

Insights from The Dip by Seth Godin

"If You're Not Going to Get to #1, You Might as Well Quit Now" - Seth Godin

There is a high opportunity cost of not investing your time and effort in becoming the best.

"We reward the product or the song or the organization or the employee that is number one. The rewards are heavily skewed, so much so that it's typical for #1 to get ten times the benefit of #10, and a hundred times the benefit of #100. WHY? People don't have a lot of time and don't want to take a lot of risks. If you've been diagnosed with cancer of the navel, you're not going to mess around by going to a lot of doctors. You're going to head straight for the "top guy," the person who's ranked the best in the world. Why screw around if you get only one chance?" - Seth Godin

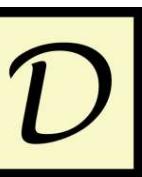
Being the BEST in the WORLD is more accessible than you think.

"Best as in: best for them (a customer or an employer), right now, based on what they believe and what they know. And in the world as in: their world, the world they have access to. So if I'm looking for a freelance copy editor, I want the best copy editor in English, who's available, who can find a way to work with me at a price I can afford. That's my best in the world. (And) the world is getting smaller because the categories are getting more specialized. I can now find the best gluten-free bialys available by overnight shipping. I can find the best clothing-optional resort in North America with six clicks of a mouse." - Seth Godin

Now let's say you quit most things and focus your time on becoming the best in a niche field or micro-market. At first it's exciting: you're getting lots of positive feedback and seeing results. But eventually your "beginner" technique stops generating results and you're forced to endure the long slog of learning "expert" techniques. Your results DIP and the excitement wears off. At this point you want to quit and try something else.

"Quitting when you hit the Dip is a bad idea. If the journey you started was worth doing, then quitting when you hit the Dip just wastes the time you've already invested...The people who set out to make it through the Dip—the people who invest the time and the energy and the effort to power through the Dip—those are the ones who become the best in the world." - Seth Godin

3 Ways to Get Through a Dip



Decide when you'll quit, in advance

"Quitting when you're panicked is dangerous and expensive. The best quitters are the ones who decide in advance when they're going to quit." – Seth Godin

Before entering a Dip, ask yourself: "How much time and money am I willing to sacrifice? How much short-term discomfort am I willing to endure?" Based on these limits, are you likely to get through the Dip? If yes, proceed and only quit if you're pre-defined quitting limits have been exceeded OR something fundamental has changed.



Influence a market

The odds of successfully influencing an individual (changing the mind of a manager or client) are quite low. After a few failed attempts at influencing an individual, persistence turns into pestering and the individual will resist all future influencing efforts.

However, the odds of successfully influencing a market are quite high. Although some people will ignore you (or even reject you), there are still people in the market who haven't heard of you. You can use your failed attempts to improve your solution and influence another area of the market.



Pace your focus on (small) progress

"To succeed, to get to that light at the end of the tunnel, you've got to make some sort of forward progress, no matter how small... but it needs to be more than a mantra, more than just "surviving is succeeding." The challenge, then, is to surface new milestones in areas where you have previously expected to find none." – Seth Godin.