



Seth-Aaron Martinez¹ 

Sumaya Ali

Karyna Mangusheva

**Boise State University, College of Education,
Boise, Idaho, USA**

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Expertise in the Workplace: The Lifelong Pursuit of Eminence in Professional Practice

Extended summary

This extended summary depicts the primary goal of our article, the significance and context of the problem, a precise description of the methodological approach, the most significant results and conclusions, and we close offering several pedagogical implications.

Goal of the Article


The extant literatures highlight that the path to eminence in a domain is characterized by a combination of the ability to overcome adversity (i.e. resilience and grit), extensive and deliberate practice, psychosocial skill development, and an amount of innate talent.

Significance of the Problem

Achieving eminent status is rare and is, therefore, under-researched compared to the scholarship for the expertise levels of novice, competent, and expert. Researching eminence presents a host of challenges, primarily due to the subjective nature of the concept and the varying criteria used to define and evaluate it. Eminence is often defined by a combination of quantitative measures, such as citation counts and awards, and qualitative factors, such as impact and influence within a discipline, which creates difficulties in establishing consistent metrics across fields. Hence, this inconsistency in determining what constitutes 'eminence' renders comparative analysis complex and often inadequate.

One significant issue that complicates the study of eminence is the reliance on historical data and their interpretation. Historical analyses of eminent individuals often reveal biases in what types of achievement are recognized and celebrated. This limitation not only affects the

¹ SethAMartinez@boisestate.edu;

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0583-3744>

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generalizability of the findings but also reinforces existing hierarchies and undervalues contributions from diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, while eminent status might suggest recognition from peers, the true influence and achievements may be obscured or entirely negated in studies relying solely on conventional metrics.

Conceptual Approach

We integrate the literatures of psychology, adult learning, and neuroscience to set forth the principles for achieving professional eminence in workplace settings. Our synthesis is the result of a literature review that explored expertise development. Our review included the topics: expertise, skill development, talent development.

Pedagogical & Training Implications

Training for eminence requires a multifaceted approach that integrates talent development, psychometric assessments, proactive educational practices, and the cultivation of psychosocial skills. Eminence requires not only innate talent but also a strategic framework for development throughout an individual's life. A central theme in achieving eminence is the recognition of distinct phases in the development of talent. To train for eminence, one must move beyond mere participation and expertise. It necessitates stages of rigorous practice and sustained engagement within one's field, which in turn fosters innovative contributions that can greatly benefit society.

In conclusion, training for eminence involves an integrated strategy that encompasses skill development, resource utilization, and the cultivation of psychosocial competencies. By fostering environments focused on continuous growth and innovation, while also emphasizing personal characteristics and educational capital, individuals can position themselves on pathways leading toward eminence.

Keywords: expertise, eminence, human resource development, talent development

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