Twitter Thread by Patrick McKenzie



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FAQ: “How do I get better at writing?”
Me: Write a million words.
Follow up: “Hah but seriously.”
Me: Start with 20,000 words. Everyone gets to that 50 times in their first million.
Follow up: “No seriously.”
Me: Nobody expects 10 Quick Tips To Play Violin At Carnegie Hall.

The Internet is so much better at teaching writing than the traditional educational system principally because it removes an artificial and limiting constraint on output imposed by ability of gatekeepers’ limited time to evaluate output.

(Interestingly in fields where we actually care about performance we’re good at encouraging students to practice when no one is watching but for writing we basically assume all the value is created by the teacher-minute of attention. Teacher-minutes are scarce and rationed.)

If you ever want to be deeply, deeply disillusioned about the state of the world, compare what we do where we care about output quality and what we do where we don’t, and which domains sort into which column by revealed preference.