

The Power of Failure

Presented by
MARK C. PERNA



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Welcome to the Competitive Advantage Track!

In these highly engaging, plug-and-play videos, your learners will discover the powerful skills to craft a personal competitive advantage—and why they need it.

In a fast-changing world, young people must develop strong life and career skills. Each module (or “Slice”) includes a short, heartfelt talk by Career Tree creator Mark C. Perna about a particular skill, why it matters, and how it connects to their personal competitive advantage for whatever they want to achieve in life.

▶ Click on the video to learn more, or click here:
<https://youtu.be/o8W9X78A2fM>

MARK C. PERNA

“ Building a competitive advantage can help you move forward by getting you the skills needed to do well in life, and whatever you’re passionate about. It gives you purpose and you can get far.

— Student



You can then implement any or all of the resources in this packet:

- Facilitator Reflection
- Group Discussion Starters
- Supersize Suggestions

You choose whatever elements will make the greatest impact in your unique learning environment.



“ I liked that we weren’t pushed to be motivated and inspired, like every other video.

— Student

Strategies for Success

“ You need this because we need this to survive... We will be better than the rest and have a competitive advantage. And since we are learning this now we could have a lead on the others.

— Student



How you use the **Competitive Advantage Track** is entirely up to you. It can be a bellringer exercise, material for an entire class period, or something you use at home with your child. You can use all the materials in this packet or change them up. These resources are provided to adapt in any way that best serves your schedule and learners.

That said, here are a few best practices to consider:

- **Make “competitive advantage” your thread:** The experienced facilitators who piloted the Competitive Advantage Track tapped into the power of repetition by constantly touching back on the concept of a personal competitive advantage. Everything the learners did moving forward was done because it related to their own competitive advantage. With this narrative, learners were more engaged when asked to complete work.
- **Connect “competitive advantage” with the lifestyle the learner wants to live:** For today’s young people, everything—including career—is a lifestyle decision. The kind of life they can live, the things they can afford, and the places they can go are what motivate young people to put in the necessary effort. Building a personal competitive advantage today is what sets you up for the lifestyle you want to enjoy tomorrow.
- **Encourage effort:** Our pilot facilitators suggest that the concept of a personal competitive advantage is a useful tool to answer questions like “Why do I have to learn this?” or “When will I ever use this?” The answer: “It is all part of building your own personal competitive advantage.” Making “personal competitive advantage” a constant thread throughout the day encourages effort and helps reframe the challenge the learner is experiencing with an end goal that matters to them.
- **Where possible, connect to the Career Tree:** While the Competitive Advantage Track can be used as a stand-alone lesson, it’s also designed to integrate with the Career Tree career exploration tool. The Competitive Advantage Track helps learners develop their Root System and ultimately move closer to their goal on the Career Tree. Find out more about the Career Tree for classroom use [here](#).



“ It can help me by giving me something to look up to and give me ideas.

— Student

Slice 5:

The Power of Failure

Video Runtime: 6:21

▶ Click on the video above to get started, or click here:
<https://youtu.be/f7XaNHMOc7U>

Visit MarkCPerna.com/cat to access the full, free library of Slices and downloadable activities.

Facilitator Reflection

Failure isn't fatal—but many of us live as if it is. Think about how the fear of failure might be holding learners back in your learning environment. What has contributed to this fear, and how can you help them see the power of failure? Reflect on what you've learned from your own failures and how your experiences could help learners focus, plan, and take action after failing.

Learners will discover:

- Why the fear of failure can be an obstacle to building a personal competitive advantage
- How there's power in failure, but no power in not trying
- That our personal best can grow every day
- Why Mark still experiences the fear of failing
- How you spend more time failing at a videogame than beating it
- That your personal competitive advantage is simply giving your personal best
- What to do when you give your personal best and still fail at something

Activities: Next Page

Slice 5: Activities

Group Discussion Starters

- Is Mark a person you would think of as an expert in failing or an expert in adapting to failure? What are your takeaways from his journey?
- What actions can you take to overcome the fear of failure and pursue your goals effectively? What's the cost of not trying?
- How can you harness the power of failure as a tool for success?

Supersize Suggestions

This is just a starter list to help you supersize the impact of this Slice. Customize these activities or create your own to fit your unique learning environment and course of study, if applicable.

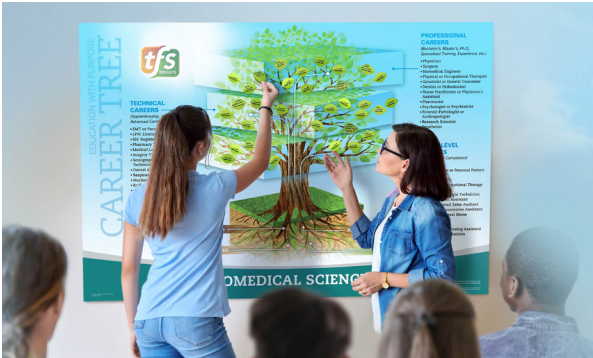
- Have learners research famous quotes on failure and pick a personal favorite. Some of Mark's favorite quotes include:
 - *"Failure is success in progress."* - Albert Einstein
 - *"We learn from failure, not from success."* - Bram Stoker
 - *"Success is not final, failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."* - Winston Churchill
 - *"Fear kills more dreams than failure ever will."* - Suzy Kassem
 - *"You always pass failure on your way to success."* - Mickey Rooney
 - *"The master has failed more times than the beginner has even tried."* - Stephen McCraine
 - *"I can accept failure, everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying."* - Michael Jordan
- Encourage learners to consider the idea that Mark was afraid of failing when he recorded this Slice.
Ask: **How do you think Mark overcame his fear of failing so that he could share this message with us?**
- Have learners create a personal affirmation for themselves to remember the next time they fail. Examples:
 - I'm going to learn a lot from this.
 - I will focus, plan, and take action.
 - I will become stronger by adapting to failure.
 - I am not defined by how often I get knocked down, but how many times I get up.
- As the facilitator, tell a story about a time when you or someone in your field faced a failure. Share what you learned from your personal experience or from the story of the person who failed.
- Project: Have learners write or orally present a reflection on what they have learned about the power of failure.
Ask: **How do we use our ability to adapt to failure to fuel our success?**

Big-Picture View

This closure question is designed to show learners the relevance of what they're learning to their lifestyle and career goals. They should be able to connect the dots between their unique competitive advantage and what they're learning.

- **In life, there are moments we succeed and moments we fail, so how will you adapt to both scenarios and continue to strengthen your competitive advantage?**

Discover the Career Tree



Created by education leader Mark C. Perna, the Career Tree is the first career exploration tool informed by a generational perspective. Through meaningful self-discovery, ongoing dialogue, and real-world goal-setting, this groundbreaking approach is helping organizations across North America to enroll, engage, and complete students in higher numbers. [Find out more about the Career Tree here.](#)

Within the Career Tree, the Competitive Advantage Track helps young people build a strong foundation to reach their desired career and lifestyle goals. On the [TFSCareerTree.com](#) portal, our [Career Tree](#) community has access to early releases, curricular elements, and training materials not available to the general public.

You can use the free elements of the Competitive Advantage Track without being part of our Career Tree community, but we encourage you to schedule a demo to explore how the Career Tree can supersize your efforts.

Please note the Career Tree is a classroom tool and is not designed for home use. New resources created especially for parents are in the works, so subscribe to our [free Paradigm Shift newsletter](#) to stay posted as those are released.

Mark C. Perna

CREATOR OF THE CAREER TREE & COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE TRACK

Mark C. Perna is a generational thought leader on a mission to effect a national paradigm shift in education, employment, and economic development. He delivers 80+ keynotes annually across North America, including a special address at Harvard University. At Forbes.com, his weekly column on generational issues in careers, education, and the workforce reaches an audience of more than 4 million. His *Perna Syndicate* micropodcast is heard in more than 70 countries.

Mark, who serves on the Advisory Council for the Coalition for Career Development in Washington, DC, founded the Education with Purpose & Employment with Passion movement to help communities connect education, business, and economic pipelines. He is a frequent guest on television and podcasts, including the #1 economic development podcast, *Develop This!*

Mark created the Career Tree and Competitive Advantage Track to empower parents, educators, employers, and community stakeholders to unleash the tremendous potential of today's younger generations. This is also the topic of his bestselling book, *Answering Why*, which won eight national awards, including the Nautilus Award which is given to books that make a positive difference in the world.

You can contact Mark [here](#) and follow his mission on these platforms:



MARK C. PERNA



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Want to stay posted on our latest releases in the Competitive Advantage Track and other free resources? Subscribe to our [free Paradigm Shift newsletter](#) now to receive actionable strategies, insights, and tools 2x a month from the desk of education and generational thought leader Mark C. Perna!