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Ten Ways to Go From Good to Great

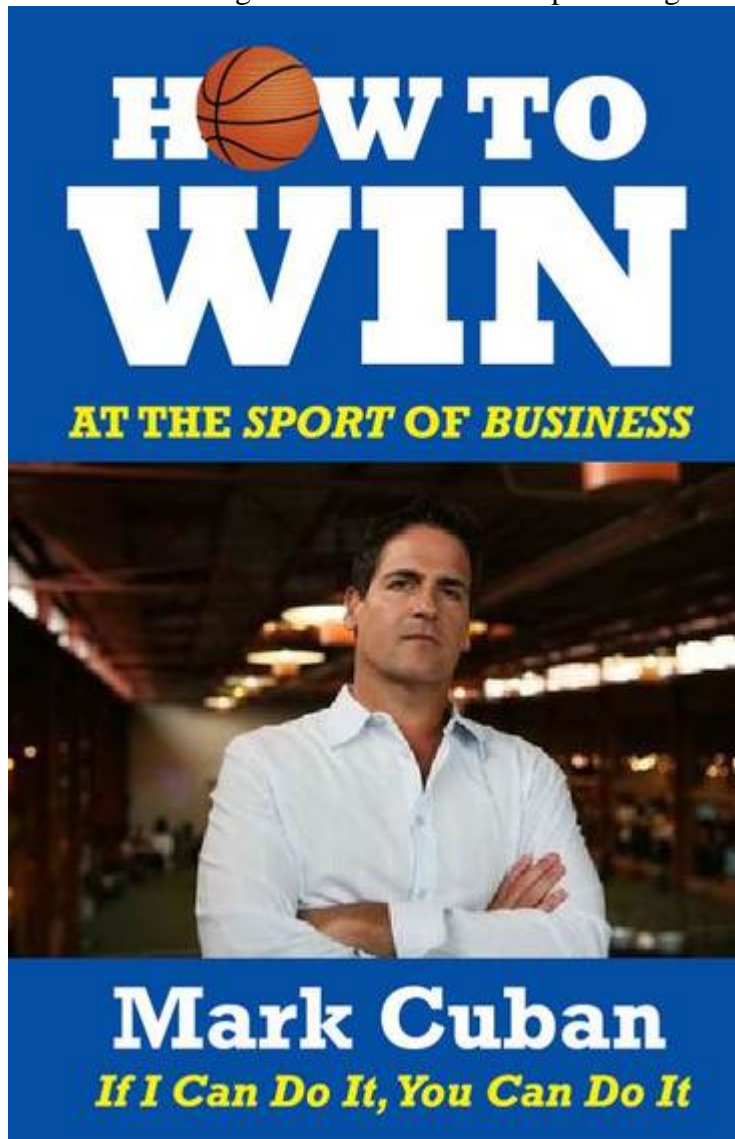


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In a recent interview with the [Legacy Project](#), an initiative which profiles creative minds, I was asked how do I differentiate good from great. [Jim Collins](#) asked that question about companies, and after researching almost 1,500 of them for his book [Good to Great](#), he found that the truly great ones had cultures that "rigorously found and promoted disciplined people to think and act in a disciplined manner." However, in our age of Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, "discipline" takes a backseat to celebrity. Greatness, it seems, is whatever gets you re-Tweeted or Liked; whatever racks up the most clicks or followers.

I asked the billionaire owner of the Dallas Mavericks and Shark Tank star [Mark Cuban](#) what it takes to go from good to great. "Two basic things in my opinion," he said. "Find something you

love to do and be great at it. And never stop learning."



I pondered the question further while watching Serena Williams lose her opportunity for a 22nd Grand Slam earlier this month. What, I wondered, was the key to her transcendent greatness? Was she born with it, or did she earn it? Was it her great talent plus [Malcom Gladwell's](#) 10,000 hours of training, or something else altogether? So I asked tennis star Andre Agassi and he told me that greatness comes from "Making it about something other than your own fleeting wants and needs, working at it with everything you've got, and then standing back--the results will be

magic." He added, "The right mentor--counselor, teacher, coach, friend--is everything."



Another star athlete, Deidra Dionne said, "Hard work made me good." This 2002 Olympic Bronze Medalist and 11-time World Cup medalist in Freestyle Skiing also told me, "What made me great was smart work - understanding that being the best required complete dedication, not just repetition. It meant committing to every aspect of sport: the physical, the psychological and the recovery. It meant being vulnerable, asking my support team and coaches when I needed

help. Great required working harder and smarter than my competition."



In learning from the greats, it came down to these top ten:

1. **BE SELFISH** - It's the ugly truth. To truly excel at something, you have to put your own needs first.
2. **BE DIFFERENT** - Extraordinary people rarely fit in with the status quo. Embracing your uniqueness is the second step to achieving excellence.
3. **INFLATE YOUR EGO** - Every great and far-reaching accomplishment begins with the conviction that you can set new records, defy norms, and change the world.
4. **PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT** - Popular culture promises us that we can all be great--whether it's Beyonce, Taylor Swift or Kim Kardashian vying for greatness due to the highest

number or Twitter followers, the harsh reality is that excellence and greatness cannot be achieved without hours and hours of practice and hard work. There are no exceptions to this rule. None.

5. **THE RIGHT TEAM** - Surrounding yourself with the right team is key to advancement, whether it's a coach or a mentor who shows you the path or people who are smarter than you who can save you from your mistakes. Nobody does it alone.

6. **PASSION** - Whether it's about the task at hand or something bigger, you need passion to fuel your fire.

7. **ELIMINATE DISTRACTION** - Having a singular vision and eliminating all distractions allows you to focus on your goals

8. **BE FLEXIBLE** - Adaptability is essential. Nothing ever happens as planned, being able to change course is as important as knowing how to set one.

9. **BE CREATIVE** - The achievement of greatness never happens on a linear path. Think creatively and open yourself up to new possibilities by trying new things.

10. **SET HUGE GOALS** - As with any other endeavor, you need to set goals. And as you achieve them, you need to update them and make them increasingly ambitious.

[Rana Florida](#) is author of the business best-seller, [Upgrade, Taking Your Work and Life from Ordinary to Extraordinary](#).



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