Concluding Gladwell’s “Outliers”

Every person has his/her own presuppositions about all aspects of life. We know some facts, believe in them and even do not question about where they came from. Everybody thinks that the sun rises every morning, but in reality, the sun does not move. The Earth is moving around the sun and spins around itself simultaneously. For this reason, we have days and nights, mornings and evenings.

Sometimes we get our presuppositions from other people that we trust, or we get them from our own experience. Some presuppositions are foundational and some are wrong. Therefore, we can understand which of them are right and deserve attention. We need to think thoroughly and critically to make our own research. In “Outliers”, Gladwell depicts his presupposition that success results from the cycle of favorable consequences and meaningful work.

The issue of personal success that Gladwell discusses in his book is tightly related to the amount of meaningful work that we perform during our life. There are no doubts that meaningful work affects the outcomes. When we measure our work only with monetary reward, we do not feel the joy of fulfillment. This is one of the reasons why we do not completely succeed in what we do. Gladwell makes a solid argument in “Outliers” that people create the rules for their achievements. We forget to analyze a failure stories while we blindly follow only the successful ones.

We always try to personalize the success in our life, and this is the wrong way that we determine for ourselves. We tend to believe that people are born to be successful, and we
idolize those successful individuals and try to be as they are. We follow their way. We often can see the populism of their way of living in magazines, books and other media dedicated to these successful individuals. Therefore, we consciously choose someone’s way to the success instead of creating our own. Moreover, we easily get upset and disappointed when after all attempts we do not receive the same result as our “idols”.

Through the example of Chinese, who are considered in the society as hard-working and patient people, Gladwell illustrates that there are opportunities for all, but the difference is how we use these opportunities.

In fact, America has long been known and still is considered as the land of opportunities. People still follow “American dream” which has a variety of interpretations. Some people might say that this means to become wealthy and live in a big house. The others might think that American dream might be defined as a quick way of achieving the success that does not depend on the initial position someone has in society (or in other words, it starts with nothing). Gladwell insists that achieving this success is possible through personal fulfillment linked to certain favorable factors.

All in all, I would not dispute with the author that a hard work is a necessary component to be successful in life, and the lucky consequences fasten the achievements making us true outliers. Gladwell’s book was the enlightenment for me because it elucidates the fact how it is important to follow your God and believe in your personal achievements.

The stories of success teach us, but they do not consist of the full formulas how to be an achiever. The final chapters of “Outliers” conclude that the life of fulfillment is a fruitful one, which reveals the path to success. We choose the life opportunities under the pressure of social rules because anyway we are influenced by our surrounding. However, we are lucky to have a freedom of choice to perform the work we like and seize the opportunities, which are
given to us. Basically, we can escape the cultural legacy and other constraints on way to success.