

By Jeff “Chief” Urbaniak  
COLUMNIST ([www.AdviceChief.com](http://www.AdviceChief.com))

Do you trust the process? Do you trust any process, whatever it may be? Do you believe it will work in the end? Or are you too impatient and try to jump ahead, either with inflated expectations or the desire for instant gratification?

Trusting any process requires faith and patience, and any process worth its salt should transform something or someone into a refined product or a very capable entity. A solid process is more than a road map to get from point A to point B, it’s a way of life or continuum that improves understanding and performance over a sustained period of time.

Let’s say you’re learning how to play the piano. In the beginning, you are an outsider. When you first study the piano, the keyboard looks rather intimidating. You probably don’t completely understand the relationships between the keys, the chords, the pedals, and everything else that goes into creating music. Although you might enter with excitement about how you can learn, you quickly realize how much work there is ahead of you. There is great danger that you give in to feelings of boredom, impatience, fear, and confusion. You stop observing and learning. The process comes to a halt.

If, on the other hand, you manage your emotions and allow time to take its course, something remarkable begins to take shape. As you continue to observe and follow the lead of others, you gain clarity, learning the rules and seeing how things work and fit together. If you keep practicing, you gain fluency. You start mastering the basic skills, allowing yourself to take on newer and more exciting challenges. You begin to see connections that were invisible to you before. You slowly gain confidence

in your ability to solve problems or overcome weaknesses through sheer persistence.

At a certain point, you move from student to practitioner. Instead of just learning how others do things, you bring your own style and individuality into play. As years go by and you remain faithful to this process, you take another leap: to mastery. The keyboard is no longer something outside of you; it is internalized and becomes part of your nervous system, your fingertips. You have learned the rules so well that you can now be the one to break or rewrite them.

I’ve seen others follow a process like this. My cousin Jennifer, a music teacher in Rochester, New York, is one such person. She transitioned from learning--to playing--to mastering the piano, and now she teaches other young aspiring piano players to do exactly the same thing--and all of this has been a life-long process for her; it did not happen overnight. Thanks to Jennifer, many young children and adults have developed into terrific piano players.

Successful sports organizations at college and pro levels typically follow a process as well. It often involves player acquisition and development, infused with a tailored philosophy about attitude, discipline, and effort. The teams that follow an ingrained process are often the teams that perform in an outstanding manner for a long period of time.

Sean McDermott, the head coach of the NFL’s Buffalo Bills, took over the beleaguered franchise in 2017 that hadn’t been to the playoffs in 17 straight seasons, which at the time was the longest playoff drought in the four major North American sports.

In McDermott’s first statement to the media, he spoke about a “process”

he was bringing to the organization. He didn’t talk about winning Super Bowls, he talked about creating a winning culture and a process that he expected everyone to follow, regardless of the result. He placed emphasis on trusting the process and then letting the process have its eventual impact--on everyone and everything in the organization!

Since McDermott’s arrival in Buffalo, the Bills have made the playoffs 4 out of the last 5 years, and are currently favored by the professional odds makers in Vegas to win the Super Bowl. His process appears to be working quite well--and not just because it’s a process, but because everyone in the organization has subscribed to it.

Are you subscribed to a process? If not, you could be rolling the dice with your life. And if you’re rolling the dice, then your outcomes are dependent upon luck rather than effort.

Are you taking shortcuts to avoid the process? If so, you may or may not succeed initially, but in the long run, you will probably succumb to failure or just plain quit. Shortcuts have their purpose at times, but not all the time. In fact, it is believed by the wisest people that the longest distance between two points is often a shortcut!

If you’re trying to go somewhere in life, you have to follow a process. If you don’t know which process to follow, find other successful people who follow a process and ask for their advice and guidance. And certainly, if a wise person ever presents you with a process, by all means, follow it! Following a process can be the difference between quitting and finishing. Following a process can be the thing that propels you to achieve more than you ever thought you could. Trust and follow the process.

~ The End ~