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**ESSENTIAL
MINDSETS
FOR GROWTH
DRIVEN
COMPETITORS**



Hey, I'm Brian Kight

I hope you enjoy reading and working through this as much as I enjoyed writing it. My goal is to provide tremendous personal and professional value to you and others through these competitive mindsets. If I've done that at all my mission has been served.

If you would like more information for yourself, your family, your friends, your colleagues, or how to implement skills like these into your business, school, or team, here's where you can go:

@TBRIANKIGHT **in**    

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1

JUST START

"Start" is a simple word with a clear directive: Begin. Go. Advance. Move forward.

But in the context of becoming an elite performer or becoming the best version of yourself, "start" doesn't feel so simple. It feels complex, and at times, confusing.

You have experiences, questions, hesitations, fears, concerns, doubts, memories, habits, relationships, responsibilities, and priorities that all find a way to justify your delay.

Not anymore.

You can't steer a parked car. You can't fly a grounded airplane. You can't see the finish line when you haven't started the race. The steering, flying, and finishing come later.

Turn the key, start the car, put it in drive, and take your foot off the brake. Now you're rolling.

Just start. Begin. Go. Advance. Move forward.

2

STAY SIMPLE

If step one is start. Step two is stay simple.

Focus on building simplicity into the foundation of your life. Use simple as the lens through which everything must pass – all your experiences, thoughts, emotions, decisions, and actions. Ask yourself, *“What is the simple and productive thing to do here?”*

It can be complex on the outside (like financial strategies, relationships, or work politics), but that doesn't mean it can't be simple for you on the inside. Circumstances do not determine your mindset. You do. Your ability to stay simple when things get complex is a powerful skill.

If you make commitments, make them simple commitments. If you establish rules, make them simple rules. If you need to follow a process, make it a simple process. The less the better. The simpler the better.

Do not over-plan. Do not over-calculate. Do not over-explain. If you catch yourself doing this, and you probably will, it's ok. You're gaining valuable self-awareness and learning how to build discipline. Step back and ask yourself, *“What is the simple and productive thing to do here?”*

Pick a simple approach and execute it. The simpler you choose, the easier it is to execute and stick with it.

3

MANY PATHS

There are as many paths to discipline as there are paths to success. In other words, almost infinite.

Do not be overly concerned that you are on the “right” path today, at the moment you’re reading this. Maybe you are or maybe you’re not. How would you know? Can you predict the future?

Instead, make sure you are (1) on a path (2) of your choosing (3) that you believe is headed in a direction you want to go. If you are confident in those three things then you’re on a path of discipline. It may not look or feel like you imagined, it could be different than others in your environment, and you might have doubts about the final destination.

That’s ok. There are no guarantees for any path you choose. Sometimes you’ll get it right early. Other times you’ll have to change paths many times before you find the right one for you.

When you choose your own path, it makes it easier to change paths. When you follow the path someone says you’re supposed to take, change gets complicated. That’s true for anything in life. When you own your decisions, it’s easier to own your mistakes or change your mind and make new decisions.

Waste no time worrying if you’re on the right path. Choose a path you believe is headed in a direction you want to go. Do the work. In the course of your life and career, you will have to change paths many times.

Don’t be committed to one path. Be committed to progress toward a destination that matters. You’ll get there when you’re good enough to earn it.

4

CREATE YOUR OWN ENERGY

One of the top five most important skills in the world is the skill to create your own energy. Here's why I believe that is true.

Energy comes from two places: inside and outside. You create energy from the inside. You catch energy from the outside.

The main difference between creating energy and catching it is control. When you create energy, the source is you, which gives you control. When you catch energy, the source is your environment, giving it control.

Catching energy can have amazing benefits. Feel the excitement of a couple having their first kid. See the effort your best friend puts into a hard workout. Hear the home crowd erupt after a touchdown. The energy is contagious. That's the danger.

The energy around you doesn't always work for you. Sometimes it does, like the examples I gave, but most days it doesn't. The energy that surrounds you at work, on the road, online, and at home is usually some combination of impatience, impulsiveness, boredom, fear, jealousy, blaming, complaining, or just general irritation.

I'm not suggesting things are awful all around you, but I am suggesting that these forms of negative energy are constantly around you, potentially capturing your attention and interest. They are persuasively appealing.

If you can't create your own energy, then you are going to catch the energy in your environment and the people in it. This gives them a certain amount of control over you. It means you are a

prisoner to the mood in the office or at the dinner table. It's also how most people think and live.

There is a better way. Don't be a prisoner of your circumstances. You control the energy you choose to create for yourself, regardless of the situation. Some people argue it is the most important skill in the world.

Environments, like people, are unstable and unpredictable. The world is crazy and we are crazier. You can't rely on your environment to give you the energy to do disciplined things. You can't rely on other people either.

The energy has to come from you. If you rely on external sources of energy to motivate you and move you, the countdown clock is already ticking toward your eventual failure.

If you learn how to create your own energy, then you are in the best possible position. You can confidently endure bad situations that derail others and you can capitalize on positive momentum swings because you're prepared to be opportunistic. Some call this learnable skill "luck". You can make up your own mind.

5

HOW TO WIN BY WHAT YOU DON'T DO.

Advice given by “experts” usually tells you what to do to be successful. What about the things *not* to do? Success is as much avoiding bad paths as it is choosing good paths.

Here is a simple and clear way to think about behavior. It's the way I think about mine too: do the things that win and don't do the things that lose.

I define behavior as three things:

- 1. What I do.** Attitudes I have, actions I take, words I say.
- 2. What I don't do.** Attitudes I refuse, actions I resist, words I reject.
- 3. How I do it.** My situational judgment and skill.

My success begins with what I choose *not* to do. I don't ever want to do big things that would cause me to lose. I also don't want to do little things, that don't feel important in the moment, that add up and cause me to lose.

I call it, “Win by don't” because I've experienced that if I avoid the big mistakes lots of people make and I avoid the little, but important, mistakes most people make, I win a lot more. I have more margin for error, can take more chances, and my risk of serious negative consequences goes down. It doesn't go away, but it does go way down.

HOW TO WIN BY WHAT YOU DON'T DO.

A quick list of how to win. Don't:

- Blame
- Complain
- Be defensive
- Intentionally make someone else feel bad about themselves
- Do things to get the approval of someone else
- Hold on to resentment
- Get a felony
- Lose your biggest financial investment
- Get addicted to anything (alcohol, drugs, food, TV, internet, etc)
- Marry the wrong person (subjective, but this is a huge issue for a lot of people)
- Have a kid too early (subjective to your personal life situation)

You will experience no serious, negative downside when you eliminate these things from your life. Your ego and emotions might push back, but they don't always tell you the truth.

You get massive upside with almost no downside. That's a dream scenario. But it's not a dream. It's reality completely within your control.

What do you think of this list? Can you think of other opportunities to "win by don't"?

6

SELF-AWARENESS OF YOUR **TALENT AND SKILL**

You have talent and you lack talent. You have skills and you lack skills. This is true for all of us, young and old, successful and struggling.

Think about your own talents and skills, as they exist today.

Your talents were given to you. You were either born with them or they came from the unknown source inside you where things make sense. You didn't have to work too hard to do it well.

Your skills had to be learned, either from repeated experience or disciplined practice. It didn't come as easily or as naturally. It took effort and time to do well.

Here is the important self-awareness: Your talent is not up to you. It is fixed and it has limits. You have only what you have. Your skill is up to you. It is flexible and has no limits. You have only what you choose to build.

Separate in your mind between talents you don't have, because you'll never have them, and skills you don't have, because you've chosen not to build them. Limitations in your talent do not create limitations in the skills you can build. They are independent and separate.

The default self-deception is, *"It's not worth studying and practicing because I'll never be that good at it. I'm not that kind of person."*

The disciplined self-awareness move is to ask, *"Is this a valuable skill I can build if I study and practice it? What is the cost of not having this skill?"*

SELF-AWARENESS OF YOUR TALENT AND SKILL

Without self-awareness you are likely to get caught in the trap of self-deception.

Your path is shaped by talent, of course, but it is determined by skills. Understand your talent and put yourself in a good position to use it, then choose to build the skills you need to get what you want.

7

PATIENCE + URGENCY

The early bird gets the worm but good things come to those who wait.

To some people these are competing statements that make a confusing sentence. Not to me. They're both true. You just need to combine two things that are rarely combined: patience + urgency.

Patience is the mindset and skillset that allows things the time they need to grow. There are so many important parts of life, work, and our personal development that will never, ever happen quickly. But people want it now. An impatient mindset is one of the biggest mistakes you can make. The time always passes. Three years from now, you'll either be glad you were patient or regret that you weren't.

Urgency is the mindset and skillset that creates focused effort and maximizes the next five minutes, 15 minutes, two hours of your day. It is the productive use of time. Speed is sometimes a natural outcome of urgency, but speed is not the goal at all. Urgency isn't efficiency, it's priority. It is an intense, complete focus on what is important now and how to win the moment.

Be patient in your years and urgent in your days. Think in 24 months of vision executed in 24 hours of focus.

8

TRUST THE SYSTEM

The value of a system is to organize and execute simple skills in complex environments. It's rarely the skills that are complex or even the rules. It just seems complex, or feels that way, because we tend to see everything at once.

See it instead as a collection of parts and see how they all go together. Organize them into a simple structure that you can understand. See how the parts affect each other, the relationships of cause-and-effect between them. Make adjustments to your organization if you need to, make adjustments to yourself constantly as you learn.

Simple skills. Organized and executed. Trust the system.

9

DO THE WORK

I end Daily Discipline the same way every day signed off “Do The Work.”

The work is whatever is required. It is the next action that makes you better. It is every lesson you need to learn, every detail you have to discover, and every skill you learn to perform. It is the direct connection between your action and what you earn.

If you don't know, go study. If you don't understand, go ask. If you don't have confidence, go practice. If you don't have experience, go do. You can have what you want as long as you are willing to do the work to get it. Earning anything always follows the same rule: it takes exactly what it takes and nothing less. It usually takes more than we think.

Sometimes it's a direct path, sometimes it's winding. Sometimes it's fun, sometimes it's a fight. Sometimes it's fair, sometimes it's not.

When you want something, align your daily discipline to meet the requirement. It can't be shortcut. It can only be sped up by the intensity of your work or by random chance. The first is in your control every day. The second is not. But daily discipline and intense work help random chance work in your favor when it does arrive.

“Do the work” is the simple anchor that grounds you in the reality that you achieve in alignment with what you earn.

10

DOESN'T MATTER, GET BETTER

If there is an outcome in your life that you want, but you're not getting, the answer is because you're not good enough. Doesn't matter, get better.

You can improve your situation. You can improve yourself. You can improve others around you. There is always a reason to look ahead and be optimistic about what you get to do next and that what you do next matters.

Some people say you're not defined by your past. Maybe that's true. But once the past is over, even five minutes ago, it is over and gone. There is nothing you can do about it. Win or lose, success or failure, progress or setback. Doesn't matter, get better.

This mindset will help you control your inner-critic and inflated ego. Both can easily derail you the instant you believe them.

If you are the best in your field and consistently win, then you have established a lead on your competitors. Doesn't matter, get better.

If you are stuck in a situation with limited resources and lack of support, then you have challenges other people don't have. Doesn't matter, get better.

If you have years of experience and know your industry extremely well, then you have unique and valuable insight. Doesn't matter, get better.

Creating your own energy, rather than catching it, is one of the most important skillsets to building discipline. Doesn't matter,

get better, is one of the most important mindsets that unlocks that skill.

The opposite mindset drains energy and undermines discipline. It exposes you to self-deception and excuses. It makes you vulnerable to ego and autopilot.

Doesn't matter, get better is always the right mindset.