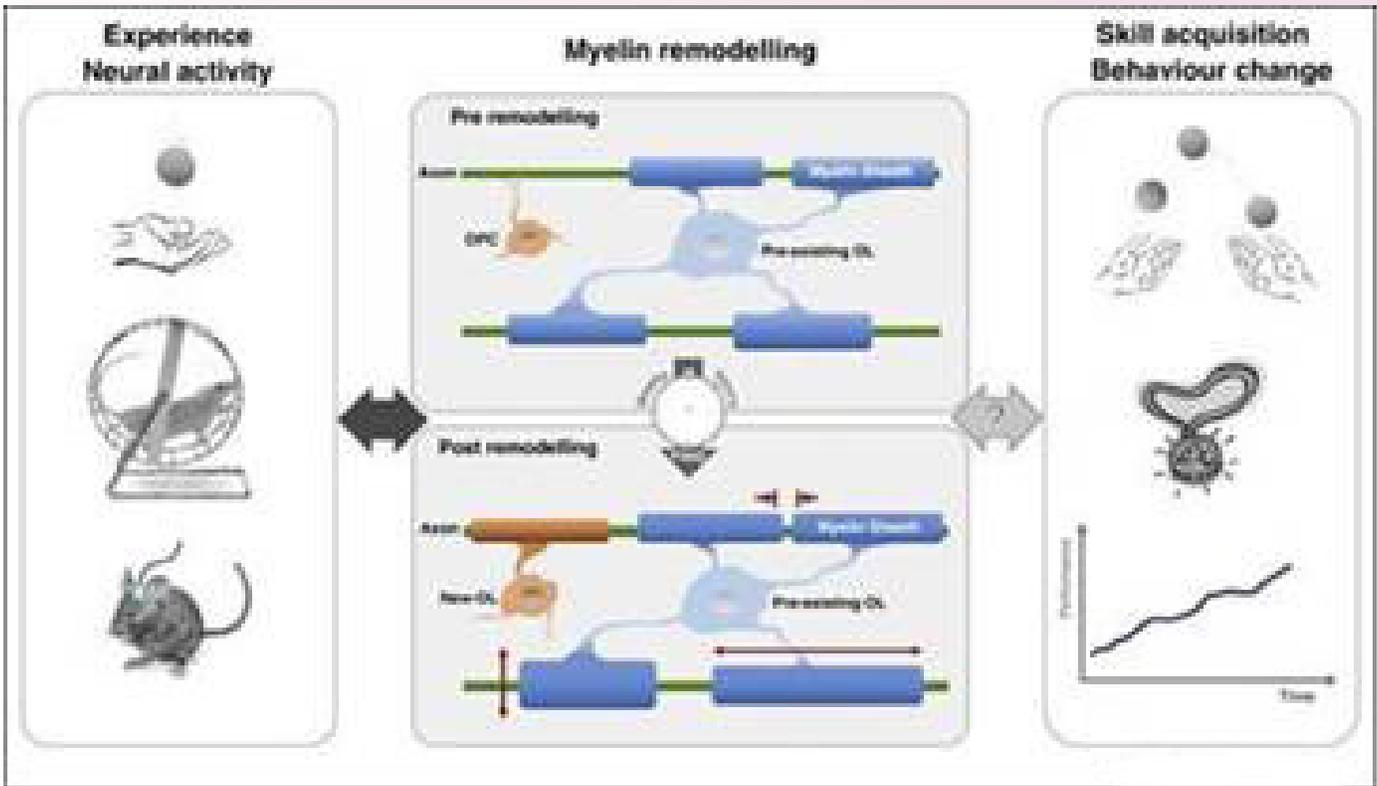
Their practice suggestions include:

- Focus on the task at hand and remove potential distractions from your practice space.
- Start out slowly, making sure that what you are playing is correct. Then gradually increase the speed of repetitions.
- Frequent repetitions with regular practice breaks are common habits of elite performers.
- Visualise in vivid detail of what you want to play, without your instrument. This also strengthens neural pathways and enhances skill development.

## Summary:

New technology called Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) allowed neurologists to measure and map myelin inside living subjects. In 2005, Fredrik Ullen (a Swedish pianist and Professor of Cognitive Neuroscience) scanned the brains of concert pianists and found a directly proportional relationship between hours of practice and white matter.

Each time we deeply practice a guitar chord or a chess opening, we are slowly installing broadband in our circuitry. We are firing a signal that those tiny green tentacles sense; they react by toward the

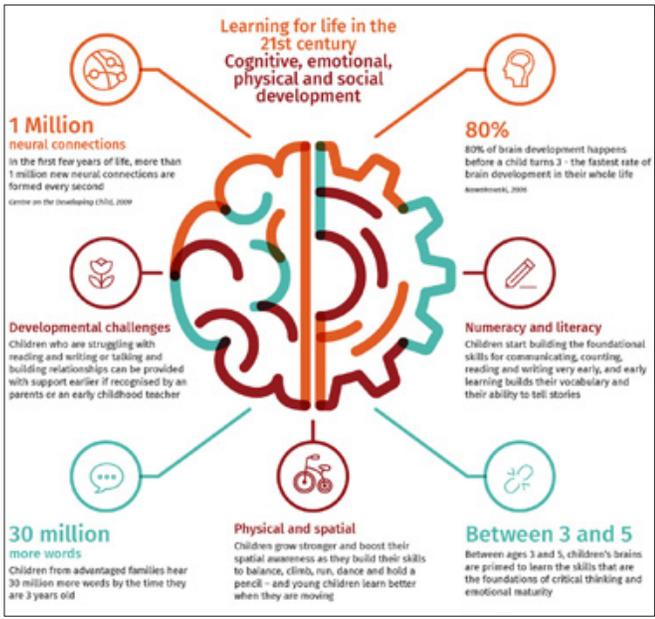


nerve fibres. They grasp, the squish, and they make another wrap, thickening the sheath. They build a little more insulation along the wire, which adds a bit more bandwidth and precision to the skill circuit, which translates into an infinitesimal bit more skill and speed.

During the process, the struggle is not optimal – it’s neurologically required – in order to get your

skill circuit to fire optimally, you must by definition fire the circuit sub optimally; you must make mistakes and pay attention to those mistakes; you must slowly teach your circuit. You must also keep firing that circuit – i.e. practicing – in order to keep myelin functioning properly. After all myelin is a living tissue.

**THE TRUTH IS PRACTICE MAKES MYELIN AND MYELIN MAKES PERFECT.**



**Dr. S. Jeyachandran**

*He is basically a Concrete Technologist turned into a Construction Management professional by experience. He has had over 4 decades of experience in selling, Quality Control of Construction Materials, teaching in various institutes. Presently Vice President in Marutham Group, Chennai..*

# Why Our Brains Like Short-Term Goals

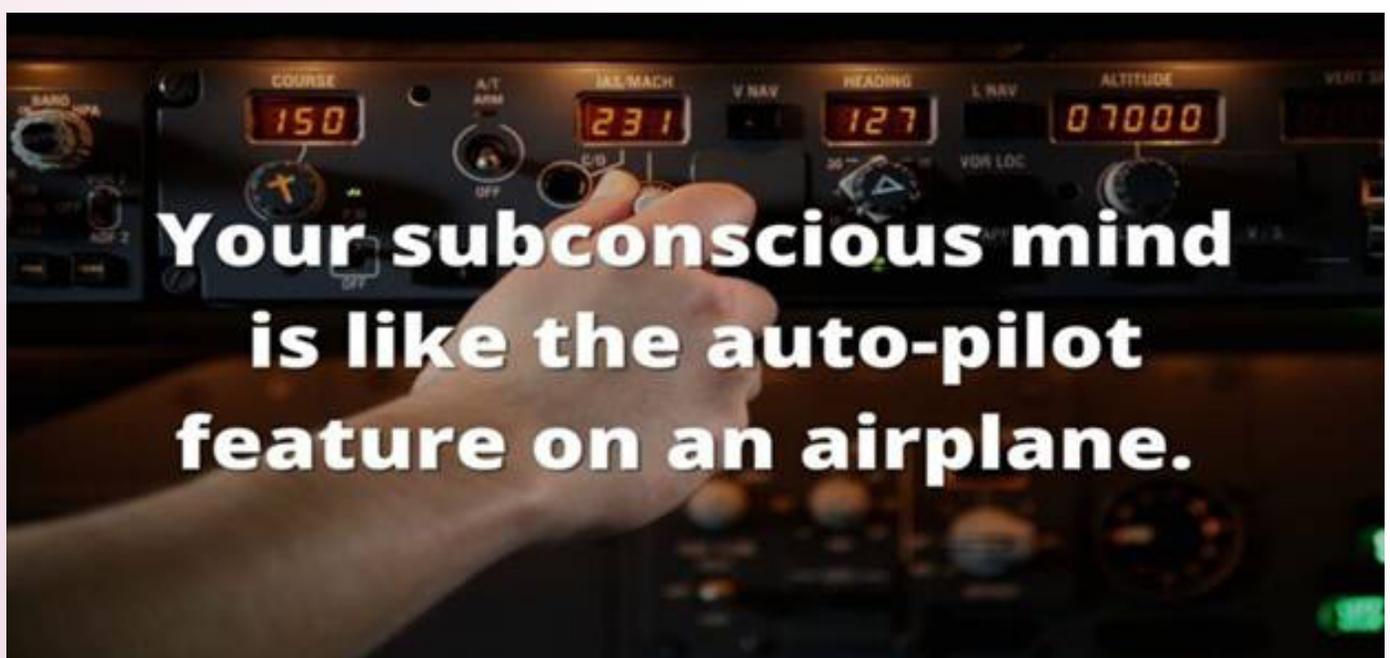
**A**chieving your goals isn't just about hard work and discipline. It's about physiology. By understanding how the brain processes success and failure, you can jump-start your productivity to create a winning streak and put an end to failed New Year's resolutions.

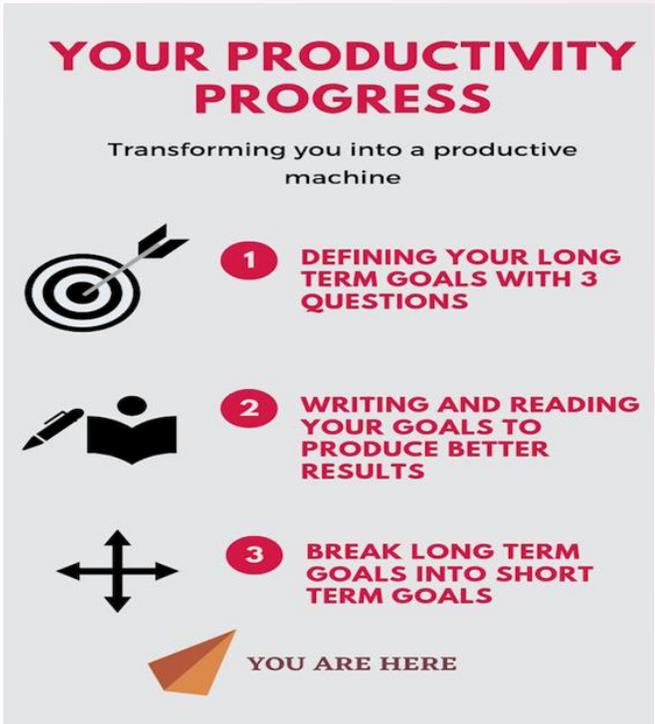
The more times you succeed at something, the longer your brain stores the information that allowed you to do so well in the first place. That's because with each success, our brain releases a chemical called dopamine. When dopamine flows into the brain's reward pathway (the part responsible for pleasure, learning and motivation), we not only feel greater concentration but are inspired to re-experience the activity that caused the chemical release in the first place.

This is why the cultivation of small wins can propel you to bigger success, and you should focus on setting just a few small achievable goals while your ambitions can remain grand, setting the bar too high with goals can actually be counterproductive. Each time we fail, the brain is drained of dopamine making it not only hard to concentrate but also difficult to learn from what went wrong.

## Why We Learn More From Success Than Failure

Ever find yourself destined to repeat the same mistakes over and over again? According to a study completed by researchers for Learning and Memory, that is exactly how our brains are wired





you have to land those first few successes. The key to creating your own cycle of productivity is to set a grand vision and work your way there with a few, achievable goals that increase your likelihood of experiencing a positive outcome.

“Your vision is your destination, and small, manageable goals are the motor that will get you there,” says Dr. Frank Murtha, a New York-based counseling psychologist with a focus on investor psychology, behavioral finance and financial risk taking. “Without the vision you’re on a road to nowhere. Without the goals, you have a destination but no motor. They work in tandem, and you need both.”

**Create a Road Map for Your Subconscious Mind**

Kick off goal setting by preparing a short vision statement of where you want to go. “Vision creates a picture for the subconscious mind. Our subconscious is what makes us such good problem solvers compared to a computer,” says Dr. Richard Peterson, a psychiatrist and neuroeconomics researcher who has written two books on financial risk taking. “We can see 1,000 dimensions of a problem and sort it down to the most important very quickly.”

The subconscious is not only responsible for 90 percent of the decisions we make in day-to-day

to work. Their findings determined that our brain cells only learn from experience when we do things right and failure doesn’t register the same way.

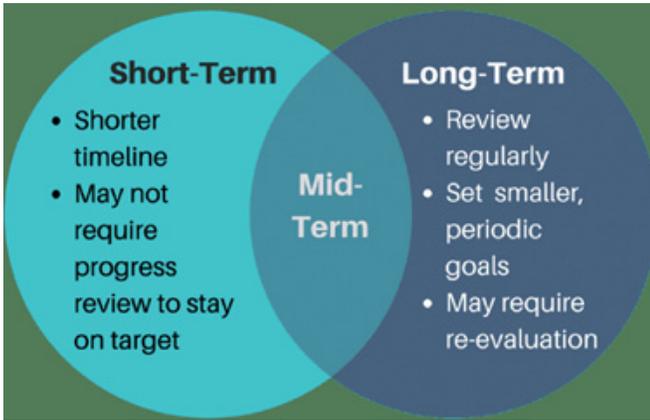
In the experiment, monkeys viewed two images on a computer screen, one that presented a reward if the subject reacted by looking right, another when it looked left. The study showed that the brain response when a monkey received an award for looking the right way improved its chances of performing well on the next trial.

The study makes important discoveries not only about the way we learn but the brain’s neural plasticity or ability to change in response to experiences. When behavior is successful our cells become finely tuned to what the animal was learning at the time while a failure shows little change in the brain or improvement in the monkey’s behavior.

**Set Goals Your Brain Likes**

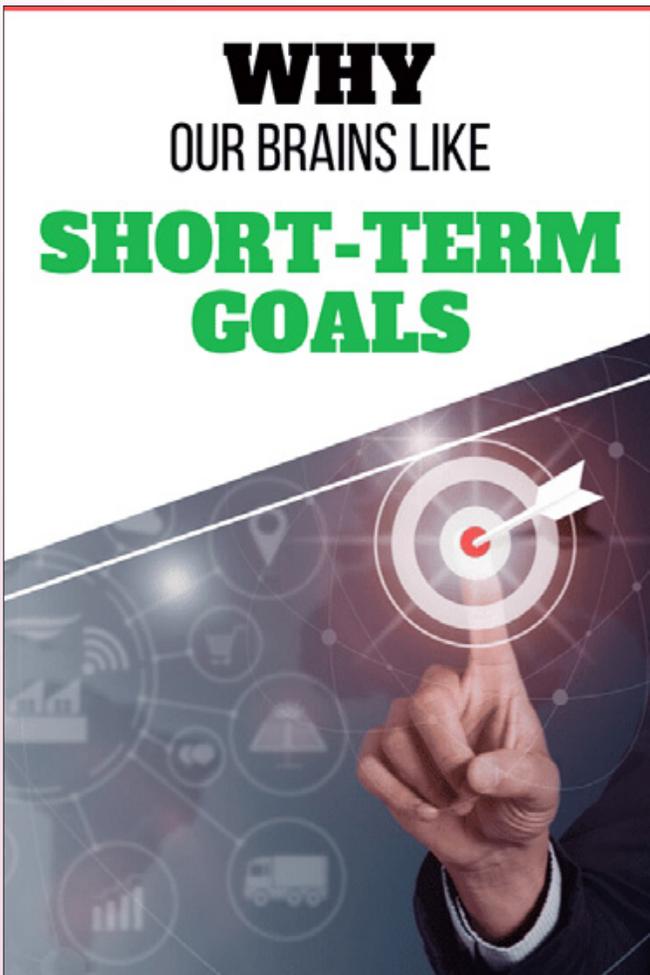
Collecting wins, no matter how small, can chemically wire you to move mountains by causing a repeated release of dopamine. But to get going





life, but is also the part of the brain that is largely in charge when we are performing creative tasks or charting unknown territory. The very act of giving your emotional brain a detailed portrait of your end goal also ensures that, even inadvertently, you will take the steps needed to steer yourself toward it.

Articulate your vision with words and a picture or two; the more detailed the better. Post this where



you can see it regularly.

**Work Your Way There With Short-Term Goals**

To rack up those first few wins, you’ve got to set only a few short-term goals at a time. Each should ideally take no more than three months to achieve. The goals should be realistic and specific, and incorporate your strengths. Writing them down, ideally in a place where you will see them every day, will help you stay focused.

**Types of short-term goals for work**

There are different kinds of short-term goals for work that can directly or indirectly improve your career prospects. They can be;

- Career short-term goals
- Financial short-term goals
- Academic short-term goals
- Health short-term goals

**Career short-term goals**

These goals will have a direct positive impact on your professional life and generally consist of small

changes and adjustments that help you be more productive. They can be as basic as making sure you get in 10 minutes early every day or keeping a clean and well-organized desk. Other direct short-term goals for work can be learning to communicate better with coworkers and customers, networking more or earning an additional professional specialization.

## Financial short-term goals

Although not necessarily linked to work goals, setting short-term financial goals is likely to improve your long-term professional outlook by giving you greater control over your income. Goals such as reducing or eliminating credit card debt, depositing a certain percentage of your monthly income into a savings account, keeping better track of your budget or learning how to invest can compound into long-term achievements.

## Academic short-term goals

Improving your education can lead to many personal and professional improvements. From a career standpoint, academic achievements can lead to new opportunities that can help you achieve your long-term goals for work. Deciding to take on a work-relevant course and setting up mini-milestones that will help you keep track of your progress is likely to improve your professional long-term prospects.



## Health short-term goals

Being healthy and energetic is usually a very important factor in professional success. Therefore improving your overall health and fitness can be a significant goal for both your personal and professional lives. Simply committing to regularly going to a gym, sleeping more or reducing unhealthy foods from your diet can give you the energy and confidence you need to achieve your long-term goals.

If success releases the production of dopamine, failure can do the opposite. Setting over-reaching goals, or too many goals at once, can be counterproductive for those seeking to harness the power of the brain's reward center. If you set four goals and achieve only two of them, it's human nature to focus on what went wrong; even the successes you were able to accomplish fail to drum out what you weren't able to achieve.

Remember to breakdown your Long term Goal into Short term Goals for success.

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