



GRIT: THE WILL TO OVERCOME

A characteristic that winners share and how to instil and nurture it in your team

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OUR EXPERTS



DR DAVID BATMAN

Dr David Batman is a member of the Science Advisory Board for Virgin Pulse Institute. He has been a medical practitioner for more than 40 years and a registered Specialist Occupational Health Consultant for the last 30 years.

Before joining Virgin Pulse, he was GCC's Chief Medical Officer. And previously, Head of Occupational Health and Safety for Nestlé in the UK and Ireland.

His expertise covers risk assessments, health surveillance, return to work and rehabilitation procedures; he has a special interest in psychological health at work.



DR OLIVIA SACKETT

Dr Olivia Sackett is Virgin Pulse's Data Scientist. She has a doctorate in biostatistics and population research, as well as experience consulting for business and government.

Her work has also been featured in internationally peer-reviewed journals.

At Virgin Pulse, she successfully combines her passion for big data with the drive to have a positive impact on the world.

GRIT REPORT

Grit has been defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals¹.

In simple terms, it's the ability to stick at something until you succeed.

This report explores the connection between grit and high performance in the workplace. It is based on a focused study of 1,590 employees, who completed the Global Challenge 100 Day Journey in 2015, and answered questions about their levels of grit.

It compares the health, psychological wellbeing and performance data collected from these employees during the Global Challenge program against their scores on the Global Challenge Grit Scale.

THIS REPORT ANSWERS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. Is grit related to health, wellbeing and performance?
2. Can we increase grit by increasing health and wellbeing?

¹ Duckworth AL. *Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals*. University of Pennsylvania. 2007

THE STUBBORN REFUSAL TO QUIT

The term grit – or resilience – describes how easily an individual is able to rebound when faced with an obstacle or difficulty. While intelligence is a significant factor in success, grit also has a major impact¹.

Grit has been described as, “The stubborn refusal to quit.”²

Grit can also be the foundation of grand achievements.

One of the world’s most prolific inventors, Thomas Edison, was known for his incredible resilience.

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

Thomas Edison

His obsessive commitment to developing the light bulb led to thousands of failures, but he didn’t see it that way.

“I have not failed,” he said. “I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” He went on to successfully produce an invention that would change the world.

Edison’s outlook is the definition of true grit.

1 Duckworth AL. *Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals*. University of Pennsylvania. 2007

2 Jonah Lehrer. 2012.

THE POWER OF STICKING AT IT

Grit has been defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals¹. In simple terms, it's the ability to stick at something until you succeed.

Cultivating grit in employees is not only good people management, it's also smart business practice,

according to the Global Challenge's Data Scientist, Dr Olivia Sackett.

Research shows that grit is highly predictive of achievement.³ If you want to build a team of people who will stick with a project, fight through the obstacles and keep going until they find a solution;

the characteristic you need to focus on building is grit.

Grit is found in every great leader and is critical to accomplishing any significant goal. People who have grit are very valuable to an organisation because they achieve bigger goals – and more of them.³

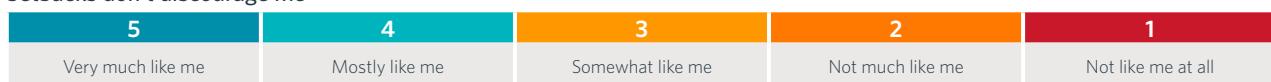
THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE GRIT SCALE

The Global Challenge Grit Scale was developed in consultation with Professor Paul Fombelle, from Northeastern University, Boston, USA. It uses the following five statements to score an employee's grit and resilience. Employees were asked how well those statements described them on a scale of 1-5, from 'not like me at all' to 'very much like me'.

Indicatively, the higher the score, the more personal grit and resilience an individual is deemed to have. Our data will show that employees' grit score improved over the course of the 100 Day Journey.

FIGURE 1 – GLOBAL CHALLENGE GRIT SCALE

Setbacks don't discourage me



People would say that I have iron self-discipline



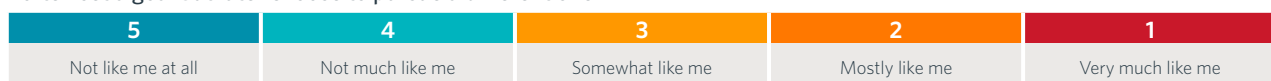
I finish whatever I begin



I am good at resisting temptation



I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one



Average Grit score is an average of the 5 questions (max. 5 – min. 1)

¹ Duckworth AL. *Grit: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals*. University of Pennsylvania. 2007

³ Stoltz PG. *Grit: The New Science of What it Takes to Persevere, Flourish, Succeed*. Climb Strong Press. 2014.

SUCCEED AGAINST THE ODDS

“Managers with high levels of grit are willing to take action and fight the status quo to get a better outcome.”

Dr David Batman

High levels of emotional and physical resilience empower employees to cope better with life events, which can allow them to succeed against the odds, according to Virgin Pulse Science Advisory Board member, Dr David Batman.

With more than 40 years of clinical experience, Dr Batman is a registered Consultant Specialist in Occupational Health with particular expertise in psychological health at work. He says grit is a set of personal behaviours that allow individuals to adapt to difficult situations - whether at home or work.

“Grit is often characterised as inner strength, fortitude or hardiness,” Dr Batman said.

“A resilient person is able to cope with challenging situations and to spring back and often succeed against what might seem to be insurmountable odds. In a world that has changed dramatically

since the financial crisis of 2008, where uncertainty and change have become the norm, grit has never been more important.”

By contrast, low levels of grit can lead to absenteeism, poor performance, ill-health - and loss of talent. It's important to look out for early warning signs, according to Dr Batman.

DR BATMAN SAYS THESE ISSUES CAN BE GROUPED INTO FOUR PRIMARY CATEGORIES

Struggling employees may exhibit:



Gradual changes in performance



Changes in attendance



Reduced concentration and memory



Increased accidents

GRIT CAN BE DEVELOPED

Far from being a fixed attribute, a person’s level of grit can be modified, according to Dr Sackett. **This means resilient employees are not just born that way – they can develop the skill.**

This knowledge is valuable for businesses because it means they can potentially transform their entire workforce into a tougher, more determined group of employees.

Dr Sackett explained: “In studying the 1,590 employees, we discovered that grit was strongly related to health,

wellbeing (a composite of sleep quality, happiness and stress) and productivity. As grit levels increased, so did health, wellbeing and productivity levels.

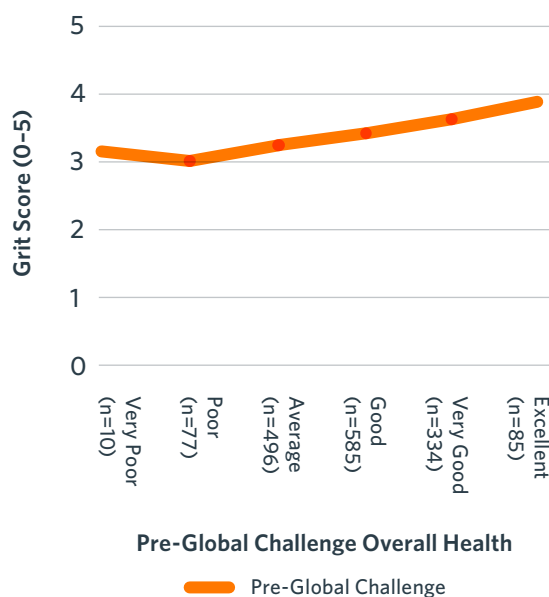
“But most importantly, we found that after completing the Global Challenge, the average grit score increased – regardless of employees’ initial levels of health, wellbeing and productivity. This shows that the program was broadly effective; not just for those who were already physically and psychologically in good shape to begin with,” Dr Sackett said.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GRIT AND OVERALL HEALTH

Figure 2 shows that higher levels of grit are associated with higher levels of overall health.

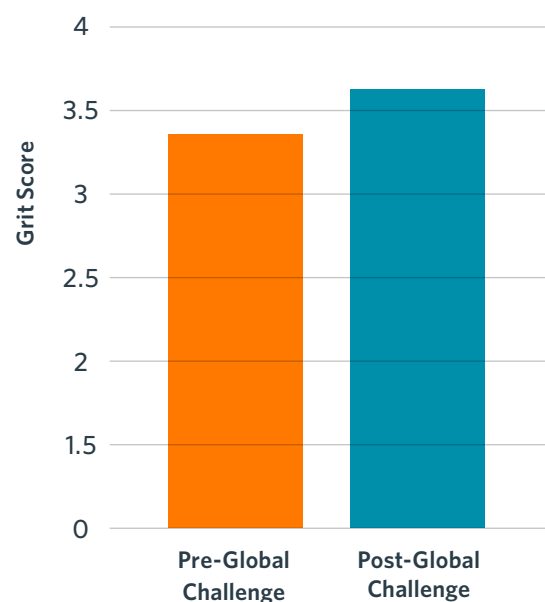
Figure 3 shows that after the Global Challenge, grit levels were 4.3% higher than before the Global Challenge.

FIGURE 2 – GRIT AND OVERALL HEALTH



(Figure 2; R-square=0.94, p=0.004)

FIGURE 3 – GRIT PRE AND POST GLOBAL CHALLENGE



(Figure 3; p<0.001)

TAKE ACTION FOR YOUR TEAM

Helping your employees become more resilient is simple when you understand the connection between body and mind, according to Dr Batman.

“Our study clearly showed that if you can improve the health and wellbeing of your employees, you can have a direct impact on their grit levels,” Dr Batman said.

“People need education, motivation and encouragement to make lasting positive changes to their lifestyles. The Global Challenge simplifies the science behind this and makes it easy and fun so you can help to transform the health and wellbeing of your team.

“This is a great outcome for everyone because you not only create happier, healthier individuals, you also create stronger, more determined and focused employees.”

○ HELP YOUR TEAM DEVELOP MORE GRIT

[Find out more](#) about the Global Challenge program and how it can transform your employees.

ABOUT VIRGIN PULSE

Virgin Pulse, part of Sir Richard Branson's famed Virgin Group, helps employers create workforces that are happier, healthier and ultimately more productive in all aspects of their personal and professional lives.

The company's modern, mobile-first platform delivers a personalised user experience that utilises gamification to engage users in building habits that inspire meaningful and measurable change across individuals and the business.

By helping employees thrive at work and in all aspects of life, Virgin Pulse is helping change lives and businesses for good.

Unlike narrowly focused employee health solutions, Virgin Pulse's solutions span the full wellbeing spectrum - from traditional wellness to strategic wellbeing - providing organisations with solutions that are appropriate for them today and tomorrow.

More than 2,500 organisations representing many of the Fortune 500 and Best Places to Work have selected Virgin Pulse's solutions to engage their workforces and drive their businesses forward.

FIND OUT MORE AT:

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