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From The Race Course To The Boardroom: How Endurance Sports Inspire A Strong Sense Of Leadership And An Unrelenting Pursuit Of Success.

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Submitted to the Program of Organizational Dynamics, College of Liberal and Professional Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Science in Organizational Dynamics at the University of Pennsylvania

Advisor: Alan M. Barstow

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Abstract

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The primary focus of the survey was on age group participants that competed in a wide range of endurance sports (e.g. half marathon, duathlon, full ironman, etc.) and had careers separate from the sport that ranged from being an individual contributor to a CEO.

Much of the research points to a correlation between the leadership traits that are required to compete in endurance sports and those that are critical to higher level success in the workplace. Essentially, the research suggests that there is a transfer of skills from the race course that endurance athletes train and compete on to the work setting they manage and lead from. Furthermore, the preparation that goes into training for endurance events provides valuable lessons that can be applied beyond business to many other areas of life.

Keywords

leadership

Comments

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JAMES ALCORN

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University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2020

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Approved by:

Alan M. Barstow, Ph.D., Advisor

Charline S. Russo, Ed.D., Reader

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

From an early age, children are exposed to sports. The exposure varies from unstructured games at recess to organized sports through their local township. Most often the focus is on having fun and being physically active, but there's also an emphasis on team building, accountability and leadership. The message may be delivered directly or indirectly, but the intention is clear. Over time, the focus expands to include a sense of personal accomplishment and motivation built from the maturation of a competitive spirit. This competitive spirit is not only a result of organic forces at play, but is also born from the direction and expectation of coaches, parents and teammates. At the same time, as some children (now young adults) have continued to participate in sports, others have chosen alternate paths, dedicating the regained time instead to education, arts or other interests. Both of these groups—those who have long term athletic exposure and those who don't eventually enter the workforce, and bring with them a portfolio of skills, experience and ambitions. I have spent years observing the attributes of leaders, and have often wondered if the commonalities I see are a result of shared experiences in life. Through anecdotal research, I have found that there is in fact often a common thread: a shared love and dedication to sport. This could certainly be a coincidence, but it could also be the outcome of lessons learned on the field of play and in locker rooms; of a respect for authority and rules; of a desire to win that is often the single most motivating factor at play.

The topic I am pursuing for my capstone is the connection between competing in endurance sports and leadership in the workplace. Is there a link between the two? I set out to ask a number of probing questions to help hypothesize if endurance sports help one to indeed become a better leader. Among the questions reflected on:

- What leadership competencies, if any, are fostered via participation in endurance sports?
- Do participants believe they are a better performer in the workplace because of their participation in endurance events?
- What kind of an effect does participation in endurance events have on an individual's approach to leadership in the workplace?

These questions allowed me to explore the effect competing in endurance events has on one's career and possible links to leadership style and patterns in the workplace. Before proceeding, it's important to define endurance sports. "An endurance sport is the ability to sustain a specific activity (endurance running, cycling, swimming, rowing, cross country skiing etc) for a prolonged period." (*What is Endurance? Definition, Training and Fitness* 2021)

A panel of eight ESPN experts weighed in on which sports are most challenging from an endurance perspective, using a ranking system from 1-10. The below table shows the top 10 most challenging endurance sports as ranked by the expert panel (Knisley 2020):

Sport	Endurance Score
Cycling: Distance	9.63
Track and Field: Distance	9.63
Swimming (all strokes): Distance	9.25
Skiing: Nordic	9.00
Boxing	8.63
Rowing	8.13
Water Polo	7.88
Soccer	7.75
Speed Skating	7.63
Basketball	7.38

Figure 1. 10 Most Challenging Endurance Sports

The top three endurance sports listed: distance cycling, distance track and field and distance swimming are the three sports that comprise triathlon events. USA Triathlon, the National Governing Body of triathlons in the United States, counts more than 400,000 members within its ranks, one of whom is me (USA Triathlon).

Personal Background

As someone who has held leadership positions in corporate America and competes in endurance sports, this topic has particular relevance for me. The focus of this capstone is on the effect endurance sport participation has on one's career, and in doing so, will reflect on my own experience competing in endurance sports, as well as the

corresponding effects these events have had on my personal and professional growth. In addition to sharing my own insights, this capstone will also reflect the experience and perspective of other endurance athletes. Both the literature review and study respondents are limited to the United States.

My deep passion for endurance competition is built on a foundation of a love for living a healthy lifestyle and a personal desire to challenge myself physically and mentally. From this base of interest, I eventually completed an Ironman, which was a significant milestone in my life, and one that has taught me that no goal is insurmountable.

I am an asthmatic and being able to achieve the endurance goals that I have set regardless of this complication has given me immense confidence in the ability for the human spirit to triumph any challenge. I'm excited for the opportunity to document my journey from fitness enthusiast to Ironman in the hopes that I may inspire someone to challenge themselves physically and/or mentally, whether it be a relatively short-term goal of doing their first 5K or a more long-term stretch of pursuing higher education. While I will spend time focusing on my personal experience, I will also explore the experience of others who regard athletic competition as a core tenet of their personal identity.

Objective and Goal

The primary questions I would like to address through my research are:

1. Is there a correlation between the training and competition that comes with endurance sports and having success in a corporate setting? Success in the corporate setting is subjective. To some it may be defined as someone who is a top performer year after year, it may be someone who others can emulate based on their professional achievements, whereas for others it may be someone who has steadily been promoted through the organization and is considered by most to be a good corporate citizen. I believe a combination of any of these traits qualifies as having corporate success and will explore what themes emerge from the data and information I collect.
2. Do leadership skills learned in endurance sport transfer to a direct application in professional life? If we believed this to be true, how do we qualify it? It may be presumptuous to say that just because someone is an endurance athlete and has a strong constitution for goal setting, motivation, vision setting and execution, that those same qualities carry over to leadership in the workforce. It's certainly possible for someone to exhibit the aforementioned traits, but also be very content professionally and not interested in taking on a leadership role in his or her professional life. However, others may recognize this for the person, and the influence they exert is through indirect, or even unrecognized, authority.

Whether the athletic accomplishments individuals draw from are from times spent competing in high school sports or as an age grouper later in life, the core investigation is

to understand if there was a single event or a more robust body of work that made something click inside to make them say: “If I can accomplish “A,” nothing can stop me from doing “X,” “Y” and “Z.” In other words, I am seeking to investigate how, specifically, their experience in endurance sports led them to believe they could set and accomplish high level goals beyond their perceived limitations (if they did not already have this mindset or predisposition prior to involvement in sports;) provided they stayed focused on their goal(s) and worked fearlessly to achieve them. Of course, it’s possible that they had this mindset prior to any involvement in sports, and if that’s the case, I am seeking to understand how.

While participation in sport in general—regardless of type—will surely have effects on professional accomplishment, I would like to focus on endurance athletes and the leadership skills learned through this type of training and competition. As a result of the unique intensity of the training and corresponding athletic events, endurance sports provide a platform where athletes are taking personal limitations to new heights. I am highly curious to understand and outline for the reader how that transcending experience may transfer to the professional setting. How are they leading others, inspiring others and creating goals beyond their perceived limitations? Conversely, if either the literature review or study provides data that does not support the claims that endurance sport helps one to become a better leader, I am curious to understand how the skills that are gained during endurance training and competition do not translate into a higher execution within the professional environment.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

While there is a significant amount of research that points to the positive impact that fitness has on executive leadership (Neck, Mitchell, Manz, Cooper and Thompson, 2000), and even research that goes one step further to say that physical fitness is a critical component to executive performance (Lovelace, Manz and Alves, 2007), there is far less literature focused on the specific research questions that are the ambition of this capstone to answer. Endurance athletes are indeed a narrow segment of the fitness focused population, so the absence of deep research on their specific experience is understandable. Without research in place, one may assume that just by virtue of the degree and intensity to which they incorporate physical rigor into their daily habits, their success in leadership roles would also be amplified. Conversely, it may also be assumed that a group that dedicates so much time and energy into their fitness habits may not allow for enough time and energy to accomplish professional objectives with the same rigor. My anecdotal observations lead me to share in the former theory vs the latter. The values that bring success on the race course are core to the personality of these athlete professionals; the values that make them successful are revealed in their focus and action across the boundary of sport and work. Over the years, and through multiple interactions, I have observed endurance athletes to be successful leaders, and feel that exploration into the traits that translate from race course to corporate setting is a worthwhile effort into understanding any nuances that may exist within this smaller segment of the fitness focused population. As I embarked on my capstone research it became abundantly clear

that a scarce amount of research had been done on this topic. My literature review and research process focused largely on three topics: 1) self-leadership habits of endurance athletes, 2) self-efficacy in endurance athletes; and, 3) mental toughness profiles in endurance athletes. Not surprisingly, these three topics are strongly rooted in an individual orientation and conviction, which is intrinsic to the heart and soul of an endurance athlete.

Self-Leadership Habits of Endurance Athletes

Though a robust library of research specific to endurance athletes does not exist, there is one preeminent work that aligns almost exactly. “The Self Leadership Habits of Ultra-Endurance, Executive Leaders: An Exploratory Case Study” is a study done by Andrew Sidwell. In it, Sidwell focuses on how competition in ultra-endurance events contributes to an executive’s self-leadership habits. Ultra-endurance athletes participate in events that are more than six hours long (Zaryski & Smith, 2005), making them the most intense of endurance sport participants, and the most committed to a strong self-leadership orientation.

One definition of self-leadership (Browning, 2008) calls on the individual to have a “developed sense of who [they] are, what [they] can do” and “where [they] are going,” (p.15) and on top of this have the skill to “influence [their] communication, emotions and behaviors” (Browning, 2008, p.15) as they work to achieve their goals. Training for an endurance event can bring an individual to the outer limits of what they imagined they were capable of, and understanding the role of self-leadership in guiding oneself past the

point of their perceived limit is critical. Sidwell explores how training for ultra-endurance sport has helped to advance those traits outside of racing, noting that:

“A growing body of research (e.g., Baker, 2015; Simpson et al., 2014) shows that ultra-endurance athletes commonly apply constructive thought patterns, behavioral strategies and natural rewards strategies synonymous with the self-leadership literature without realizing it.” (Sidwell, 2018, pg. 5)

Sidwell’s research may stand alone in its focus, but is nevertheless impactful in bringing credibility to the notion that there are undeniable similarities between the characteristics that fuel successful ultra endurance athletes and those that fuel successful business leaders. In both scenarios, the individual is driven by a strong sense of self-leadership, assigning expectations for performance without direction from a third party. There is no one compelling the achievement other than the individual themselves; it is up to them and them alone to “achieve an optimum state of motivation and self-direction needed to perform what one sees as necessary and unavoidable” (Kazan, 1999, p. ii). Pursuing the things that are sometimes ‘necessary’ and ‘unavoidable’ can create the dogged determination that translates from the personal sphere to the professional one by leveraging the “mental, cognitive and behavioral strategies that give strength, purpose, meaning and direction” (Kazan, 1999, p. ii) to achieving objectives. In addition to determination, strong self-leadership requires resilience. Here again, endurance athletes are able to leverage their focus on physical fitness into success within high demand roles “because physically fit leaders have been found to have increased stamina and mental

focus” (Leiter & Maslach, 2005; Neck, Mitchell, Manz & Thompson. 2004; Neck & Cooper, 2000). What is not as clear within the research is how these skills are founded and developed; a classic chicken-or-the-egg type of question. Did the self-leadership skills come first, and that is what led the successful leader to the race course, or did the experience from the race course create the foundation for the leader to thrive professionally?

Self-Efficacy in Endurance Athletes

If self-leadership is the engine that orients an individual towards success, self-efficacy is the fuel that powers that orientation by enabling a “belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1997, p.3).” Self-efficacy motivates endurance athletes to not only sign up for an Ironman -- a 140.6 mile event--but also to believe that they can complete it within a maximum allowable time of 17 hours. With strong self-efficacy comes deep confidence, and those that possess it are more likely to set more challenging goals for themselves in relation to the task (Bandura & Locke, 2003), invest more effort into the task (Tenenbaum & Hutchinson, 2012), and display higher levels of perseverance when faced with obstacles and difficulties (Feltz, Short, & Sullivan, 2008).

Research indicates that participation in ultra-endurance sports (events that last more than six hours long,) increases self-efficacy (Simpson et al., 2014). Intuitively, it makes sense that the more one challenges themselves, the more they require belief that they can achieve their objective. A recent study exploring sources of self-efficacy specific to

endurance sports found that endurance athletes draw “on the culmination of [their] experiences, experiences of overcoming challenge and adversity, and a sense of physical familiarity” (Anstiss, Meije, & Marcora, 2018, p. 1), when finding motivation through the belief that they are capable of accomplishing their goal. (Anstiss, Meije., & Marcora, 2018). In addition to past experience, past success is also a key source of self-efficacy, likely due to the confidence imparted to continue pursuing additional goals and objectives. With every instance of success achieved, self-efficacy increases. Although failure has the potential to decrease self-efficacy, research has shown that “past performance experiences have been consistently demonstrated to be one of the most cited sources of self-efficacy in sporting settings (Chase, Feltz, & Lirgg, 2003; Simpson, 2014).” Considerations such as the difficulty of the task, level of support and number of attempts are all contributing factors to the efficacy value assigned to past performance (Bandura, 1997).

It’s been documented that endurance athletes have drawn on heightened self-efficacy skills built through sport to overcome adversity in personal ways (ie, childbirth), as well as professional ways (ie, a layoff) (Anstiss, Meijen, & Marcora, 2018.) The belief in self that comes with success in challenging athletic events can cross over into personal and work settings. The Anstiss study also found distinct parallels between leadership principles shown by both endurance athletes and leaders in the workplace. Key skill sets that were transferable between the two included the ability to set goals, prepare effectively and manage demands. From a ‘demand’ perspective, there is an important difference between endurance athletes and leaders in the workplace in that endurance

athletes have the additional burden of physical demand over the mental burden that is experienced by both profiles. While stress may be considered a physical demand on the body that can be experienced by both, the literal exertion of blood, sweat and tears that is necessary to achieve endurance goals is not paralleled in a corporate setting. However, having that additional degree of demand arguably plays an important role in building one's character and leadership potential, and may give endurance athletes an edge in their workplace endeavors.

This ability to overcome challenges and face adversity on the back of strong self-efficacy are illustrations of leadership principles that are transparent whether one is competing in an endurance event or conducting business. The determination and the belief in oneself to get the job done, no matter what the task is or how much the odds are stacked against you, is tantamount to the power of self-efficacy. At its core, self-efficacy delivers the energy required to help cross the finish line, whether at the end of an Ironman or at the culmination of a project.

Mental Toughness Profiles in Endurance Athletes

Many of the same characteristics it takes to be successful in endurance sports run parallel with being a successful leader in the workforce. Consider traits such as: goal setting, vision, openness, trust and mental strength. Leaders who are identified as not just leaders by way of instilled authority, but instead as transformational leaders that create organic change, “accomplish this process of motivating and transforming followers...[by] articulat[ing] an inspiring vision and act[ing] as role models in attaining the vision.”

(Steinmann, Klug, & Maier, 2018 p.1). In this description of the transformational leader, we see for the first time how an endurance athlete leader, who does so many things in solitude (training, racing,) also has the skill set to create engagement with those they lead in the workplace. The vision they set for themselves is reflected in the vision they outline for others, and the example they set for themselves becomes the inspiration for others. The same attributes used to describe the transformational leader, specifically the focus on vision and goal setting, also describes what it takes to be a mentally tough runner (Dahlkoetter, J., 2016). Though it feels valid to assume that the mental fortitude required to create and execute on ambitious visions are analogous between endurance athlete and professional leader, it is important to note that there is a gap in the research to confirm this, and that “mental toughness in endurance athletes, while an important factor for success, has been scarcely studied” (Zeiger & Zeiger, 2018, p.1).

A survey published in 2018 by Joanna and Robert Zeiger is one of the few explorations of mental toughness in endurance athletes. It’s focus centered on how a combination of sports mental toughness, psychological performance and self-esteem come together to create a more mentally tough athlete:

“The study aim was to determine mental toughness profiles via latent profile analysis in endurance athletes and whether associations exist between the latent profiles and demographics and sports characteristics. Mental toughness was measured using the Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (SMTQ), Psychological Performance Inventory-Alternative (PPI-A), and self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE).

A three class solution emerged, designated as high mental toughness (High MT), moderate mental toughness (Moderate MT) and low mental toughness (Low MT). The data showed that mental toughness latent profiles exist in endurance athletes and that High MT is associated with demographics and sports characteristics” (Zeiger, & Zeiger, 2018, p1).

Endurance athletes that display high levels of MT have the benefit of translating “success in sports to parameters of improved sleep quality, higher life control and interpersonal confidence, high levels of subjective and objective performance and healthier lifestyle” (Zeiger, & Zeiger, 2018, p.2) . The ability to “produce consistently high levels of subjective (e.g., personal goals or strivings) or objective performance (e.g., sales, race time, GPA) despite everyday challenges and stressors” (Zeiger & Zeiger, 2008, p. 2) translates into a “psychological resource that is purposeful, flexible and efficient in nature for the enactment and maintenance of goal directed pursuits (Gucciardi, 2017).” All of these benefits support a higher level of excellence in a leadership role, as does the suggestion that “individuals with higher MT exhibit greater emotional control” (Zeiger & Zeiger, 2018, p. 2). The ability to restrict emotion in decision making creates more objective performance and likely more stability in the vision and actions that the endurance athlete leader takes in the workplace. Further, individuals with a higher level MT disposition are “less likely to believe that the demands imposed by a given situation exceed their available coping resources” (Zeiger & Zeiger, 2018, p. 2).

This all points to an abundance of common themes between endurance athletes and leadership principles that have the potential to cross over into one's professional life. While most studies on MT “focus on athletic populations, problem-focused coping has been demonstrated to be effective in mitigating negative impacts of stressors across diverse environments, including the workplace.” (Lin, Clough, & Papageorgiou, 2017, p.8). Though there is not much research on the impact or value of MT in the workplace, it is at least understood that MT isn't a characteristic retained for endurance events, or athletics, alone. MT is not something that can be turned on and off in an on-demand manner, so it is reasonable to assume that MT honed and expanded on the race course should translate to other parts of life, including in the professional setting. I believe MT to be an innate quality that many endurance athletes possess, and one that effectively crosses over into their professional lives. Combined with self-efficacy, mental toughness allows one to punch past perceived limitations in all areas of life so that challenges are not feared, but instead looked for and conquered.

Where self-leadership is the engine and self-efficacy is the fuel, mental toughness is the navigation system that secures the discipline needed to traverse the path from goal initiation to goal execution. The navigation system that is mental toughness relies on “goal setting, visualization, stress management, emotion control, confidence, persistence, rebounding from failure and positive cognition (Jones, 2002) to maneuver through the ups and downs that the path the endurance athlete leader covers will surely bring to bear. Across these paths, and “across most achievement settings, mental toughness is

commonly referred to as the defining attribute that enables one to thrive in demanding situations” (Gucciardi, Hanton, Gordon, Mallett, & Temby, P., 2014).

As noted a few times within this chapter, there is not a large amount of literature or academic study dedicated to the interplay between endurance sports and leadership in the professional setting. Sidwell’s work is rare in its specific focus on how competition in ultra-endurance events contributes to an executive’s self-leadership habits, and provides the most clear view into how this synergy presents itself. Separate from Sidwell’s contribution, we are able to extrapolate from research focused on each topic in isolation, and create bridges between the independent research that helps to define a narrative around the relationship between the two. To help in providing more research that is clear in its aim to understand the relationship between endurance sports and success in the corporate setting, the next chapter will deliver insight into the methodology behind a corresponding primary research effort.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Endurance athletes make up a small percentage of the general population in the United States. ‘Though the ratio of endurance athletes who ascend to higher level corporate positions is greater than that of the general population’, this additional layer of segmentation yields an even smaller target audience for research. Since the focus of this capstone is exploring the connection between endurance sport competition and leadership in the workplace, it was important to survey as broad a swath of this niche audience as possible. Though it is a niche audience, the diversity in thought amongst the group is great, so trying to access as many viewpoints as possible was key to identifying any patterns in thought or consistencies in experience. This was also important because there is not much existing research on this topic, so the opportunity to generate data through new primary research was a necessary means to investigating my capstone topic in detail.

Having been a long time participant of endurance sport competition, I leveraged my existing network of contacts from local endurance clubs: The Bucks County Triathlon Club, Bucks County Road Runners, and Cadence Cycling to answer a 18 question survey. By sending out 38 personalized emails to each contact, with an explanation of the survey’s purpose, the anonymous nature of the responses, and an invitation to forward the survey to others who fit the respondent profile, I was able to secure 63 unique responses. I felt this was a successful deployment of the survey. In their study of survey response rate levels, Baruch and Holtom (2008) noted the “average response rate for studies that

utilized data collected from individuals was 52.7 percent” (p. 1139). Given this baseline, I set a goal of a 50 percent response rate, but was pleased to obtain 166 percent. Baruch and Holtom identified two primary reasons for low response rates: 1) failure to deliver questionnaires to potential respondents; and, 2) reluctance of people to respond. In trying to understand the high response rate of the survey I deployed, I believe it was achieved for the following two reasons:

- I had correct contact information for all of the invited respondents, which ensured that the email invitation would be delivered
- Each email invitation included a personalized message explaining the reason for the request and the importance of a high response rate, which drove engagement

The engagement from the original distribution list extended beyond just their responses. By forwarding the survey to additional respondents, I was able to obtain an additional 25 responses, which fueled the 166 percent response rate.

With a strong response rate, the survey delivered both quantitative and qualitative results that helped me to explore each athlete respondent’s passion for the sport of endurance events, if and how the motivation that is intrinsic to competing effectively translates into professional success and how the relationship with endurance competition informs their own leadership style. From a quantitative perspective, I explored the data to understand if there were discernible correlations between things like:

- How much time athletes were devoting to training and the effect this time spent had on their professional life

- The type of endurance events the athletes participated in and the impact on leadership style and development
- If competing in endurance sports helps one to become a better leader

From a qualitative perspective, the open-ended questions enabled respondents to share more poignant thoughts and observations around the questions that were being asked.

CHAPTER 4

DATA COLLECTION

Demographics

To examine this position more intently, I broadcasted an 18 question Qualtrics survey to 35 Endurance Athletes in my personal network in which I indicated it would be welcomed for them to share the link to other endurance athletes they knew. In total, I received 63 responses which provided for some very rich data. 38 of the respondents were male and the remaining 25 were female. The largest sample size came from the 40-49 age group with 22 respondents (35%). See figure 2 for a complete list of age groups.

Age	Number of Participants
21-29	6
30-39	20
40-49	22
50-59	11
60 or older	4

Figure 2. Age Groups

Age Distribution and Professional Role

Rather than focus primarily on age, I wanted to provide clarity on the age distribution vs. the professional role each candidate held. This data was helpful to identify each person's experience and if they were individual contributors vs. people managers. People managers were further segmented into managers having one layer of

direct reports, manager of managers having more than one layer of reports and executives within the C-suite (CEO, CFO, COO, etc.) Figure 3 illustrates each participants professional role and corresponding age.

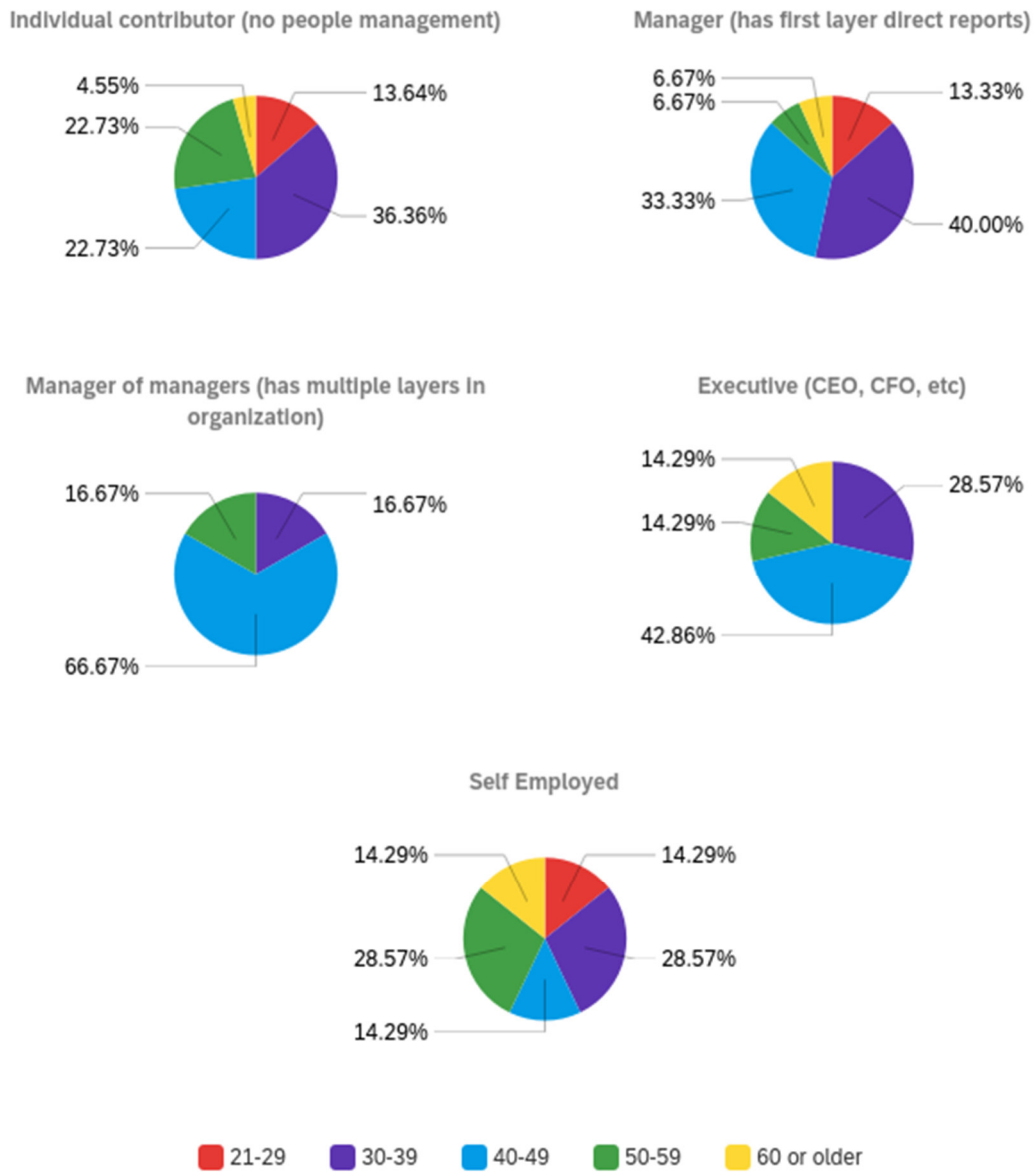


Figure 3. Participants age vs professional role

Endurance Events Completed by Executive Respondents

Over 42% of the respondents had advanced degrees and came from an assortment of industries that varied from healthcare, academia, media, banking, retail, etc. I opened the survey with general questions related to demographics then progressed into more pointed questions that revealed the respondent's position on the relationship between endurance sports and professional leadership. Some of the more poignant responses revolved around the effect and/or influence endurance sport has had their leadership approach. I was most curious to see how the executives (CEO, CFO, etc.) in particular view the role endurance sports play on leadership, if at all. Seven of the 63 respondents held executive positions and have all competed in a number of endurance events that ranged from a 5K to full Ironman (see figure 4).

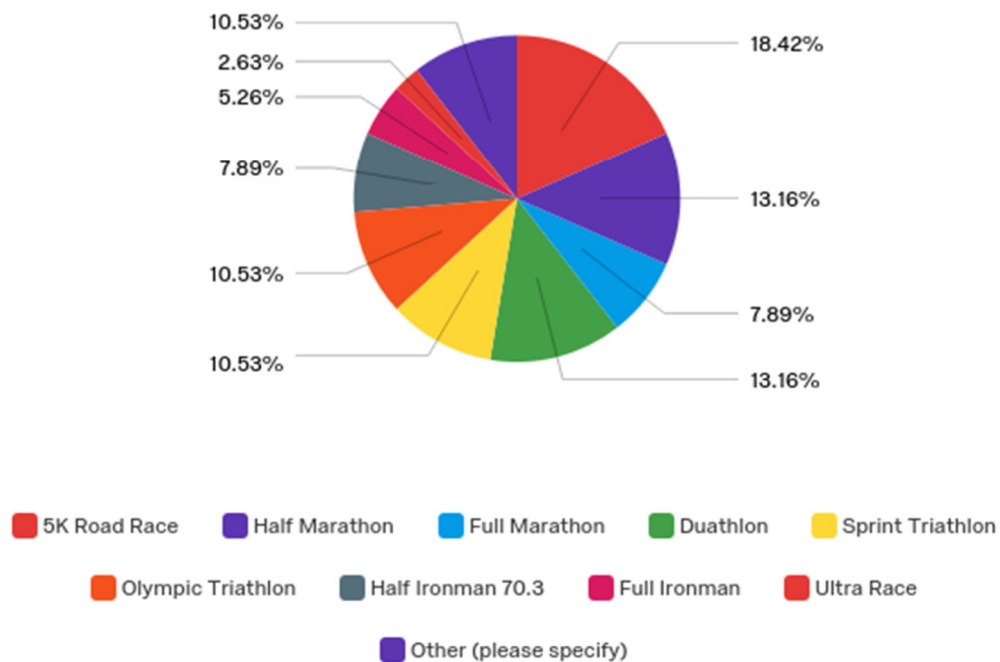


Figure 4. Endurance events completed by Executive respondents

It was interesting to see that the majority of executive respondents managed to balance their work with substantial training regimens. Though they all held demanding jobs, 57% of them still managed to train 7 to 9 hours a week and a majority of them competed in 6-10 events annually.

Effect Endurance Sports had on Executive's Career

When asked what kind of an effect participation in endurance events has had on their career progression, 57% of executives felt it had some effect with 29% classifying the effect as large. 14% believe it had no effect.

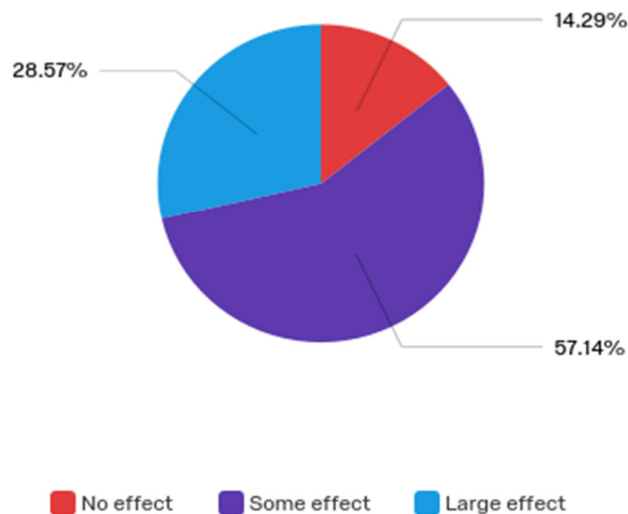


Figure 5. Effect endurance sports has had on Executive respondents' careers

Leadership Effect

The same group of Executives that felt participation in endurance sports had some effect on their own personal career progression felt even stronger about the role

participating in endurance sports played in their leadership; 57% believed participation in endurance sports played a large role in their leadership development.

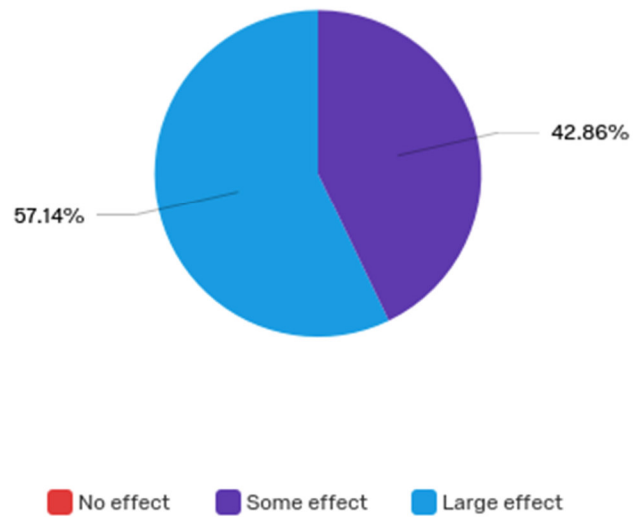


Figure 6. Effect participation in endurance sports had on leadership among Executives

CHAPTER 5

DATA INTERPRETATION & CONCLUSION

After a long process of analyzing data and combing through research it became clear to me that there was a connection between competing in endurance sports and professional leadership. Although it may not have been a straight line in every instance, it was nevertheless apparent that participation in endurance sports played a role in more of the respondents' leadership than not, especially in the areas of goal setting, motivation, vision setting and execution. There are a number of factors that help lead to my conclusion.

Performance in the workplace

I presented a question about leadership to the group and if they believed they were better performers in the workplace as a result of their participation in endurance sports. In a very definitive way, 100% of the sample group of executives believed it did. This point indicates a strong correlation between the self-leadership that's required to compete in endurance sports and the transfer of that leadership to the workplace. The following figure demonstrates the level to which this is articulated by survey respondents.

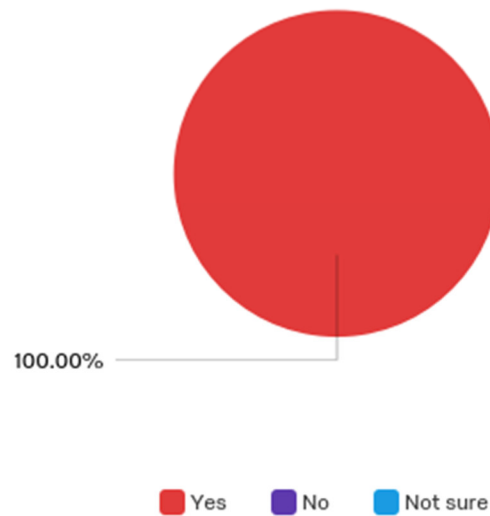


Figure 7. Number of Executives who believed they were better workplace performers as a result of being an endurance athlete

Effective Leadership

It's apparent that endurance training is supremely important to the athletes highlighted in my research. 57% of the executives felt endurance training was essential to their ability to be an effective leader. When asked what professional skills specifically were developed as a result of their participation in endurance sports, respondents ranked the following four skills in descending order: stress management, focus, productivity and accountability. One executive respondent offered additional perspective on why they believed endurance sports help one to become a better leader:

“Endurance sports require long term planning, commitment and endurance. I have found that the same applies to business, particularly in my role as a co-founder. In order to be successful in both [endurance sports and professional life,] you have to constantly be looking at the larger picture and adjusting your plans on the fly to make sure you are properly prepared to execute the end goal. For me, the long-term thinking and conditioning from preparing for 150 mile cycling rides has taught me valuable lessons that can be applied to many areas of my life.”

Figure 8. Anonymous quote from Qualtrics Survey

What is clear from this response, and others like it, is that the preparation that goes into training for endurance events provides valuable lessons that can be applied to many areas of life—not just business.

Career Progression

When I broadened the search from just executives to all 63 respondents the results still showed a high correlation between the work endurance athletes do in training and the leadership skills capitalized on within their professional careers. It was not with the same conviction as the executive only audience had expressed, but nonetheless the data still pointed in the general direction. For example, when asked, what kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your career progression, 41% of the broader group stated it had some effect, whereas 57% of executives believe it did (See Figure 8). Perhaps this is a clear insight, or perhaps it is possible that as one progresses through the

professional ranks, they begin to ascribe more value to the factors that have enabled them to ascend to that place. To clarify would require additional investigation.

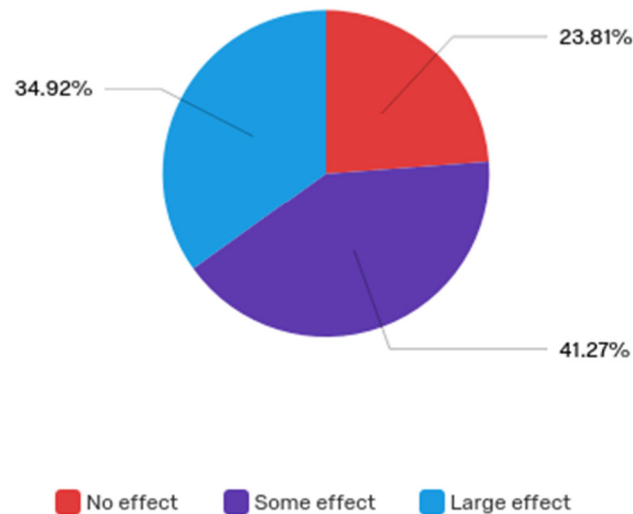


Figure 9. Effect participation in endurance sports had on career progression

Workplace Performance

The same group believed that participating in endurance sports had some effect on their approach to leadership in the workplace, comparatively executives felt it had a large effect. When asked if they believed they were better performers in the workplace because of their participation in endurance events the numbers overwhelmingly affirmed they did, 87% of the broader group answered yes compared to 100% executives who were in agreement.

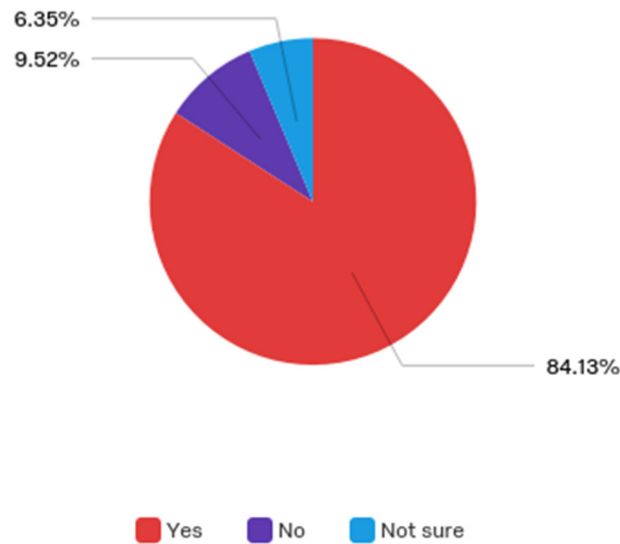


Figure 10. Percentage of respondents that believed they were better performers in the workplace because of their participation in endurance sports

I found the biggest discrepancy between executive and all respondent responses to be with the question: how important is your endurance training to your ability to be an effective leader? Only 22% of the broader group felt it was extremely important where 57% of the executives rated this as being extremely important. This bears the question: is the correlation between endurance training and one's ability to be an effective leader tied to the person's position (e.g individual contributors vs. executives)? This is a question I'd like to delve into deeper should an opportunity to do further research on the topic present itself. For now, I'd have to base the results on the premise that, "exercise helps executives better cope with the stresses and demands of their position and this ultimately increases leadership effectiveness" (McDowell-Larsen, S.L., Kearney, L. and Campbell, D. 2002).

Conclusion

My focus for this capstone was to gain perspective on links between competing in endurance sports and leadership in the workplace; with an emphasis on whether there was a correlation between the two. The question is, can the same leadership traits that one draws from to compete on the racecourse – goal-setting, motivation, vision-setting and execution—transfer to the workplace?

My research cemented for me that endurance sports attract a certain personality type. Not only do endurance athletes exhibit a tremendous amount of self-leadership they are also exceedingly motivated individuals. Greater than 40% of the survey participants had an advanced degree, on average most of the athletes committed to 7-9 hours of training per week in addition competed in 6-10 endurance events annually; all of this while managing full time careers that ranged in scope from individual contributors to CEO of companies. By the most modest of standards these individuals would be considered highly motivated. Although endurance sports are still somewhat of a niche category and research is limited on the subject, there's little doubt that the athletes competing in the sport possess many of the same skill sets required to be what many would consider a leader in the workplace. It's unequivocal that the athletes' work ethic wouldn't transfer from the racecourse to the workplace and vice versa.

Leadership can be judged in many different ways. It's not just a function of one's title or how many direct reports someone has reporting to them. It's the ability to lead directly, or indirectly, through authority or through influence by being skilled in goal

setting, motivation, vision setting and execution. While the academic research has ample room to be expanded on the intersection between participation in endurance sports and success in the professional setting, there is enough anecdotal, and limited quantitative data, to suggest that there is indeed a relationship that exists between the two. transferable personally and professionally.

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APPENDIX A

CAPSTONE SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. What is your age?
 - a. 21-29
 - b. 30-39
 - c. 40-49
 - d. 50-59
 - e. 60 or older

3. What is the highest level of school you have completed or highest degree you have received?
 - a. High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)
 - b. Some College but no degree
 - c. Bachelor's degree
 - d. Masters degree
 - e. Doctorate (Ph D, Ed D)
 - f. Other (please specify)

4. Which of the following best describes your professional role?
 - a. Individual contributor (no people management)
 - b. Manger (has first layer direct reports)
 - c. Manager of managers (has multiple layers in organization)
 - d. Executive (CEO, CFO, etc.)
 - e. Self Employed

5. How large is your immediate team, department or region?
 - a. Less than 10 people
 - b. 10 people or larger
 - c. I am not part of a team or department

6. What is your job title?

7. What industry do you work in?

8. Which of the following endurance events have you competed in? Please check all that apply.
 - a. 5K Road Race
 - b. Half Marathon
 - c. Full Marathon
 - d. Duathlon
 - e. Sprint Triathlon
 - f. Olympic Triathlon
 - g. Half Ironman 70.3
 - h. Full Ironman
 - i. Ultra Race
 - j. Other (please specify)

9. How often do you train per week?
 - a. 1-3 hours
 - b. 4-6 hours
 - c. 7-9 hours
 - d. More than 10 hours

10. On average, how many endurance events do you participate in on an annual basis?
 - a. Less than 5
 - b. 6-10

- c. More than 10
11. What kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your career progression?
- a. No effect
 - b. Some effect
 - c. Large effect
12. What kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your approach to leadership in the workplace?
- a. No effect
 - b. Some effect
 - c. Large effect
13. Do you believe you are a better performer in the workplace because of your participation in endurance events?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure
14. How important is your endurance training to your ability to be an effective leader?
- a. Extremely important
 - b. Very important
 - c. Moderately important
 - d. Slightly important
 - e. Not at all important
15. Which of the following professional skills do you believe you have developed or improved as a result of participation in endurance events? Check all that apply.
- a. Stress management
 - b. Focus

- c. Problem solving
- d. Creativity and imagination
- e. Productivity
- f. Mental agility
- g. Negotiation
- h. Accountability
- i. None
- j. Other (please specify)

16. Which of the following leadership competencies do you believe are fostered via participation in endurance sports? Check all that apply.

- a. Communication. Express ideas clearly and uses language to build common understanding.
- b. Execution and results. Aligns resources to accomplish key objectives and assigns clear accountability (to oneself and/or others) for important objectives. Achieves meaningful accomplishments.
- c. Influence. Inspires and motivates others to take action through direct and/or indirect authority.
- d. Strategic perspective. Gains perspective and has a long-term view on what needs to be accomplished while also completing short-term objectives.
- e. Working across boundaries. Works across a variety of teams and functions within the organization to build collaborative relationships.

17. If you believe that endurance sports help one to become a better leader, do you have any additional thoughts that would be helpful in understanding your experience and perspective? How has your leadership philosophy and experience been shaped by your participation in endurance sports? Conversely, if you don't believe that endurance sports helps one to become a better leader, do you have thoughts on why there is no correlation? Please share here.

18. If you would be open to a 15-20 minute phone call or in-person chat to answer some additional questions, please share your name and phone number here. I'm looking for a few people who I can dive into more details with. Thank you in advance if you're willing to help - I won't share your name or any identifying information in the results.

APPENDIX B

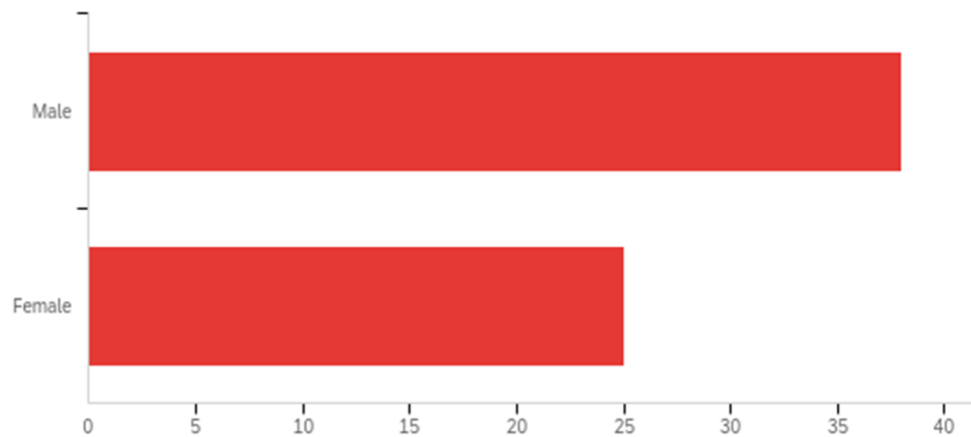
QUALTRICS SURVEY RESULTS

Default Report

Endurance Sports Effect on Leadership

December 18th 2020, 1:13 pm MST

Q1 - What is your gender?

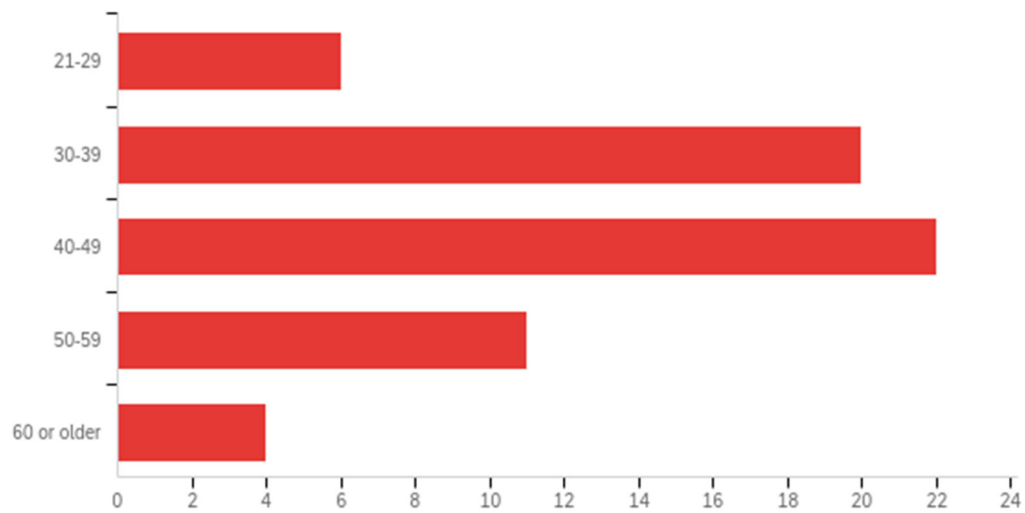


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your gender?	1.00	2.00	1.40	0.49	0.24	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Male	60.32%	38
2	Female	39.68%	25
	Total	100%	63

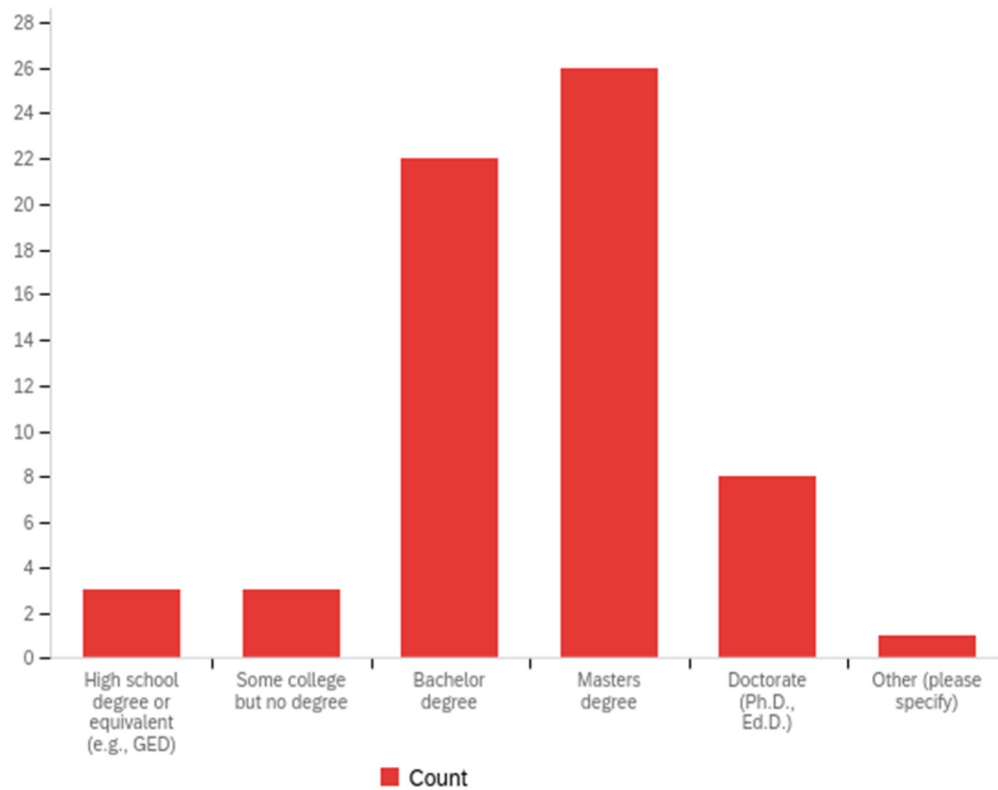
Q2 - What is your age?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your age?	1.00	5.00	2.79	1.04	1.08	63



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your age?	1.00	5.00	2.79	1.04	1.08	63

Q3 - What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received? - Selected Choice	1.00	6.00	3.57	0.99	0.98	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)	4.76%	3
2	Some college but no degree	4.76%	3
3	Bachelor degree	34.92%	22
4	Masters degree	41.27%	26

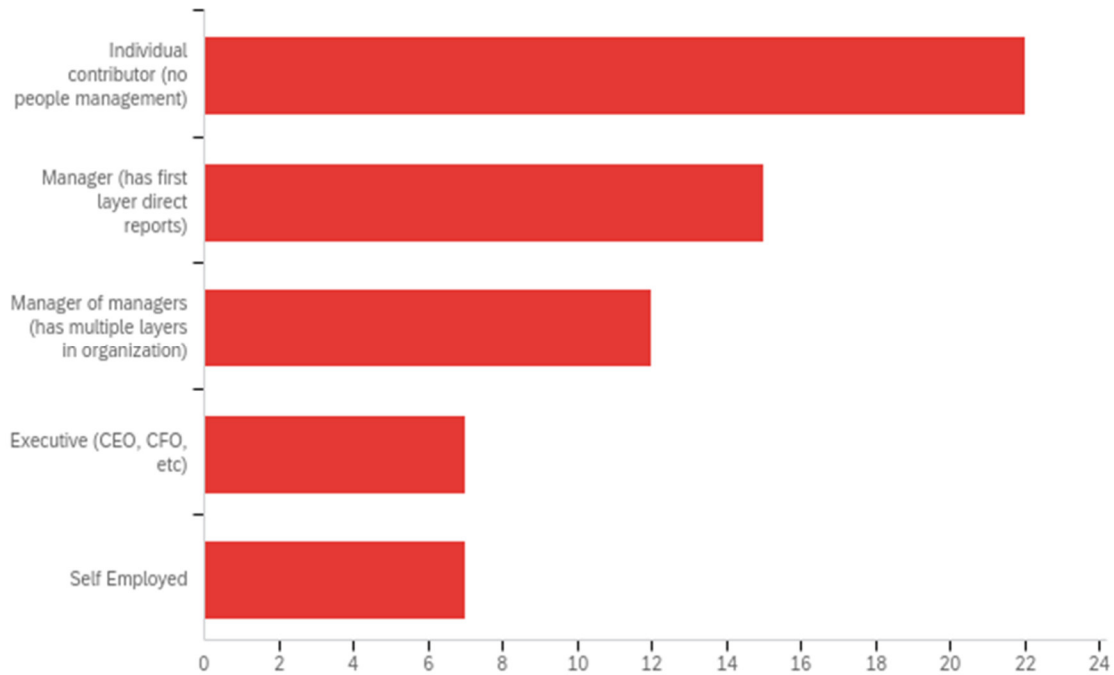
5	Doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D.)	12.70%	8
6	Other (please specify)	1.59%	1
	Total	100%	63

Q3_6_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify) - Text

MD, MBA

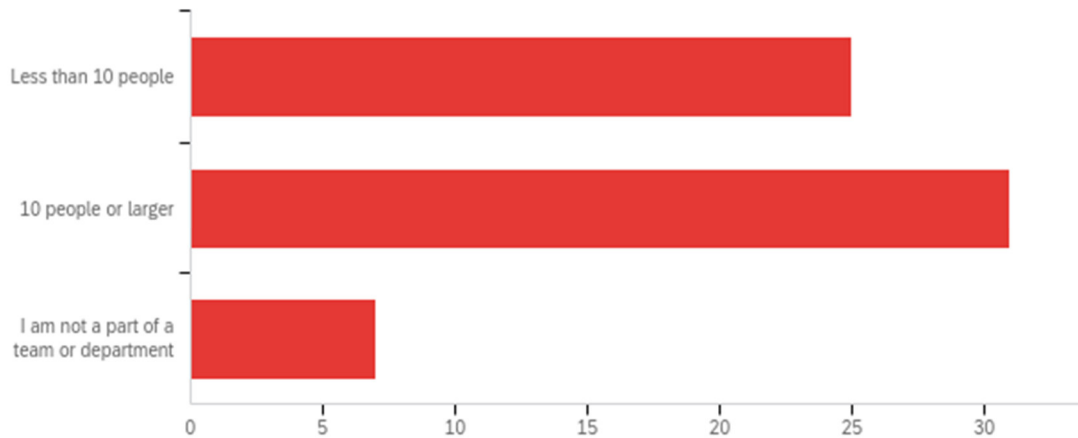
Q4 - Which of the following best describes your professional role?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Which of the following best describes your professional role?	1.00	5.00	2.40	1.35	1.83	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Individual contributor (no people management)	34.92%	22
2	Manager (has first layer direct reports)	23.81%	15
3	Manager of managers (has multiple layers in organization)	19.05%	12
4	Executive (CEO, CFO, etc)	11.11%	7
5	Self Employed	11.11%	7
	Total	100%	63

Q5 - How large is your immediate team, department or region?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How large is your immediate team, department or region?	1.00	3.00	1.71	0.65	0.43	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than 10 people	39.68%	25
2	10 people or larger	49.21%	31
3	I am not a part of a team or department	11.11%	7
	Total	100%	63

Q6 - What is your job title?

What is your job title?

Operations Manager

Senior Solutions Architect

SVP

General manager/ small business owner

Small business owner

Operating Room Nurse

Strategic Planning and Business Development Consultant

AVP

Owner

Program Manager Strategic Accounts

Account Director

Project Manager

Division Chief of Pediatric Anesthesiology

Teacher

Information Governance Compliance Attorney

Student

Print Production Studio Supervisor

Sr. Production Foreman

Veterinary technician

Behavior Clinician

Teacher

Pharmacy resident

Library Assistant

Camp and School Director

Firefighter

Sales Manager

Regional Asset Coordinator

Asmin assistant

Teacher

Quality Assurance Supervisor

Director, Strategic Operations

CFO

Athlete Manager

Senior research associate

Director of Lead Gen. & Online Content

Assistant Dean of Liberal Arts

Research Associate II

Property Administrator

Attorney

Account Executive

Executive Producer

Chief Technology Officer

Instructor

SVP

production safety consultant

Attorney

Professor

Director, Client Relations

Chiroprator

Resident physician

President & COO

Executive Director

Human Resource

Vice President of Operations

Account Manager

Software engineer

District Center Store Sales Manager - Giant food

Owner - Outdoor guide; professional photographer

Chief Technology Officer and Co-Founder

avp

Systems Engineer

Sales Executive

Q19 - What industry do you work in?

What industry do you work in?

Attractions/Entertainment

Media and Video

Technology

Cycling retail

Bicycle retail

Health Care

Healthcare

Banking

Retail and bar

Medical Device Manufacturing

Sports

Pharma

Helathcare

Education

Legal

Law

advertising

Energy

Animal care/healthcare

Social Services

School District

Healthcare

County Library

Child care

First Responders

Beverage distribution

Federal

Medical

Education

Food Manufacturing

Healthcare

Manufacturing

Outdoor Industry

Science research

Medical Billing

Education

Pharma

Property management

Legal Profession

Technology Sales

Film and Video Production

Software Engineering

Higher Education

Advertising

Film and Television

Legal services

Academic Healthcare and Science

Financial Services

Health care

Medical

Footwear

Medical Device

Electrical

Recreation

Technology

Consulting

Retail - Supermarket

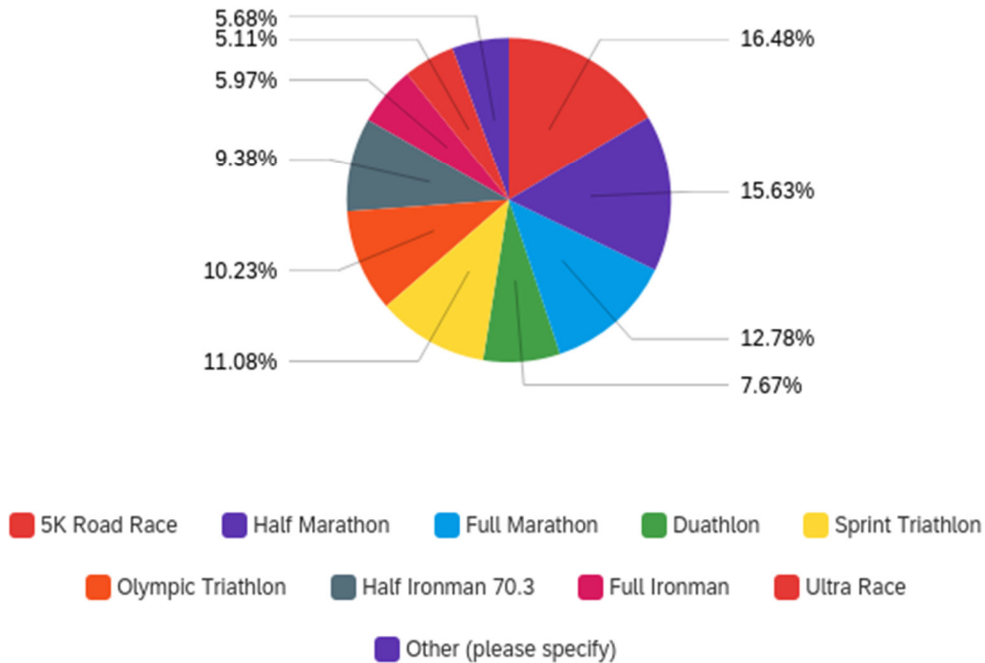
Adventure travel; photography

Consumer Data Analytics

finance

Defense

Q8 - Which of the following endurance events have you competed in? Please check all that apply.



Data source misconfigured for this visualization

#	Answer	%	Count
1	5K Road Race	16.48%	58
2	Half Marathon	15.63%	55
3	Full Marathon	12.78%	45
4	Duathlon	7.67%	27
5	Sprint Triathlon	11.08%	39
6	Olympic Triathlon	10.23%	36
7	Half Ironman 70.3	9.38%	33
8	Full Ironman	5.97%	21
9	Ultra Race	5.11%	18
10	Other (please specify)	5.68%	20
	Total	100%	352

Q8_10_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify) - Text

bicycle centuries and 149 miles rides

national and regional swim meets

50+ mountain bike races marathon and ultra mtb

50k, 50 mile, 100k and 100 mile

Swim around Key West, mid and ultra distance national swimming championships, SwimRun Georgia, RAIN Ride, Leadville trail marathon, and probably quite a few other fun things!

Obstacle Course

10k-15k mud runs, 198 mile bike ride for charity

Marathon swimming/open water swimming

Ragnar Relay

Spartan Race

Escape from Alcatraz

Century and Century plus cycling

10K

Cycling race (crit)

Swim Run, bike racing

Long road bike rides

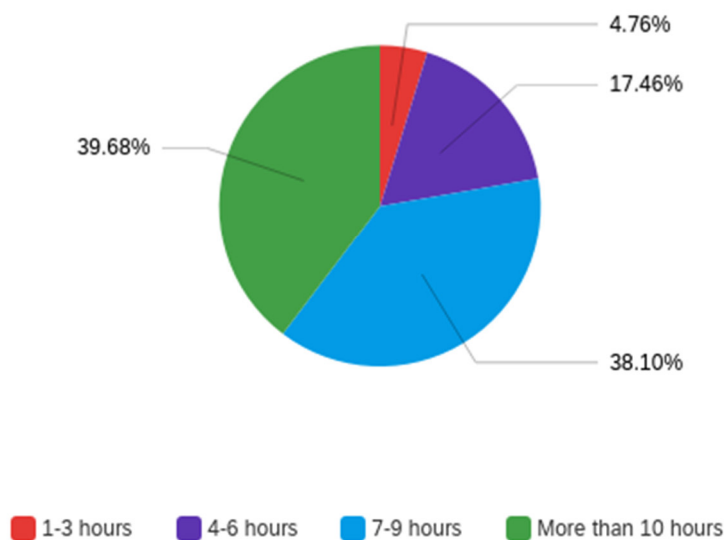
Trail 25k, Trail 20 mile

Tough Mudder / Spartan race

Open water swimming, cycling

virtual run; virtual bike

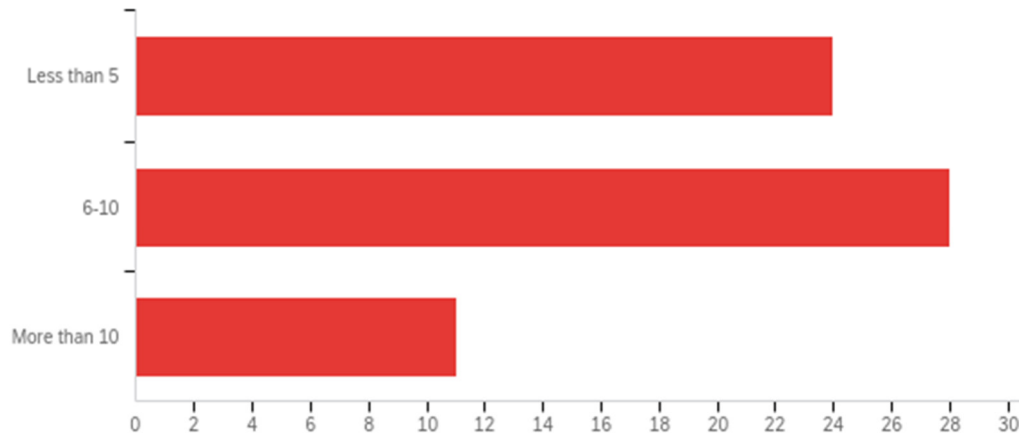
Q9 - How often do you train per week?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How often do you train per week?	1.00	4.00	3.13	0.86	0.75	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	1-3 hours	4.76%	3
2	4-6 hours	17.46%	11
3	7-9 hours	38.10%	24
4	More than 10 hours	39.68%	25
	Total	100%	63

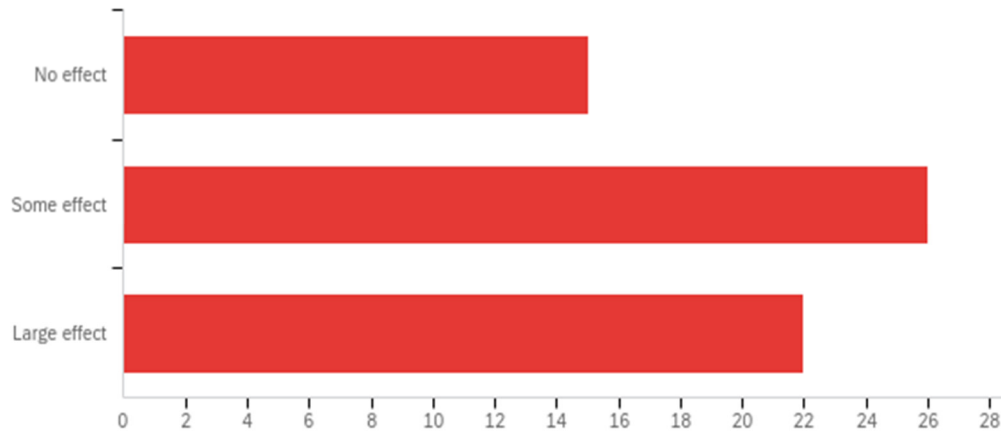
Q10 - On average, how many endurance events do you participate in on an annual basis?



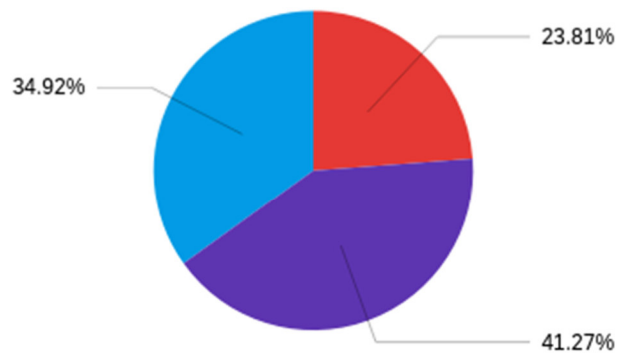
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	On average, how many endurance events do you participate in on an annual basis?	1.00	3.00	1.79	0.72	0.51	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than 5	38.10%	24
2	6-10	44.44%	28
3	More than 10	17.46%	11
	Total	100%	63

Q11 - What kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your career progression?

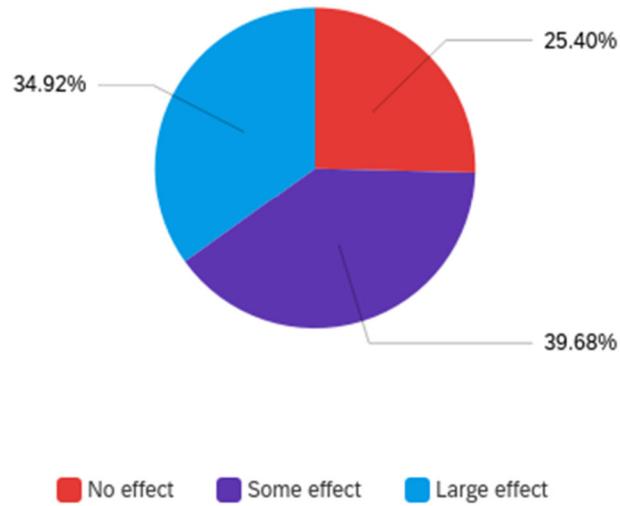


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your career progression?	1.00	3.00	2.11	0.76	0.57	63



■ No effect
 ■ Some effect
 ■ Large effect

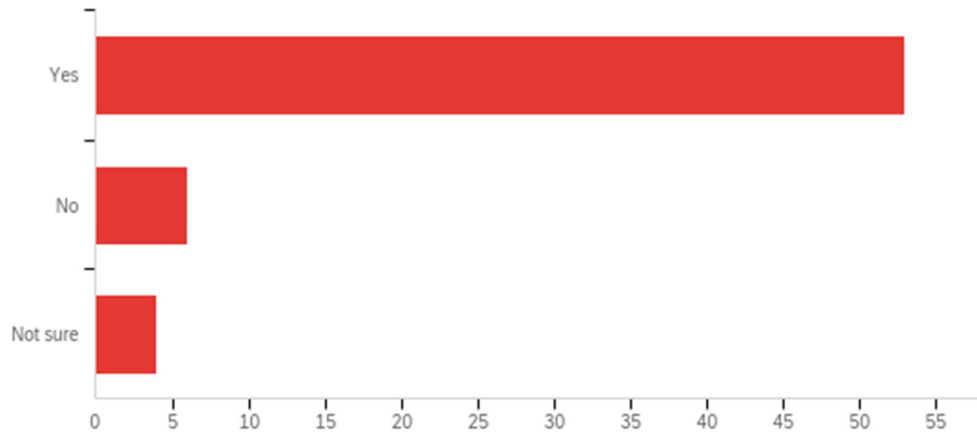
Q12 - What kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your approach to leadership in the workplace?



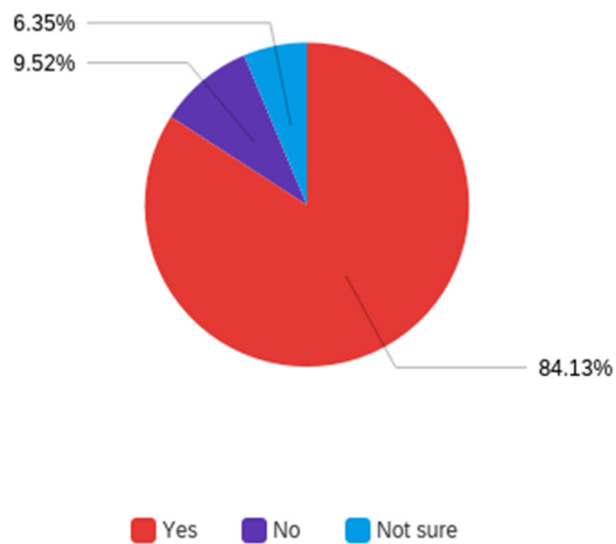
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What kind of an effect has participation in endurance events had on your approach to leadership in the workplace?	1.00	3.00	2.10	0.77	0.59	63

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No effect	25.40%	16
2	Some effect	39.68%	25
3	Large effect	34.92%	22
	Total	100%	63

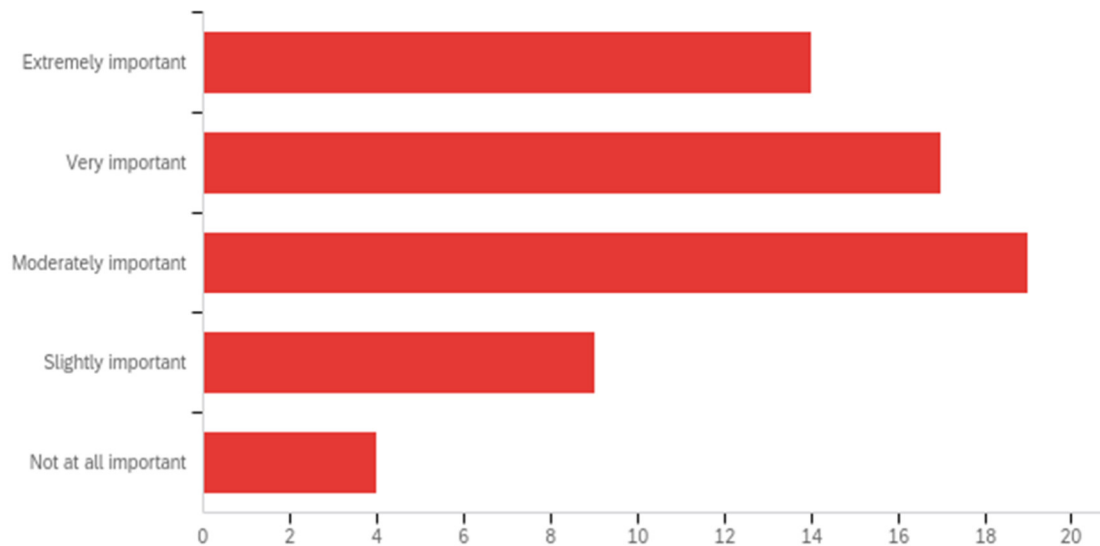
Q13 - Do you believe you are a better performer in the workplace because of your participation in endurance events?



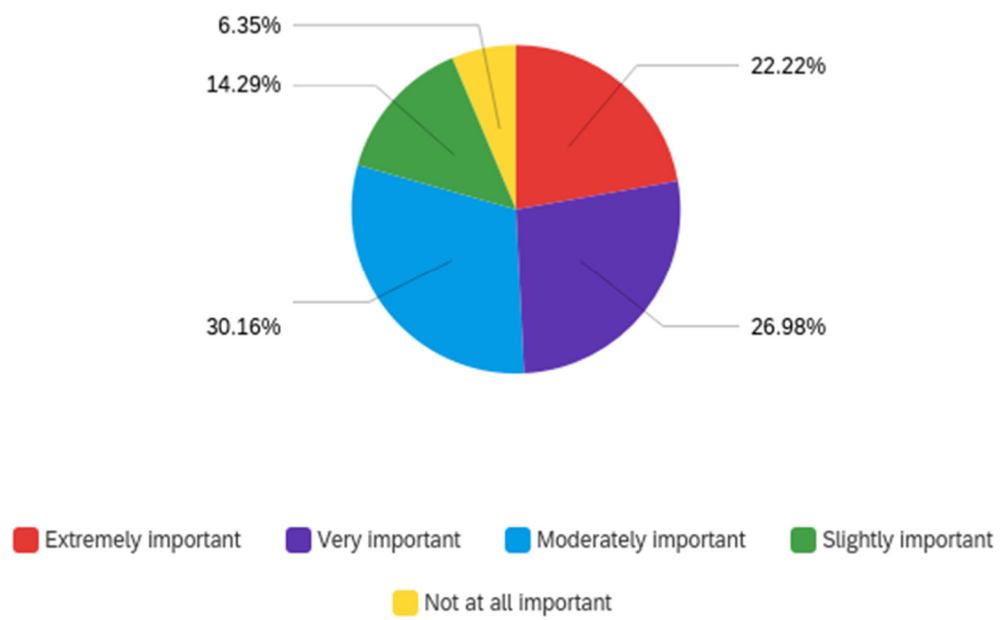
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you believe you are a better performer in the workplace because of your participation in endurance events?	1.00	3.00	1.22	0.55	0.30	63



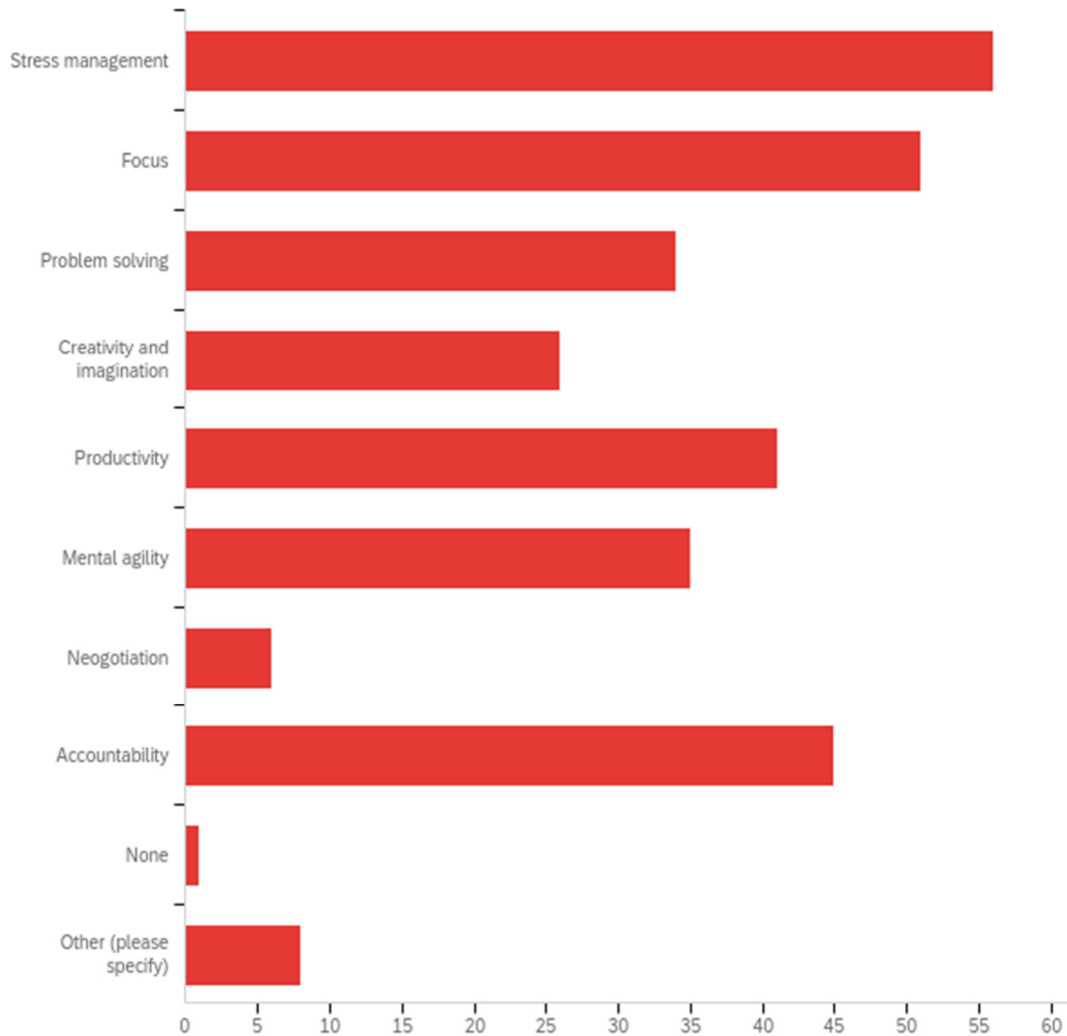
Q14 - How important is your endurance training to your ability to be an effective leader?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How important is your endurance training to your ability to be an effective leader?	1.00	5.00	2.56	1.17	1.36	63



Q15 - Which of the following professional skills do you believe you have developed or improved as a result of participation in endurance events? Check all that apply.



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#	Answer	%	Count
1	Stress management	18.48%	56
2	Focus	16.83%	51
3	Problem solving	11.22%	34
4	Creativity and imagination	8.58%	26
5	Productivity	13.53%	41

6	Mental agility	11.55%	35
7	Neogotiation	1.98%	6
8	Accountability	14.85%	45
9	None	0.33%	1
10	Other (please specify)	2.64%	8
	Total	100%	303

Q15_10_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify) - Text

work thru difficult scenarios

Mental toughness

Performance under pressure

Resilience

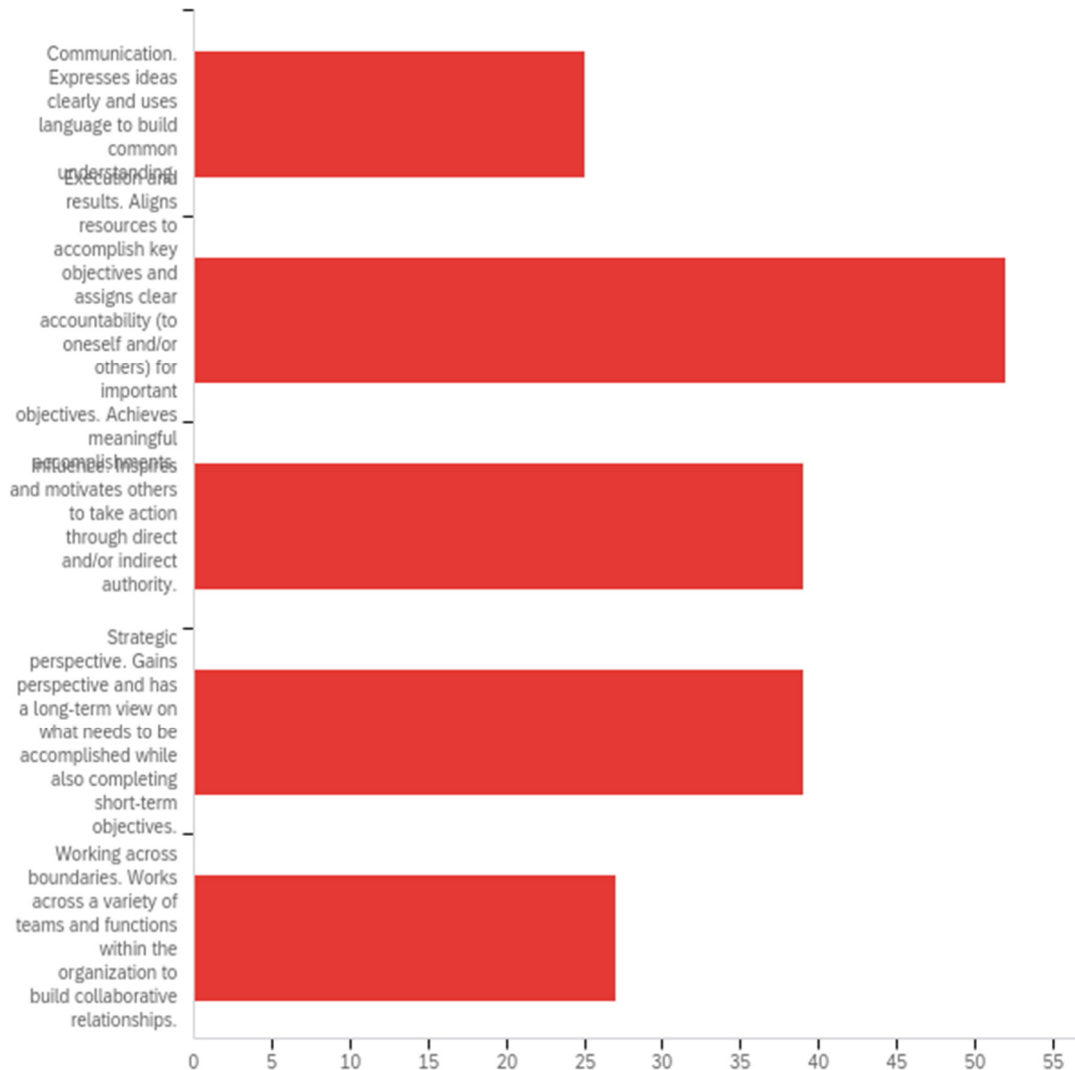
Time management

Patience

executive function; grit/perseverance; drive for success/outcomes; future goal setting

Goal Setting

**Q16 - Which of the following leadership competencies do you believe are fostered via participation in endurance sports?
Check all that apply.**



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#	Answer	%	Count
1	Communication. Expresses ideas clearly and uses language to build common understanding.	13.74%	25
2	Execution and results. Aligns resources to accomplish key objectives and assigns clear accountability (to oneself and/or others) for important objectives. Achieves meaningful accomplishments.	28.57%	52
3	Influence. Inspires and motivates others to take action through direct and/or indirect authority.	21.43%	39

4	Strategic perspective. Gains perspective and has a long-term view on what needs to be accomplished while also completing short-term objectives.	21.43%	39
5	Working across boundaries. Works across a variety of teams and functions within the organization to build collaborative relationships.	14.84%	27
	Total	100%	182

Q17 - If you believe that endurance sports helps one to become a better leader, do you have any additional thoughts that would be helpful in understanding your experience and perspective? How has your leadership philosophy and experience been shaped by your participation in endurance sports? Conversely, if you don't believe that endurance sports helps one to become a better leader, do you have thoughts on why there is no correlation? Please share here.

If you believe that endurance sports helps one to become a better leader, do you have any additional thoughts that would be helpful in understanding your experience and perspective? How has your leadership philosophy and experience been shaped by your participation in endurance sports? Conversely, if you don't believe that endurance sports helps one to become a better leader, do you have thoughts on why there is no correlation? Please share here.

would think the population of triathletes is generally successful in career and is biased toward those in leadership, give cost of participation. almost a self fulfilling prophecy. think there is correlation in having competitive nature, but not just endurance sports. example: bridge, chess, etc do traits of endurance athlete lead to good leaders or vice versa?

Training for long distance races allows for your mind to relax and allocate time to problem solving and focus. You spend a lot of time working through work challenges in your head and the endorphins work to lift your mood and objectivity. Ironman races require 9 months of preparation and training. Achieving that goal builds confidence.

Training and competing in endurance sports has given me the perspective that planning, practice and focus can result in the achievement of goals that initially seem unassailable.

Persistence. Better time management. You become an example or inspiration to others. Learn to overcome obstacles. Take ownership of actions. Learn how to deal better with uncertainty (no race is perfect conditions or no training is perfect/flawless).

People look up to me and respect what I do .

Participation in endurance sports has taught me resilience and perspective. It is not uncommon in an endurance event to feel exhausted and uncertain at some point, only to feel better a few miles later. That's a good lesson to learn in life and work, as well - when things are tough, it does not always mean they're just going to get tougher. Just keep moving.

My job involves stressful situations under high physical and mental performance. Endurance training allows me to acclimate my mindset in a controlled chaos during races or training to better perform under the most stressful situations when it's matters of life or death. I have the ability to focus, task orientate, and communicate when I'm working because of my endurance training. The ability to perform tasks under stress is difficult but with stress, heat, and elevated heart rate it is even harder. Endurance training has trained my mindset and coordination to further my skill sets at work.

Managing the difficulties in training and adjusting expectations to reflect current reality have both significantly contributed to how I manage my professional responsibilities, in a positive way.

In my opinion, being healthy and focused helps enhance leadership. So training and participation in endurance sports should correlate. The discipline inherent in training is also helpful.

I think regular physical exercise that is outdoors provides all the benefits of endorphins being released, oxytocin, and other hormones. Additionally, vitamin D production and uptake; improved metabolism, muscle to fat ratio, and general health. This includes mental health. This in turn impacts the ability to think, analyze and respond to complex or stressful situations, cope, and be productive. All of these are key to leadership a success at work. I'm not sure all of this is necessarily tied to endurance sports versus other sports. But I'd be interested to reading any empirical evidence/mid and long-term studies on this.

I think keeping yourself physically fit helps with everything including leadership.

I keep my private life out of my work life.

I believe that endurance athletes are generally good at getting things done because we're highly motivated and not lazy

I believe that I am the same person everywhere, and that skills and lessons learned or earned in one context are transferable to another. With that perspective, I believe that sport is a "place to practice" for life and leadership. It is a safe place to test limits and tactics and strategies for success. And the feedback cycle can be rapid; results come quickly.

I believe that athletics in general and particularly endurance athletics help develop leadership skills. For example, problem solving is a key leadership quality and also a tool which can be developed through endurance athletics as completing these types of events involves creativity. I also believe it develops a mentality of "anything is possible" which fosters a positive attitude. In my opinion it's this attitude that is crucial in leadership as it inspires others to follow your lead.

I am results driven, professionally and personally. Driven to achieve at work and driven to achieve in triathlon. Time management is critical in business and in balancing the training workload, as well as balancing work/life activities...and respecting employee's work/life balance.

I am not an extremely active endurance athlete by most standards. I ride long distance because being fit improves my attitude and provides an outlet for stress. I believe that attaining a Master's Degree was most significant in building my leadership skills. Endurance training makes me a better person but I don't believe it contributes to my leadership abilities.

Endurance training is a stress release for me as well as time to think through issues at work and personally. Giving an hour to yourself alone without interruption is needed to collect thoughts and prioritize. I'm also a believer that being physically in shape helps mentally. Also haven't taken a sick day in years so I'm more productive than my peers who tend to be out many times per year.

Endurance sports training has helped me become a better leader because I have learned balance and better time management. Others see me with better balance and that allows them to create better balance for themselves. I leave work on time because no matter what, the work will always be there, one can never really get through the emails and projects, and I want to be a better me.

Endurance sports require long term planning, commitment, and endurance. I have found that the same applies to business, particularly in my roll as a co-founder. In order to be successful in both arenas you have to constantly be looking at the larger picture and adjusting your plans on the fly to make sure you are properly prepared to execute the end goal. For me the long term thinking and conditioning from preparing for 150 mile cycling rides has taught me valuable lessons that can be applied to many areas of my life.

Endurance sports have played a large role on my personal/professional leadership development. It's helped me become better at setting goals and achieving them. Completing an IM in 2009 was a huge paradigm shift for me in terms of building confidence and setting larger goals for myself to achieve. I took a mental tenacity away from that experience that has allowed me to focus on achieving goals that I never thought were possible. The discipline that it takes to train for endurance sports has translated into my professional life.

Endurance sports and leadership do not have a connection.

Endurance events, specifically ultra running has a good amount of problem solving. No matter how well you train, things will go wrong in a race/run. Learning to deal with the unexpected and work thru them is a valuable skill in life and the professional environment. Also the ability to endure difficulties, knowing it will change at some time is translatable.

Q18 - If you would be open to a 15-20 minute phone call or in-person chat to answer some additional questions, please share your name and phone number here. I'm looking for a few people who I can dive into more details with. Thank you in advance if you're willing to help - I won't share your name or any identifying information in the results.

If you would be open to a 15-20 minute phone call or in-person chat to answer some additional questions, please share your name and phone number here. I'm looking for a few people who I can dive into more details with. Thank you in advance if you're willing to help - I won't share your name or any identifying information in the results.

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