

# The Little Book of

# Talent



**52** Tips for  
Improving Skills

**DANIEL COYLE**

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## About the Book

- Don't fall for the prodigy myth
- Take off your watch
- Embrace struggle
- Take a nap
- To learn it more deeply, teach it

*The Little Book of Talent* is packed full of 52 simple, practical, proven tips that will help improve any skill. Whether you want a better singing voice, a more powerful golf swing or success in the business world, *The Little Book of Talent's* method will help you realise your potential.

## About the Author

DANIEL COYLE is the author of *The Talent Code*, *Hardball: A Season in the Projects*, and the *New York Times* bestseller *Lance Armstrong's War*, and is a contributing editor for *Outside* magazine. He divides his time between Cleveland, Ohio, and Homer, Alaska, with his wife, Jen, and their four children.

Also by Daniel Coyle

*Hardball: A Season in the Projects*

*Waking Samuel*

*Lance Armstrong's War*

*The Talent Code*

*The*  
**LITTLE BOOK**  
*of*  
**TALENT**

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52

TIPS *for* IMPROVING SKILLS

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Daniel Coyle

rh  
BUSINESS  
BOOKS



*For Jen*

*We are what we repeatedly do.  
Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.*  
—ARISTOTLE

## INTRODUCTION

### **The Story of the Little Book**

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A few years back, on assignment for a magazine, I began visiting talent hotbeds: tiny places that produce large numbers of world-class performers in sports, art, music, business, math, and other disciplines. Places such as:

- A ramshackle Moscow tennis club that had, over the previous three years, produced more Top 20 women players than the entire United States.
- A humble Adirondacks music camp where students accomplish one year's worth of progress in seven weeks.
- A San Mateo, California, inner-city charter school that, in four years, transformed a student population perennially ranked at the bottom of state math scores into one that scored in the ninety-sixth percentile.
- A Dallas vocal studio that has, over the past decade, developed millions of dollars' worth of pop-music talent.
- A ski academy in Vermont with an enrollment of a hundred that has produced fifty Olympic skiers over the past forty years.

My research also took me to a different sort of hotbed: the laboratories and research centers around the country investigating the new science of talent development. For centuries, people have instinctively assumed that talent is largely innate, a gift given out at birth. But now, thanks to