

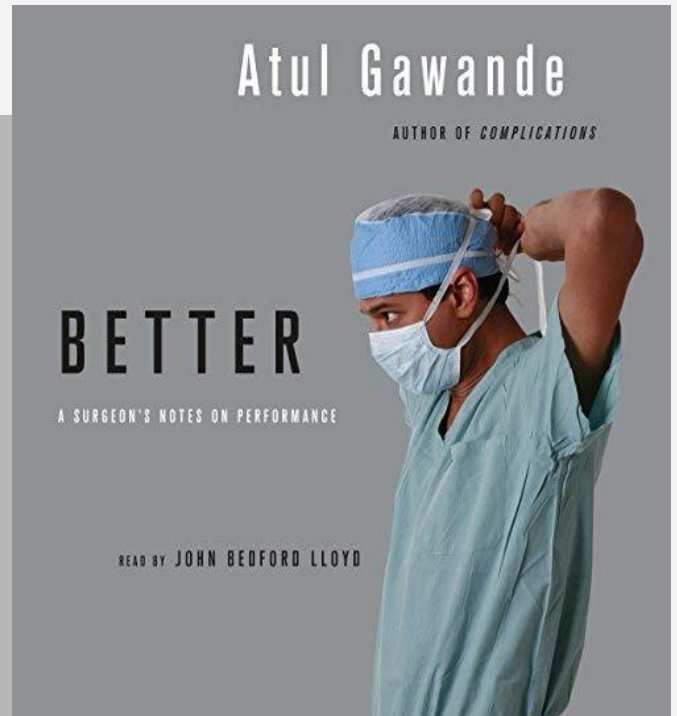
STAFF EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Based on *Better* by Atul Gawande

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INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Atul Gawande is a general surgeon, writer, associate professor, and public health leader.
- ▶ In *Better*, Gawande outlines three core requirements for success in medicine: diligence, doing right, and ingenuity.
- ▶ To illustrate these traits, he tells stories ranging from proper hand washing procedure to how cystic fibrosis is fought.



“

[B]etter is possible.
It does not take genius.
It takes diligence.
It takes moral clarity.
It takes ingenuity.
And above all, it takes a
willingness to try.

”

1 Diligence

2 Doing right

3 Ingenuity

“

To fix medicine... we need to do two things: measure ourselves and be more open about what we are doing. We should be routinely comparing the performance of doctors and hospitals, looking at everything from surgical complication rates to how often a drug ordered for a patient is delivered correctly and on time.

”

Physicians in Iraq and Afghanistan took the time to **collect and input data** on every casualty (i.e., injuries and outcomes), so they could later analyze the patterns in what had happened to the soldiers and how effective their treatments had been.

By finding a **meaningful way to measure performance** (whether you're taking nasal cultures of patients to monitor hospital infection rates... or using the Apgar score for immediate objective feedback on the effectiveness of your infant care) you can **better understand** your capabilities and **adjust** your behavior **accordingly**.

1 Diligence

2 Doing right

3 Ingenuity

“

Always Fight.

Always look for what more you could do... It gives us our best chance of avoiding the worst error of all--giving up on someone we could have helped.

”

A hospital opened up to patients' families about how poorly the results of their cystic fibrosis program ranked and announced a plan for **doing better**.

Not a single family left the program because they were impressed by the team's sincere **desire to improve** and by their lack of excuses.

By setting aside your ego and being open about your work, you acknowledge that the person for whom you're fighting is your patient, and you drive improvement.

- 1 Diligence
- 2 Doing right
- 3 Ingenuity

“

Look for the opportunity to change... be willing to recognize the inadequacies in what you do and to seek out solutions.

”

To lower hospital infection risks, a team asked hospital personnel what they knew about how to solve the problem.

They found places where hand-gel dispensers were lacking and ways to keep gowns and gloves from running out of supply, amongst other tips that helped decrease infection risks.

This is known as a **positive deviance** approach: building on the capabilities people already have--finding out **who** has the best strategy and asking them **what** that strategy is.

- 1 Diligence
- 2 Doing right
- 3 Ingenuity

“

[E]xcellence [comes] from seeing, on a daily basis, the difference between being 99.5 perfect successful and being 99.95 percent successful.

”

Warren Warwick, the director of Fairview-University Children's Hospital's cystic fibrosis center, is **focused, persistent, and inventive.**

When he noticed a slight dip in a patient's lung function, he not only helped her revise her treatment plan going forward but also requested that she recover the ground she had lost.

He does not settle for 80% of normal lung function... he aims for 100% or better.

To replace laborious manual chest therapy, he invented the mechanized chest-thumping vest.

He is not only *better*, he is *extraordinary*.

NEXT STEPS

Learn from others

Ask unscripted questions and swap stories. Listen and make note of what you learn.

Sometimes you may discover the unexpected

Don't complain

It's boring, doesn't solve anything, and will bring you and others down

Count something

If you count something you find interesting, you will learn something interesting

Write something

It'll help you step back and think through a problem

Look for the opportunity to change

Find something new to try. Make yourself an early adopter

REFERENCES

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