the process

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Mind Map
Tell Back
Steve Jobs was fired from his own company; Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison; and Abraham Lincoln failed in business, had a nervous breakdown, and was defeated in eight elections. So how did all these people achieve such extraordinary success?

We all know of business leaders, authors, celebrities, and sports stars who after a brief moment in the sun hit rock bottom only to rise again, overcome adverse circumstances, claw their way back to the top, and inspire the world around them. The stuff of legends and Hollywood movies, these comeback stories are incredible to hear. But when failure is fresh, it’s often hard to believe that recovery, let alone success, is possible.

From rejection to workplace screw-ups, everyone has experienced that all-too-familiar gut-wrenching numbness. Even small failures can stalk you like a dark cloud, causing others to question your abilities. Worse, it can seriously undermine your self-assurance.

In my early years in business, I nearly drove a company I had founded bankrupt. I betrayed my own values and goals and lost everything, including the support of many important people in my life. However, it was from this adversity that I discovered the three keys to overcoming failure:

**Responsibility: Be Your Own Master**
Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison before becoming the first president of South Africa to be elected in a fully representative democratic election. During his time in jail, he kept a scrap of paper in his cell that contained the words of a poem by William Ernest Henley, entitled “Invictus.” It ends with the famous lines, “I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul.”

To make it through times of extreme adversity, you need to embody these words. Take responsibility for the results you create in your life, and keep agreements with yourself. They are at least as important as agreements with others.

**Self-Acceptance: Find Peace with Yourself**
From his eight election failures to the civil war, perhaps no U.S. president suffered more hardship than Abraham Lincoln. But throughout his presidency he remained steadfast, and was even quoted saying that if by the end of his term, “I have lost every other friend on earth, I shall at least have one friend left, and that friend shall be down inside of me.”

Always show loyalty to yourself. Embrace your weaknesses and shortcomings, but work to turn them into strengths. You cannot control the negative opinions of people around you, but with self-acceptance, you can block out the noise.

**Trust: Listen to Your Gut**
As Steve Jobs once said during a famous commencement speech, “You have to trust in something. Your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. Because believing that the dots will connect down the road will give you the confidence to follow your heart, even when it leads you off the well-worn path.”

Human beings are often irrational, but you should always trust your intuition and your instincts. Make your judgments based on experience and listen to your gut. Understand that you will make wrong decisions and you will fail but that,
without these experiences, you’ve never truly lived.

Having the skills and the wherewithal to rebuild your platform requires you to 1) take responsibility for the bad result and negotiate your way out of it, 2) refuse to be deterred by a setback that five years from now will be nothing more than a great learning experience, and 3) proceed with utmost integrity using both your heart and your mind to guide you along the road back.

As the leaders of corporate organizations and entrepreneurial ventures, we put ourselves on the line every day. Things can break in the most unlikely of places (sometimes totally beyond your control), but you still own the result.

When you hit rock bottom – and you probably will at some point in your life – rely on the package of skills that gets leaders to the top in the first place. I call these the Skills of Engagement™:

1. Listening actively
2. Thinking critically
3. Communicating transparently
4. Owning the result
5. Influencing obstructionists, the timid, and the disengaged
6. Negotiating a favorable outcome

Also remember that you will not be able to make the climb back to the top alone. Assembling a stellar team and defining an interpersonal dynamic based on the Skills of Engagement are the building blocks of your resurgence. If you mix these with a little unabashed charisma, you may even take pleasure in the challenges of the journey back.

The great paradox is that the people who enjoy the most public successes often endure the greatest private failures. However, these leaders understand, and even expect, that storms will come their way. They also realize that it’s how they handle the dark moments that gives them the internal strength to shine during their brightest ones.

So stand tall when you hit rock bottom, and focus on the wise proverb “this too shall pass …” While it might not seem like it at the time, with responsibility, self-acceptance, and trust, you can leverage the Skills of Engagement and overcome even your greatest failures.

850 words

Time: __________
Circle the best answer to the following questions based on the article “Rock Bottom: How Great Leaders Triumph Over Failure”

1. Who is one of the successful figures mentioned in the article who learned from failure?
   a. Henry Ford
   b. Abraham Lincoln
   c. Bill Gates
   d. Thomas Edison

2. What did the author of the article do in the early years of his business?
   a. fire all of his employees
   b. lie to his business partners
   c. got in trouble for tax evasion
   d. nearly drove his company bankrupt

3. How many years did Nelson Mandela spend in prison?
   a. 7
   b. 19
   c. 27
   d. 35

4. What poem did Mandela keep in his prison cell?
   a. “The Road Not Taken”
   b. “O Captain! My Captain!”
   c. “A Dream Deferred”
   d. “Invictus”

5. According to the article, what can you use to block out the negative opinions of others?
   a. a strong circle of close friends
   b. commitment
   c. self-acceptance
   d. a sense of humor

6. The author says you should always trust...
   a. your intuition and instincts
   b. the advice of your parents
   c. reliable news sources like Forbes and The Wall Street Journal
   d. all of the above

7. “Proceeding with the utmost integrity” means using …
   a. your education and experience
   b. your judgment and your professionalism
   c. your heart and your mind
   d. none of the above

8. The Skills of Engagement™ include all of the following except:
   a. listening actively
   b. communicating transparently
   c. negotiating a favorable outcome
   d. speaking optimistically

9. Along with the Skills of Engagement™, what two other things will help one take pleasure in the journey back from failure?
   a. charisma and a stellar team
   b. commitment and a sense of humor
   c. strong friendships and giving thanks
   d. exercise and a love of nature

10. What “wise proverb” does the author invoke to sum up the feeling of the article?
    a. “good things come to those who wait…”
    b. “this too shall pass…”
    c. “patience is a virtue…”
    d. “actions speak louder than words…”

Comprehension Score: ___________
(number correct x 10)
It’s a Fork, It’s a Spoon, It’s a ... Weapon?
by Ian Urbina. Excerpt from The New York Times. © October 11, 2009. All rights reserved.

Finding character witnesses when you are 6 years old is not easy. But there was Zachary Christie last week at a school disciplinary committee hearing with his karate instructor and his mother’s fiancé by his side to vouch for him.

Zachary’s offense? Taking a camping utensil that can serve as a knife, fork and spoon to school. He was so excited about recently joining the Cub Scouts that he wanted to use it at lunch. School officials concluded that he had violated their zero-tolerance policy on weapons, and Zachary was suspended and now faces 45 days in the district’s reform school.

“It just seems unfair,” Zachary said, pausing as he practiced writing lower-case letters with his mother, who is home-schooling him while the family tries to overturn his punishment.

Spurred in part by the Columbine and Virginia Tech shootings, many school districts around the country adopted zero-tolerance policies on the possession of weapons on school grounds. More recently, there has been growing debate over whether the policies have gone too far.

But, based on the code of conduct for the Christina School District, where Zachary is a first grader, school officials had no choice. They had to suspend him because, “regardless of possessor’s intent,” knives are banned.

But the question on the minds of residents here is: Why do school officials not have more discretion in such cases?

“Zachary wears a suit and tie some days to school by his own choice because he takes school so seriously,” said Debbie Christie, Zachary’s mother, who started a Web site, helpzachary.com, in hopes of recruiting supporters to pressure the local school board at its next open meeting on Tuesday. “He is not some sort of threat to his classmates.”

Still, some school administrators argue that it is difficult to distinguish innocent pranks and mistakes from more serious threats, and that the policies must be strict to protect students.

For Delaware, Zachary’s case is especially frustrating because last year state lawmakers tried to make disciplinary rules more flexible by giving local boards authority to, “on a case-by-case basis, modify the terms of the expulsion.”

The law was introduced after a third-grade girl was expelled for a year because her grandmother had sent a birthday cake to school, along with a knife to cut it. The teacher called the principal — but not before using the knife to cut and serve the cake.
1. Zachary was given the camping utensil because he recently joined what organization?

___________________________________________________________________________

2. What grade is Zachary in?

___________________________________________________________________________

3. What does Zachary wear on some days to school to show how seriously he takes it?

___________________________________________________________________________

4. The law was introduced after a grandmother sent what to her third-grade granddaughter at school?

___________________________________________________________________________
The 3-Minute Visual Vacation
Excerpt from Read Your Way to the Top with the Guide, by Rose Saperstein and James Joseph

As you read, tension, stress, and fatigue build up, especially in the eyes. This prevents clear thinking. An excellent remedy was devised by Dr. William H. Bates, who designed palming as a method for natural vision improvement in 1918.

The only time our eyes are at a complete rest is during total darkness. To rest your eyes, close your eyes and cup your hands over them. You will feel the instant relief. Do not press, but make sure no light can penetrate your fingers.

Relax through breathing. Clear your mind of all thoughts. Move your eyeballs up and down, side to side, and diagonally. This helps relieve muscle tension. Slowly uncup your hands and open your eyes. Do this exercise for a few minutes whenever you feel fatigue or eye strain.
Mind Mapping
An excerpt from Map It by Nancy Margulies

Mind Mapping was developed by British author Tony Buzan. He studies one of the most interesting topics in the universe: the amazing human brain.

We know that every brain has two different ways of processing information. The left hemisphere of your brain is logical and orderly. The right hemisphere is visual. It likes color, pictures, and emotions. It looks for patterns and is interested in the big picture.

Mind Maps are made on unlined paper, using color, symbols, pictures and key words. So, when you make Mind Maps, you will be using your whole brain! Mapping is a method for recording ideas that uses pictures and symbols.

When you use symbols on your Mind Maps, it helps you take notes quickly. You will decide what a symbol means for your map. A cloud could be a thought, rain, or trouble. With practice, you will be able to think of symbols for many ideas. Pictures and symbols make your notes more memorable.

Maps use words as well as pictures and symbols. Use key words and put one word on each branch. When you print one word on a line, you can easily branch out to add other related words. It's sort of like tree branches or roots of trees. Notice that when you use key words, you don't have to use words like “and,” “to”, and “it.” Extensive global research indicates that most people can't read their own notes. That's why Mind Maps are clearly printed.

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$100 Bill Makeover

United States Gives the $100 Bill a Makeover
From www.studentnewsdaily.com/blog/human-interest-news-stories © November 18, 2014. All rights reserved.

8 A glitzier, high-tech version of America’s $100 bill is rolling off the presses.
20 Despite years of production-related delays, the updated $100 bill has undergone a major makeover that includes a color-changing ink well, 3-D security ribbon, and more texture on Benjamin Franklin’s collar.
55 The new, more expensive C-note also has a higher calling: It aims to fight back against counterfeiters by using better printers and technology.
77 The modifications will help people check for fake $100s without going to a bank or using a blacklight, said Michael Lambert, a deputy associate director at the Federal Reserve.
107 “We try and find security features that can be used at a number of different levels, from more experienced cash handlers … down to the person on the street who really needs to know the security features so they can protect themselves,” Lambert said in an interview October 2nd.
155 The new $100 bill still bears the image of Franklin, one of America’s Founding Fathers. But it adds part of the Declaration of Independence, written in script from Franklin’s left shoulder to the right edge of the bill. A quill and an ink well are printed behind the text, and a blue ribbon goes down near the center of the bill.
217 The ink in the well changes colors from copper to green when the bill is turned. A watermark of Franklin also appears on the right side of the bill when it’s held up to light.
Intelligence Is Overrated: What You Really Need To Succeed
by Keld Jensen. From www.forbes.com/sites/keldjensen © 2012. All rights reserved.

Albert Einstein’s was estimated at 160, Madonna’s is 140, and John F. Kennedy’s was only 119, but as it turns out, your IQ score pales in comparison with your EQ, MQ, and BQ scores when it comes to predicting your success and professional achievement.

IQ tests are used as an indicator of logical reasoning ability and technical intelligence. A high IQ is often a prerequisite for rising to the top ranks of business today. It is necessary, but it is not adequate to predict executive competence and corporate success. By itself, a high IQ does not guarantee that you will stand out and rise above everyone else.

Research carried out by the Carnegie Institute of Technology shows that 85 percent of your financial success is due to skills in “human engineering,” your personality and ability to communicate, negotiate, and lead. Shockingly, only 15 percent is due to technical knowledge. Additionally, Nobel Prize winning Israeli-American psychologist, Daniel Kahneman, found that people would rather do business with a person they like and trust rather than someone they don’t, even if the likeable person is offering a lower quality product or service at a higher price.

With this in mind, instead of exclusively focusing on your conventional intelligence quotient, you should make an investment in strengthening your EQ (Emotional Intelligence), MQ (Moral Intelligence), and BQ (Body Intelligence). These concepts may be elusive and difficult to measure, but their significance is far greater than IQ.

Emotional Intelligence
EQ is the most well-known of the three, and in brief it is about: being aware of your own feelings and those of others, regulating these feelings in yourself and others, using emotions that are appropriate to the situation, self-motivation, and building relationships.

Top Tip for Improvement: First, become aware of your inner dialogue. It helps to keep a journal of what thoughts fill your mind during the day. Stress can be a huge killer of emotional intelligence, so you also need to develop healthy coping techniques that can effectively and quickly reduce stress in a volatile situation.

Moral Intelligence
MQ directly follows EQ as it deals with your integrity, responsibility, sympathy, and forgiveness. The way you treat yourself is the way other people will treat you. Keeping commitments, maintaining your integrity, and being honest are crucial to moral intelligence.

Top Tip for Improvement: Make fewer excuses and take responsibility for your actions. Avoid little white lies. Show sympathy and communicate respect to others. Practice acceptance and show tolerance of other people’s shortcomings. Forgiveness is not just about how we relate to others; it’s also how you relate to and feel about yourself.

Body Intelligence
Lastly, there is your BQ, or body intelligence, which reflects what you know about your body, how you feel about it, and take care of it. Your body is constantly telling you things; are you listening to the signals or ignoring them?
Are you eating energy-giving or energy-draining foods on a daily basis? Are you getting enough rest? Do you exercise and take care of your body? It may seem like these matters are unrelated to business performance, but your body intelligence absolutely affects your work because it largely determines your feelings, thoughts, self-confidence, state of mind, and energy level.

Top Tip For Improvement: At least once a day, listen to the messages your body is sending you about your health. Actively monitor these signals instead of going on autopilot. Good nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate rest are all key aspects of having a high BQ. Monitoring your weight and making sure you have down time can dramatically benefit the functioning of your brain and the way you perform at work.

What You Really Need To Succeed

It doesn’t matter if you did not receive the best academic training from a top university. A person with less education who has fully developed their EQ, MQ, and BQ can be far more successful than a person with an impressive education who falls short in these other categories.

Yes, it is certainly good to be an intelligent, rational thinker and have a high IQ; this is an important asset. But you must realize that it is not enough. Your IQ will help you personally, but EQ, MQ, and BQ will benefit everyone around you as well. If you can master the complexities of these unique and often underrated forms of intelligence, research tells us you will achieve greater success and be regarded as more professionally competent and capable.
Sleep Allows the Brain to Wash Out Junk
By: Tina Hesman Saey. From https://www.sciencenews.org © October 17, 2013. All rights reserved.

9 Sleep hoses garbage out of the brain, a study of mice finds.

19 The trash, including pieces of proteins that cause Alzheimer’s disease, piles up while the rodents are awake. Sleep opens spigots that bathe the brain in fluids and wash away the potentially toxic buildup, researchers report in the Oct. 18 Science.

58 The discovery may finally reveal why sleep seems mandatory for every animal. It may also shed new light on the causes of neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s diseases.

89 “It’s really an eye-opening and intriguing finding,” says Chiara Cirelli, a sleep researcher at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The results have already led her and other sleep scientists to rethink some of their own findings.

124 Although sleep requirements vary from individual to individual and across species, a complete lack of it is deadly. But no one knows why.

150 One popular idea is that sleep severs weak connections between brain cells and strengthens more robust connections to solidify memories.

170 But a good memory is not a biological imperative. “You don’t die from forgetting what you learned yesterday,” says Maiken Nedergaard, a neuroscientist at the University of Rochester Medical Center in New York who led the study.

Researchers in Nedergaard’s lab stumbled upon sleep’s role in garbage clearance while studying a brain drainage system they described last year. This service, called the glymphatic system, flushes fluid from the brain and spinal cord into the space between brain cells. Ultimately, the fluid and any debris it carries washes into the liver for disposal.

Studying fluid flow in the brain isn’t easy. Lulu Xie in Nedergaard’s lab trained mice to sit quietly on a microscope stage while researchers probed their brains. The mice were so relaxed that they sometimes fell asleep.

When that happened, Nedergaard says, “it was almost like you opened a faucet.” While the mice slept, cerebrospinal fluid rushed into the brain’s interstitial space and washed away debris. When the mice woke up, the faucet dried up and only a trickle of fluid left the brain.

Further experiments revealed that brain cells known as glial cells swell and shrink to control fluid flow. When mice are awake, glial cells expand, reducing the space between brain cells and shutting off fluid flow. During sleep, the cells contract and the faucet opens. The interstitial space changes in volume by at least 60 percent between wake and sleep, the researchers found.

The fluid flow’s on-off switch comes as a surprise because scientists have paid little attention to the area between cells, says Suzana Herculano-Houzel, a neuroscientist at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. “It’s usually disregarded. It’s considered just space.”
Researchers including Randall Bateman, a neurologist and neuroscientist at Washington University in St. Louis, have previously found that some substances build up in the brain during waking hours. He and others have evidence that brain cells just keep pumping out more and more of the stuff the longer a person or animal is awake, and scientists thought that was the reason garbage piled up. One substance that follows this pattern is amyloid-beta, or A-beta, a protein fragment that forms plaques in the brains of people with Alzheimer’s disease.

Levels of A-beta decrease with sleep, but researchers thought that was mostly due to enzymes and brain cells eating away the gunk, and that too little sleep meant the brain’s clean-up crew doesn’t have time to clear away all the mess. Scientists never considered that brain tissue could expand and contract enough to open flood gates and flush away toxic by-products, Bateman says. Now he’s rethinking some of his experiments.

“I’d be a fool not to pay attention to this,” he says. If the results are confirmed in people, it could mean that doctors should time Alzheimer’s treatment to when patients sleep.

Increasing the brain’s ability to rinse itself off may also combat Alzheimer’s and similar diseases, he suggests. But flushing away muck probably won’t eliminate the need for sleep altogether, he says. Even if garbage disposal is sleep’s primary task, he says, “sleep has become such an integral part of life on this planet that it serves additional functions besides clearing substances out of the brain.”
The Pentagon’s Anti-Zombie Plan

By: Stephanie Pappas. From https://www.livescience.com © May 16, 2014. All rights reserved.

Citizens of the United States, breathe easy: The Pentagon has a plan in case of a zombie attack.

Don’t pack your bug-out bag and put up your zombie defenses, yet, however. CONPLAN 888, first uncovered this week by Foreign Policy magazine, is not an indication that the Department of Defense has gone off the deep end. The plan, written in 2011, was part of a training exercise.

Here’s what you need to know.

1. It’s not (exactly) a joke
The U.S. military is not actually expecting the country to be overrun by zombies. But the work and thought that went into making the plan was very real.

“If you suspend reality for a few minutes, this type of training scenario can actually take a very dry, monotonous topic and turn it into something rather enjoyable,” they wrote in a disclaimer to the report.

2. There are eight types of zombies
The anti-zombie plan covers eight threats. Pathogenic zombies are created by infectious agents; think “World War Z.” Radiation zombies are created by extreme doses of radiation. Evil magic zombies are the result of “occult experimentation.” The report notes that military chaplains may be the best defense against these “EMZs,” and that atheists may be most vulnerable to attack.

Space zombies come from space or originate from extraterrestrial toxins. The report notes, “Asteroids and nuclear space radiation that can convert people into zombies can affect any landmass or population on Earth.” Weaponized zombies are bioengineered by hostile forces. Symbiant-induced zombies are similar to pathogen-induced zombies, but they are created by parasitic life forms and don’t kill their host right away.

Vegetarian zombies eat only plant life. They don’t threaten humans directly, but they could destroy basic food crops. The report notes that instead of moaning, “braaaaains,” vegetarian zombies groan, “graaaains.” (And you thought the military didn’t have a sense of humor.)

The final threat noted in the report is chicken zombies.

3. Wait, what? Chicken zombies?
Oh yes. Unlike the other seven potential zombie threats, chicken zombies are “the only proven class of zombie that actually exists,” the report notes. Chicken zombies are old egg-laying hens that are
zombie survival

no longer profitable for poultry farmers to feed and house. The cheapest way to dispose of these birds is to euthanize them and turn them into compost. Farmers gas birds with carbon monoxide to kill them, but survivors are sometimes seen struggling out of piles of dead chickens. A 2006 Associated Press article described the phenomenon and the response from animal-cruelty organizations.

“CZs are simply terrifying to behold and are likely only to make people become vegetarians to protest animal cruelty,” the military report notes. It goes on to add that counter-measures against chicken zombies fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration.

4. The legal status of zombies

Chicken or otherwise, zombies qualify as neither human nor animal life, the report notes. Thus, the military is free to counterattack without concern for U.S. and international laws that regulate treatment of opposing forces. Given the dire nature of the threat, the country would likely be under martial law during a zombie attack, the plan goes on to note. Because zombies can’t be reasoned with and they don’t fear pain or death, riot-control strategies would do no good. Zombies are also unable to swim, the report helpfully notes.

The only way to effectively kill zombies is assumed to be a shot to the head. The only way to dispose of the corpses safely is by burning.

5. Call in the CDC

An effective response to zombie attack will have to involve the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the plan notes. As there is no known zombie medical cure, the CDC is the best source for pushing back against the pandemic. Fortunately, the CDC is one step ahead of the military on this one: In 2011, the agency wrote a blog post on how to prepare for the zombie apocalypse. The plan was to promote real disaster preparedness, but the post went viral.

Humans infected by the zombie plague may overrun hospitals, the military report notes. Other stalwarts of the medical field might help against a zombie attack, however. Hand sanitizers are marketed as killing 99 percent of germs.

“Although none of these products has ever indicated any efficacy against biohazard level 4 pathogens like Ebola, it is entirely possible that such products could limit or delay the spread of pathogen-based zombieism if properly employed,” the report reads.
Circle the best answer to each of the following questions based on the article “The Pentagon’s Anti-Zombie Plan.”

1. The magazine that uncovered the Pentagon’s anti-zombie plan is:
   a. Military Times
   b. Foreign Policy
   c. Department of Defense
   d. none of the above

2. Why did the military choose to write a joint operation plan about zombies instead of real countries?
   a. zombies are a huge part of pop culture
   b. ‘zombies’ is a code word used for enemy soldiers
   c. the public might think plans involving actual countries are real
   d. the public thinks zombies are a real threat and want to see action taken

3. Which movie does the article cite as an example of pathogenic zombies?
   a. Shaun of the Dead
   b. 28 Days Later
   c. The Walking Dead
   d. World War Z

4. Which of the following is not a type of zombie mentioned in the report?
   a. parasitic zombies
   b. evil magic zombies
   c. space zombies
   d. symbiant-induced zombies

5. Vegetarian zombies are dangerous because:
   a. they eat vegetarians and vegans
   b. they eat food crops that humans need
   c. they eat humans who have recently consumed vegetables
   d. they aren’t actually dangerous at all

6. The only type of zombies that actually exist are:
   a. pathogenic zombies
   b. symbiant-induced zombies
   c. chicken zombies
   d. all of the above

7. Which government agency would not be involved in chicken zombie countermeasures?
   a. U.S. Department of Justice
   b. U.S. Department of the Interior
   c. Food and Drug Administration
   d. Homeland Security

8. Zombies qualify as what type of organism?
   a. human
   b. plant
   c. animal
   d. none of the above

9. Which is not a characteristic of zombies according to the report?
   a. feed on human brains
   b. can’t be reasoned with
   c. do not fear pain or death
   d. are unable to swim

10. What common over-the-counter product could be useful in the event of a zombie outbreak?
    a. febreeze
    b. aluminum foil
    c. hand sanitizer
    d. surgical masks

Comprehension Score: ____________
(number correct x 10)
If David Tran were a more conventional CEO, he would be a fixture at conferences, a darling of magazine profiles, and a subject of case studies in the Harvard Business Review. Sriracha hot sauce, made by Huy Fong Foods, which Tran founded 33 years ago in Los Angeles, is one of the coolest brands in town. There are entire cookbooks written to celebrate Sriracha's versatility; memorabilia ranging from iPhone covers to t-shirts and all sorts of other swag; a documentary in the works to chronicle its rise; and innumerable imitators. Sriracha sales last year reached some 20 million bottles to the tune of $60 million dollars, percentage sales growth is in the double digits each year, and it does all this without spending a cent on advertising.

Yet Tran shuns publicity, professes not to care about profits, hardly knows where his sauces are sold, and probably leaves millions of dollars on the table every year. His dream, Tran tells Quartz, “was never to become a billionaire.” It is “to make enough fresh chili sauce so that everyone who wants Huy Fong can have it. Nothing more.”

Product before profit

Today hot sauce is an emerging global business. The industry, which is among the 10 fastest growing in the US, now rakes in over $1 billion a year in global sales. But when Tran arrived in Los Angeles back in 1980, he was both jobless and hot-sauce-less. Having recently arrived from Vietnam, Tran found it near impossible to find a spicy additive worthy of his palate. The Southeast Asian community in Los Angeles, he soon realized, was suffering from the same hot sauce withdrawal.

In a matter of months, he had arrived at his rendition of Sriracha, a version of the Thai sauce made with hybrid jalapeño peppers (red or sometimes orange in color), vinegar, sugar, salt, and garlic, and was delivering it to local markets throughout the city. Soon thereafter, he was packaging it into its now unmistakable clear bottles with the rooster logo and green caps.

But the only hope he ever harbored was to provide Vietnamese immigrants with a hot sauce worthy of their pho soup. Growing a bona fide business wasn’t an afterthought—it wasn’t a thought at all. “I started the business with my eyes closed. There were no expectations at all,” he said.

He still runs it in the same way: with his eyes closed. He says he has not once hiked the wholesale price at which he sells Sriracha—a number he won’t share with anyone—no matter that inflation has more than tripled food prices since 1980. He can’t tell you where Sriracha is being sold, because all he knows is that Huy Fong has ten distributors, to whom he has handed off his hot sauce for over 10 years now. “We don’t have a detailed record on where it’s being sold,” Tran admits. Griffin Hammond, who is making the documentary about Sriracha, tells Quartz that as far as he knows, Sriracha is available in the US, Canada and Europe. “But it’s probably sold elsewhere, too,” he conceded. “At the very least, I know that on the bottle there is English, Chinese, Vietnamese, French and Spanish.”

Tran also learned only recently that Sriracha has become a popular ingredient among sushi chefs, who have been using it to spice up spicy...
tuna rolls for years. “I didn’t know until one of my distributors told me,” Tran said. In fact, says Hammond, it’s “almost always the spicy ingredient in spicy tuna rolls these days. It probably makes up a pretty significant portion of their sales.”

Sushi chefs aren’t the only ones. Restaurant chain P.F. Chang, which has 204 branches in the US and worldwide, offers Sriracha-flavored dishes. Chef David Chang (no relation to P.F. Chang’s) has bottles of Sriracha on every countertop of his Momofuku Noodle Bar restaurant in New York. Bon Appétit magazine declared the sauce the ingredient of the year back in 2010, and Cook’s Illustrated called it the best-tasting hot sauce in 2012. Though it didn’t win, Sriracha was one of three new flavors chosen in Lays potato chips’ new flavor contest last year.

Tran is, of course, flattered by all the fandom. He spends time every day reading through bucket-loads of emails, the bulk of which chronicle new and often unthinkable ways in which patrons use his chili sauce. One, he recalled, involved macaroni and cheese, a pairing Tran has never tried—he still almost exclusively eats it on his pho.

Chili-driven growth

Demand is such that Huy Fong—which also makes Chili Garlic and Sambal Oelek, two significantly less popular hot sauces—recently purchased a new 650,000-square-foot (60,000 sq m) factory just to process and bottle its Sriracha. It’s quite the upgrade: the current facility produces 3,000 bottles every hour, 24 hours a day and six days a week, and the new one will have two-and-a-half times that capacity. But the company’s biggest obstacle to growth isn’t manufacturing space. It’s raw materials.

Most commercially distributed hot sauces are made with dried chilies to make it easier to harvest, process and bottle the product at scale. McIlhenny, the maker of Tabasco, for example, buys its chilies from producers around the globe. But Sriracha is—and always always has been—made with fresh chilies. It’s what separates it from the competition, says Tran.

His unwillingness to compromise on quality means that the chilies for Sriracha need to be processed within a day of being picked. So Huy Fong’s Rosemead factory sits only an hour away from Underwood Family Farms, which has been the company’s only chili supplier for the past 20 years. Its new plant in Irwindale is only a few miles further away. Finding new land fit for further chili harvesting has proved difficult—the land needs not only to be vast, but also fit for the purpose. “I can’t buy land that’s being used to harvest oranges,” Tran explained. “It’s not right for chilies.”
Confident Multitaskers Are the Most Dangerous Behind the Wheel

By: Daisy Grewal. Scientific American © November 5, 2013. All rights reserved.

7 How good are you at multi-tasking?

15 The way you answer that question may tell you more than you think. According to recent research, the better people think they are at multitasking, the worse they actually are at it.

49 And the more that you think you are good at it, the more likely you are to multi-task when driving. Maybe the problem of distracted driving has less to do with the widespread use of smartphones and more to do with our inability to recognize our own limits.

95 A study by David Sanbonmatsu and his colleagues looked at the relationship between people’s beliefs about their own multi-tasking ability and their likelihood of using a cell phone when driving. Importantly, the study also measured people’s actual multi-tasking abilities. The researchers found that people who thought they were good at multi-tasking were actually the worst at it. They were also the most likely to report frequently using their cell phones when driving. This may help explain why warning people about the dangers of cell phone use when driving hasn’t done much to curb the behavior.

194 The study is another reminder that we are surprisingly poor judges of our own abilities.

207 Research has found that people overestimate their own qualities in a number of areas including intelligence, physical health, and popularity. Furthermore, the worse we are at something, the more likely we may be to judge ourselves as competent at it.

246 Psychologists David Dunning and Justin Kruger have studied how incompetence, ironically, is often the result of not being able to accurately judge one’s own incompetence.

In one study, they found that people who scored the lowest on tests of grammar and logic were the most likely to overestimate their own abilities. The reverse was also true: the more competent people were most likely to underestimate their abilities. And multitasking may be just yet another area where incompetence breeds over-confidence.

Talking on a cell phone is one of the more popular, and dangerous, ways to multi-task in the modern world. Some states have enacted laws and fines to deter the behavior, but the issue is not without controversy. People who support the ban of cell phones when driving argue that phones are especially distracting to drivers in a way that other activities are not. Those against widespread bans point out that multi-tasking when driving is nothing new, and the number of fatal accidents from “distracted driving” could be the result of any number of distractions including eating, talking with a fellow passenger, or fiddling with the radio.

In Sanbonmatsu and his colleagues’ study, three hundred participants completed a series of questionnaires that asked about their driving habits, their beliefs about their ability to successfully multi-task, and their tendencies toward impulsivity and thrill-seeking. In addition, participants completed something called the Operation Span task, a test which measures multi-tasking ability. During the test, participants were presented with a series of letters to memorize. In between being presented with the letters, they were asked to complete math problems. A person’s performance on the Operation Span task is based both on the number of letters...
The researchers found that the people most likely to report using their cell phones while driving were the least likely to perform well on the Operation Span task. They were also the most likely to express confidence in their ability to successfully multi-task. (The researchers also found a connection to personality: those most likely to use their cell phones while driving scored highest on measures of impulsivity and thrill-seeking.) An important limitation of the study is that the data are correlational rather than causal in nature, however the study clearly demonstrates that many of us may have a blind spot when it comes to judging our ability to successfully talk on the phone while driving.

Given these results, what might be effective at stopping people from multi-tasking when behind the wheel? Probably not more scare tactics. After all, the problem is not that people don’t recognize the dangers of multi-tasking when driving—rather, the problem is that we only think it’s risky when other people do it.

Instead of more laws and fines, the government may want to send a message that most people no longer think it is appropriate to use cell phones when driving. If people buy-in to this message about what others are doing, they may be less likely to do it themselves. Even if it is only really a problem when the other guy does it.

Maybe the best way to curb the distracting driving would be to make it a socially undesirable thing to do. Psychologist Robert Cialdini, a leading researcher on the topic of persuasion, has shown that we are more likely to do something undesirable when we see a lot of other people do it too. In one famous set of experiments, Cialdini demonstrated how people are more likely to litter in a parking lot that’s already covered with flyers, rather than one that is free of litter. When we hear about the widespread use of cell phone use when driving, we may actually be more likely to do it ourselves.
Why That Video Went Viral
By: Natalie Kitroeff. The New York Times. © May 19, 2014. All rights reserved.

There it was, virtual gold: a video of a firefighter resuscitating a kitten trapped in a smoky home.

Neetzan Zimmerman, then an editor at Gawker, a news and gossip site, knew it was destined for viral magic. But before he could publish a post about it, his editor made a request. Mr. Zimmerman was to include the epilogue omitted by most every other outlet: The kitten died of smoke inhalation soon after being saved.

For telling the whole story, Mr. Zimmerman paid a price.

“That video did tremendously well for practically everyone who posted it,” he recalled, “except Gawker.”

Why should one sad detail mean the difference between an online megahit and a dud? What makes content go viral?

Social sharing is powerful enough to topple dictatorships and profitable enough to merit multibillion-dollar investments. But scientists are only beginning to explore the psychological motivations that turn a link into “click bait” and propel a piece of content to Internet fame.

Their research may have significant implications for the media and advertising businesses, whose profits hinge on winning the cutthroat race for the attention of Internet users worldwide. Already, some notions of the ingredients in this modern alchemy are beginning to emerge.

If you want to melt the Internet, best to traffic in emotion, researchers have found. The emotional response can be happy or sad, but the more intense it is, the more likely the story is to be passed along.

In a study led by Rosanna Guadagno, a social psychologist at the University of Texas at Dallas, 256 participants much preferred to forward a funny video than one of a man treating his own spider bite. But they were likely to share any video that evoked an intense emotional response, Dr. Guadagno found.

Similarly, Jonah Berger and Katherine Milkman, professors at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, have found that uplifting articles are more likely than disheartening ones to land on the most-emailed list at the New York Times. But even stories evoking rage or other negative, strong emotions are emailed by readers more often than ones that are simply depressing.

“People share things they have strong emotional reactions to, especially strong positive reactions,” Dr. Guadagno said.

Sharing is not just how information ripples across communities; it’s also how emotions are disseminated. Recently, analysts at Facebook, Yale and the University of California, San Diego, reviewed more than a billion posts by Facebook users, and found that when users vented on a rainy day, their friends in other cities posted bleak status updates more frequently than normal.

But positive status updates were even more contagious, prompting upbeat updates from friends at even greater rates. The conclusion: Online, as in real life, feelings can be caught like the flu.

The most shared post at Upworthy, a site for shareable content, is a video about a boy who died of cancer, but not before producing a hit song and performing sold-out shows. The post has racked
up nearly 20 million views, thanks in part to the type of methodically calculated headline that has become the site’s trademark: “This Amazing Kid Got to Enjoy 19 Awesome Years on This Planet. What He Left Behind Is Wondtacular.”

“Even though it was a really sad story, it was a story that gave you something to do with that sadness,” said Upworthy’s analytics czar, Daniel Mintz.

For many people, sharing seems to be a way to process the highs and lows they feel while consuming content online. Mr. Berger, who studied the Times articles, conducted a follow-up study in which he instructed one group of students to jog in place for 60 seconds before going online, while a comparison group rested before logging on.

The runners were more than twice as likely as the sedentary group to email the same article, he found. Why? Because they were already physiologically aroused, Mr. Berger theorizes, and forwarding or liking something serves as a form of release.

“Arousal is an aversive state, so people want to get out of it by sharing,” Mr. Berger said. Misery loves company, and so does any sort of deeply affecting feeling.

But pressing the share button can also be driven by ego. Constructing and refining an online persona has become a daily task for many, experts say; posting a link that evokes laughter or gasps can confer status on the sharer.

No surprise, then, that data recently compiled by Chartbeat, a company that measures online traffic, suggests that people often post articles on Twitter that they haven’t actually read.

“What we found is that there is no relationship whatsoever with the amount that the article is shared and the amount of engaged time and attention given to that article,” said Tony Haile, Chartbeat’s chief executive.

Like a bookshelf stocked with classic tomes that have never been opened, the links that adorn Facebook walls and Twitter accounts are markers of the people we aspire to be. And online media companies are increasingly aware that their role is to package content that will make each member of the masses who disseminates it burnish an online reputation while feeling, oddly, unique.

Mr. Zimmerman, formerly of Gawker, saw it as his job to help the reader feel like “that guy who is always plugged in and tapped into what’s going on.”

“People build their online identities by sharing,” he said. “They want people to think of them a certain way.”
Circle the best answer to each of the following questions based on the article “Why That Video Went Viral.”

1. What two media websites are featured in the article?
   a. Buzzfeed and Upworthy  
   b. Mashable and Buzzfeed  
   c. Gawker and Upworthy  
   d. Upworthy and YouTube

2. One of the best ways to get attention on the internet is to “traffic in . . .”
   a. scientific research  
   b. emotion  
   c. financial insight  
   d. happiness

3. Rosanna Guadagno is a social psychologist at which university?
   a. Harvard University  
   b. University of Colorado at Boulder  
   c. University of Texas at Dallas  
   d. University of California, Berkeley

4. What types of articles are likely to end up on most emailed list?
   a. disheartening  
   b. eye-opening  
   c. health-related  
   d. uplifting

5. In one study, when Facebook users vented about a rainy day, their friends in other cities ... 
   a. also posted bleak status updates  
   b. told them to cheer up  
   c. liked their statuses more often  
   d. posted more statuses about the weather

6. The most shared post on Upworthy is about:
   a. a heroic cat in California  
   b. an inspiring boy who died of cancer  
   c. a flash mob in a train station  
   d. an outspoken human rights activist

7. What is the job title of Upworthy’s Daniel Mintz?
   a. chief content officer  
   b. analytics czar  
   c. editor-in-chief  
   d. staff writer

8. Experts say that sharing a link does what for the sharer?
   a. feeds ego and confers status on them  
   b. allows them to gain followers  
   c. affirms their opinions and feelings  
   d. creates a separate online persona

9. Data from Chartbeat shows that Twitter users often post articles . . .
   a. that can be read in 30 seconds or less  
   b. that contain infographics  
   c. that they haven’t actually read  
   d. that have a good chance of being retweeted

10. According to the article, people build their online identities by:
    a. posting often  
    b. venting their frustrations to the world  
    c. uploading a lot of pictures  
    d. sharing

Comprehension Score: ____________
(number correct x 10)
Prepare
Are you ready?
• Check your attitudes and beliefs
• Get curious and ask yourself questions
Is your physical space ready?
• Good lighting
• Seated comfortably
• Mind Map started with colored pens
• Uncluttered area

Q-Up
Are you focused?
• Pull up
• Picture
• Breathe
• Release

Super-Scan
Are you previewing the reading?
• Move quickly
• Scan pictures, graphs, titles, headers, important words
• Super-scan entire reading

Read
Are you using your visual guide?
• Read the text, line-by-line, using your visual guide

Review
Are you reviewing what you just read?
• Go over your Mind Map out loud or with a friend
• Tell back what you just read

Use this as a reminder of the Quantum Reading Process. Once you practice this sequence a few times, it will be quick and natural. Say this to yourself or out loud as you get ready to read:

Attitude check!
Q-Up
Pull Up
Picture
Breathe
Release

Open your eyes and use your visual guide to Quantum Read.
The 5 steps of the Quantum Reading process:

The powerful reading belief I will use: ____________________________

___________________________________________________________
### Quantum Reading Speed Chart

#### Failure Leads to Success: 850 Words

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#### Zombies / Going Viral: 900 Words

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failure leads to success

Speed: ______ words per minute
Comprehension: ______

zombie survival

Speed: ______ words per minute
Comprehension: ______

going viral

Speed: ______ words per minute
Comprehension: ______