
EFFORT

“There may be people that have more talent than you, but there’s no excuse for anyone to work harder than you do.”

~ **Derek Jeter**

“Work like there is someone working twenty-four hours a day to take it away from you.”

~ **Mark Cuban**

“Hard work beats talent, when talent doesn’t work hard.”

~ **Tim Notke**

“You can’t have a million-dollar dream with a minimum wage work ethic.”

~ **Zig Ziglar**

“I know that hard work got me here. And the day I stop working hard, this can all go away.”

~ **Kevin Durant**

It is said that hustle and effort never have an off-day. We are in complete control of how much effort we put into something. Our effort is completely in our hands and it can only be measured by us. Success won’t come unless we are willing to put all our effort towards pursuing it. So how will we ensure we put forth our greatest effort?

The great basketball coach John Wooden used to define success as the “peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.” Results may not

come immediately in sports, but we can definitely be satisfied that we gave our best. We can take that best effort and improve specific skills to be even better the next time. Use your best effort relentlessly, and success will come because of your continuous improvements.

There is certainly no guarantee that we will achieve our desired result just because we work hard. However, we are guaranteed to not experience any long-term success if our effort is not there. We can't control everything when it comes to our game. We can't control the referees. We can't always control the other team. We can't control the weather conditions, fans, or field conditions. But we can control our effort and how much we put forth. It's the only thing that is 100% under our control in a game or practice.

If we want to succeed we need to give our greatest effort not only in the big matches but also every day in practice.

Wayne Gretzky is known as "The Great One". He is the greatest hockey player of all-time. Even from a young age, he was always putting forth his best effort. For many athletes, watching the sport we play is a great way to learn more. When Gretzky would watch hockey games as a kid, he would always have a pen and paper where he would take notes. He would even track the movement of the puck as the games went on. Yes, he had talent, but he also put in the effort and did the extra things necessary to continue to get better and better.

He is known for famously stating, "the highest compliment that you can pay me is to say that I work

hard every day, that I never dog it”. He knew that no matter what his situation, no matter his circumstances, he was going to give his best effort. That was the kind of player he wanted to be known as.

When we don't give our best effort, we are creating bad habits and setting low standards for ourselves. Giving 90% effort or 95% effort, even 99% effort, will maybe get us somewhere... but unless we are giving 100% of our effort, we won't get far. That extra 20%, 10%, 5%, or even that extra 1% can be the deciding factor between success and failure.

As well as giving all of our efforts, we have to do it repeatedly, over and over again. We won't be successful because we gave 100% effort just one time. It needs to become a habit.

When we give our best effort, it speaks a great deal about our character. It's a great leadership quality to have and every coach wants to work with players that constantly give their best effort regardless of the outcome.

There is often a battle within us between what is easy and what we want most. Every day, we can “win the day”. We can win the battle with ourselves. We can do what needs to be done, when it needs to be done. Then we can do it to the best of our ability all the time.