

KAREN SAYS

WHAT IS PERSEVERANCE?

IS persevering merely “not giving up”? Is it the euphemism for being stubborn and worse, inflexible? My take on it is that we shouldn't just survive, but thrive!

We have, in the past, learnt from leaders who have endured hardship, crises and injustices, as well as those who have set their minds on their personal goals and worked towards them with unwavering fervour.

We also explored the parallels between high-performing athletes and “corporate athletes”.

On the relativity of time and how good things come to those who wait, Mitch Dittkoff recounts a story where a promising project came to fruition only after a long wait – not for the lack of trying on his part of course.

Lim Lay Hsuan, with her wry sense of humour, decides to focus on procrastination – which of course is the poison to perseverance. She gives us her top 10 ways to combat procrastination (my favourite being “to be mindfully present”).

What is one of the essential ingredients for success? In the context of perseverance, John Walter Baybay also introduces us to the “Law of Consistency” and how it applies in our quests for success.

The effervescent Freda Liu shares her story of how she overcame a setback by setting her mind to do something she had never attempted in the past – emphasising the need to be willing to make sacrifices, to be accountable, and to be prepared – quite literally – to go the extra mile.

And these great lessons are echoed in the story of the highly regarded CEO of Chatime, Bryan Loo – who at age 30, already has battle wounds to share, and stories of success in this week's instalment of *The Leaderonomics Show*.

What if, in our individual pursuit of life goals, something derails us? Dr Edmund Ng addresses the harsh reality and grief associated with the loss of a job, and offers some guidelines on how to cope.

On another note, Jean Selvam shares her own experience of finding a job that brings her joy – stressing the importance to find meaning in our jobs, while sharing tips on how we can do just that.

Last, but certainly not least (because we love receiving feedback from our readers – feel free to write in) we share two great messages from readers in response to a recent article by Jasmine Chuah and the villanelle by Sara Yee.

Onward, upward!

KAREN NEOH
Editor
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MORE THAN JUST WORKING HARD

By **JASMINE CHUAH**
editor@leaderonomics.com

I have always related perseverance to “Math”. To me, Math is repeatedly doing equations, until it becomes autopilot: hard work.

Math enthusiasts tell me differently – it's about the beauty of the equations, that **process** of coming to the answer and moment of hard-won wonder.

Personally, my moments mostly comprised relief that one problem was solved. Thus, I grew up disliking perseverance for what I assumed was its nature: non-stop work.

I found out later in university that I was wrong. Perseverance, like math, is not just “hard work”. The equation goes as such:

1 DESIRE (20%)

You must want something desperately and passionately. You must desire it.

Desiring something that much moves you to calculate the possibilities of achieving your goals and you begin to think of the costs. Do you want it that much?

When I reread my group's submitted assignment, I realised that we could have performed better. I desired the best grade possible: an A.

2 DECISION (10%)

In evaluating your desires, you enter into the process of prioritisation. If it ranks high, you are then forced to decide whether or not to pursue it, upon which you will then decide how much you would be willing to give. How much will you pay to get what you want?

I decided that it was worth trying for and after some discussion with my teammates, we decided that we would ask for the chance to redo it.

We were willing to give our time and energy for the grade we wanted.

3 DETERMINATION (20%)

In making your decision, you are determined to go through with it. Determination is the “decision”, stemming from passion, in the direction of an end goal. Are you determined enough to carry it to the end?

We made commitments to work for a good grade. All of us were determined to do a good job this time around and were willing to sacrifice time and energy for this second chance.

4 HARD WORK (50%)

At the end of the day, perseverance also requires grit: you remembering your desire, paying homage to that moment of decision, determining to carry on and working towards it.

My friends and I, fuelled by our determination to get a good grade, redid the whole process – rewriting, researching and recollecting data.

CONCLUSION

Many times, it is so easy to forget the other 50% and “Just do it”. Perseverance then becomes reduced to half its meaning.

The end goal follows suit whereby the original reason for pursuit is forgotten. That is when perseverance seems like the hardest thing in the world, when it becomes easier to just give up.

In the end, just like Math, true perseverance is more than just hard work. It is passion and determination culminated in decisions that are made with sweat, blood and tears, again and again.

So, have you done the Math of perseverance? Or are you only doing 50%? Maybe it's time to recalculate.



The opinions expressed in this career guide are those of the writers or the people they quoted and not necessarily those of Leaderonomics.



- 01 “It always seems impossible until it's done.” – **Nelson Mandela**
- 02 “Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree.” – **Martin Luther**
- 03 “The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.” – **Vince Lombardi**
- 04 “You never know what's around the corner. It could be everything. Or it could be nothing. You keep putting one foot in front of the other, and then one day you look back and you've climbed a mountain.” – **Tom Hiddleston**
- 05 “Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.” – **Abraham Lincoln**

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EDITORIAL

Adviser
ROSHAN THIRAN
Editor
KAREN NEOH

Contributing editors
PREMA JAYABALAN
NINA TI
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Sub-editor
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Layout, Art & Design
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ZULHAIMI BAHARUDDIN
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HAFIS IDZLA

SHANKAR
MOHD KHAIRUL
MUHD HAFEZ
RAZZIAH

Writers & Contributors
JASMINE CHUAH
MITCH DITKOFF
JOHN WALTER BAYBAY
FREDA LIU

DR EDMUND NG
CINDY YAP
JEAN SELVAM

