

## Do You Have Grit?

Research shows successful leaders have grit, and no, it's not the kind under their fingernails.

Some people are just successful! It seems like everything they do — every rebrand or new project — turns to gold. Why is that? Why are some people able to turn around a seemingly disastrous situation or take on a new project or business venture with apparent ease and lead it into a success? Or, what about the person who seems to be handed a raw deal but comes out of it looking like an ace?

To me, that's impressive — the proverbial falling into a pile of cow manure and stepping out smelling like a rose. How do they do it? According to researcher, Angela Duckworth, those successful, dedicated types probably have a high level of grit.

I really love that quote because it plays well in agriculture. As business owners, farmers and cattle producers, we're tied to our "ultimate concern" because it's a business we've built; it's something we've literally sweated over, and often, what we do in our industry heavily defines what we believe about ourselves.

### Test your mettle

But, when things get hard, do we have the staying power to make it through? There's a quiz that might help you find out (or help identify a potential hire's 'grit factor'). I decided to take the 10-question GRIT Scale quiz (<https://angeladuckworth.com/grit-scale/>) to

in particular, I think you can be too stubborn about mid-level and low-level goals. You can throw good money after bad on particular projects that will never make sense."

Now that quote makes sense, especially in agriculture, especially in the cases where we continue to do the same things over and over without evaluating them for an opportunity to keep, cull or improve. So, being too gritty can literally clog things up if you let it. Yet, what about the opposite — working with people who just don't seem to have enough resolve? Can you get more grit? And, is more grit trainable? Duckworth seems to think you can improve, especially by improving focus on completion of tasks and projects. Yes, if everyone would just take on his/her own work and complete it on time, things would be great.

Reflecting on grit, the lack of it and the ways to improve it, here's what I learned: the power of grit is important and it's important to know an individual's grit quotient when you're building leaders on your team or adding new hires. So, next time you consider a new hire, take a look at their grit to see if they are a fit.

As owners and leaders, many of us may believe that we have that "ultimate concern," that we hold the clear vision about where we want to take our lives and businesses. But, what about others in our sphere? Perhaps, it's about using that strength, our own high level of grit, to encourage others to follow and do well. Successful leaders motivate and inspire.

I bet that takes grit. **HW**

"I define grit as the tendency to pursue long-term goals with passion and persistence," writes Duckworth. She also runs a lab studying grit and, of course, has an excellent book on the topic, *GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*.

Besides passion and perseverance, Duckworth's website says grit is not talent or luck, but rather, "Grit is about having an 'ultimate concern' — a goal you care about so much that it gives meaning to almost everything you do."

test my mettle. I scored a satisfying 4.6 out of 5, earning me the distinction (according to her website, anyway) of being grittier than about 90% of other testers. That felt good!

But, I wondered, is there a downside to having grittiness? Besides, what does grit really get me? Duckworth's research suggests that extreme grittiness is OK. On her website it reads: "Indeed, at the very top of the Grit Scale, I typically find individuals who are tremendously successful and also satisfied with their lives. However,

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