

# Persistence, Persistence, and More Persistence!

**Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser**

- \* What is SUCCESS?
- \* How do we define/determine SUCCESS in our band world?
- \* Moreover, how do we ATTAIN SUCCESS?
- \* What is the pathway one must traverse to achieve the elusive destination we know as SUCCESS?

To borrow an equation from Angela Duckworth's wonderful book "GRIT":

$$\text{TALENT} + \text{EFFORT} = \text{SKILLS}$$
$$\text{SKILLS} + \text{EFFORT} = \text{ACHIEVEMENT}$$

As we can quickly ascertain, the common denominator is EFFORT. One can be "talented," one can be "skilled," but without the magic elixir of EFFORT the "achievement" (whatever it may be for each of us) will not be realized.

It would be logical (then) to simply conclude, "If I dedicate myself to a rigorous schedule of EFFORTING, my personal and professional goals will come to fruition." However, we all know - all too well - there is far more to it. It is not a quick and easy trip from *idea* to *outcome*.

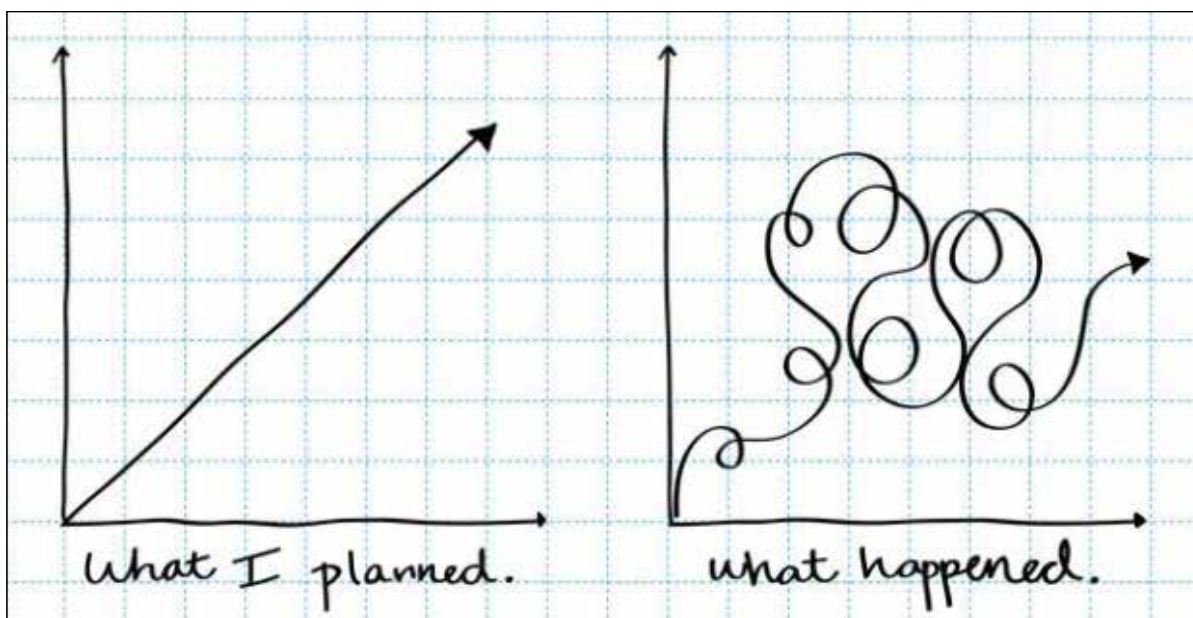
In fact, rarely does the planned course unfold as it was originally conceived. Please refer to the illustration below.

When things go awry, it is tempting to throw in the towel and turn our backs on the self-assigned goal(s)...even claiming (rationalizing!) that the original idea was not worthy and/or certainly not achievable. However what about those who always are at the pinnacle of their game? How do they get there and stay there? Are they always the benefactors

of good luck? What do they know/do that ensures their ongoing high level achievements?

Might I suggest all outstanding accomplishments are fueled by PERSISTENCE, or - if you will - "Giving up giving up." Are the many master teachers TALENTED? Of course they are. Are they SKILLED? Absolutely. Above all, they are PERSISTENT. They don't know any special shortcut or some secret code; they just stay "on it" and "at it" until they arrive at the road sign that reads: ACCOMPLISHMENT/SUCCESS!

**Dr. Tim will  
present "Mirror,  
Mirror on the  
Wall..."  
on July 26, 3 p.m.  
at the convention**



"What I planned. What happened." cartoon was created by Julia Gamolina

“The Iceberg Illusion” below may best explain what one can expect:



The Iceberg Illusion was created by Sylvia Duckworth

On my desk is a framed-quote from Calvin Coolidge; it serves as a BOLD reminder of the answer to the quartet of inquiries at the beginning of this article.

***Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not. Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not. Unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not. The world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.***

Time-and-time again such wisdom has served as a WAKE-UP call (a slap-in-the-face, if you will!), particularly when there was the temptation to retreat-in-defeat. For our programs, for our students, and for ourselves; PERSISTENCE IS THE KEY.

“STRIKE UP THE BAND!”