

Three Lessons from an Unlikely Superstar

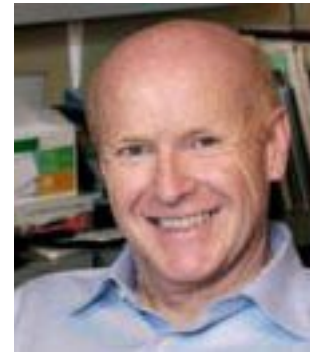
By Dan Richards

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Jeremy Lin's remarkable rise from obscurity to star point guard for the New York Knicks has been well documented. Even with his recent season ending knee surgery, Lin's impact over the past few months has few precedents.

But his story is not about the failure by NBA teams to recognize Lin's potential; rather it's about three key traits that enabled Lin to elevate his play far beyond what anyone in the basketball world expected. And those traits apply to advisors just as much as they do to NBA stars.



The Linsanity story is a classic rags to riches tale ... he wasn't recruited by any university out of high school, was undrafted two years ago out of Harvard and cut by two NBA teams.

And then on February 4 he burst out of nowhere with a 25-point explosion as point guard for the Knicks and led the Knicks to a remarkable turnaround..

A recent *New York Times* article explained why every scout on every NBA team overlooked Lin's ability and missed him in the draft. Quite simply, the Jeremy Lin who i starred for the Knicks this season is entirely different from the Jeremy Lin who graduated from Harvard two years ago.

Three keys to success

The Times piece argued that Lin succeeded through "*determination, self-belief, perseverance and hard work.*" In the two last two years, he completely reworked his shot, dramatically increased his strength, radically improved his court vision and added a remarkable 3.5 inches to his vertical leap.

Let's take a look at the three elements that turned Lin into a star:

1. Conviction, confidence and determination:

Lin refused to be discouraged. Even as he saw classmates prosper on Wall Street, he persisted through disappointments and setbacks. He had a "*refuse to lose*" men-



tality and absolute certainty in his ability to make it in the NBA that carried him through the frustration and disappointment of getting cut.

2. Hard work

Lin stood out for his persistence and work ethic. He was consistently first in and last out for practices, arriving at 8:30 for a noon practice. He didn't just have conviction and confidence – he backed it up by effort.

3. A relentless focus on improvement

This is what impressed me the most – lots of people have conviction and are prepared to work hard, but lack the drive to constantly improve. Lin spent hours studying tapes of the best players, looking for ways to upgrade his play. And when reviewing his own performance, he didn't look for instances of great passes or successful shots – rather he focused on examples where he'd turned the ball over or his shot had missed.

And he also sought outside assistance – help on building muscle and strength, help on reworking his shot and help on improving his passing. He spent hours on the court with coaching staff, fine tuning and tweaking his game.

Applying Lin's success principles to your business

Few of us can spend hours working one on one with coaches to improve our performance. And fewer still have Jeremy Lin's native ability as a starting point.

But there are hundreds of basketball players whose athletic ability is equal to or superior to Lin's. What they lack and what separates Lin is his success formula of determination, hard work and focus on improvement.

We can apply this same success formula to our own business. Start by picking one thing to focus on for the balance of 2012. Some candidates:

- Building deeper relationships with your top 10 clients
- Establishing referral relationship with a high-profile accountant or lawyer
- Dramatically improving the productivity of your team
- Shifting the direction of your business towards fee-based or managed money
- Increasing the number of serious prospects in your pipeline
- Building your profile and becoming the go-to resource among a key target market

Once you've picked that one thing to work on, apply Jeremy Lin's formula of determination, work ethic and focus on improvement.



Start every day by asking this question: What am I going to do today to improve and to advance my success in this one key area? If you do that and that alone, then Jeremy Lin's success will have helped you move your business forward.

In the meantime, here's the New York Times [article](#) on Lin.

Dan Richards is a top-rated presenter at advisor conferences and an award winning instructor in the MBA program at the University of Toronto, as well as author of Getting Clients Keeping Clients: The Essential Guide for Tomorrow's Financial Advisor. To learn more about his conference keynotes and workshops, email dan@clientinsights.ca.

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