

Passion is the biggest key to success

April 21 2022, by Steinar Brandslet



Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

"For people who are the best of the best in their field, passion is absolutely the biggest factor. It's the essential key to success," says Hermundur Sigmundsson, a professor in NTNU's Department of Psychology.

Researchers at NTNU, collaborating with several other institutions, have taken on a group of talented male football players to see what qualities

determine which of them become the cream of the crop.

They found that one specific trait stands out: a burning passion for football.

Sogndal county and regional teams

Participants in the study were the players on Sogndal's elite team and the regional team of Sogn og Fjordane's 14–15 year old boys. All these players are highly proficient footballers.

The researchers were helped by a coaching team who selected the very best of these talented football players.

The players answered a questionnaire about their passion, grit and positive mindset. The study results were recently published in *New Ideas in Psychology*.

Highest to lowest

Participants in the survey included 25 elite players and 21 regional players in the 14–15 year old age group. In the older group, the researchers compared the eight highest ranked with the eight lowest ranked players. In the younger group, researchers compared the seven highest and the seven lowest ranked players.

"We found no difference in the players' grit and positive mindset. Where we did find a difference was in their passion," says Sigmundsson.

It is worth noting that all the [players](#) in this study were men. Previously, Sigmundsson and his colleagues have found that passion is more important for men than for women. Passion is not necessarily as crucial

to success for women.

Burn, baby, burn

The results are also transferable, not only to other sports but to completely different fields, such as school and work.

In other words, grit and a positive mindset can carry you a long way on the path to excellence. But if you really want to be the absolute best at something, finding your burning [passion](#) is the key.

More information: H. Sigmundsson et al, Passion a key for success: Exploring motivational factors in football players, *New Ideas in Psychology* (2022). [DOI: 10.1016/j.newideapsych.2022.100932](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.newideapsych.2022.100932)

Provided by Norwegian University of Science and Technology

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