

GOOD, BETTER, BEST.

by Craig Harrison

The summer Olympics were a reminder to us all about the vision, discipline and dedication required to be the best. Regardless of your field, industry or field of competition, the best doesn't happen by accident.

In sales situations there are many opportunities to transform your performance from good to better to best.

GOOD: Making your sales calls as scheduled.

BETTER: Calling the morning of to confirm.

BEST: Calling the day before to reconfirm.

In service situations we similarly have opportunities to be good, better or best in our deliverables.

GOOD: You resolve a customer's problem.

BETTER: You resolve a customer's problem and then follow-up by e-mail to ensure their satisfaction.

BEST: You follow-up in person or at worst, by phone, speaking directly to the customer, to ensure they're 100% satisfied with the situation, after addressing their problem.

As you can see, being your best requires more thought, effort and commitment. Yet the trust and good will derived from your best enhances your reputation. It's a feather in your cap. Why wouldn't you strive to be best of class? If the goal is to earn customers for life, the investment to go from good to better to best is an investment in the future.

GOOD: You make your client calls every day you're in the office.

BETTER: You make extra calls on days you're in the office, to make up for days "on the road"

BEST: You make client calls every day, whether you're in the office, in your car, or between flights at an airport.

When you vow to give your customers the best you have you naturally find ways to deliver that level of excellence...whatever it takes.

GOOD: You enter each sales call with confidence, facts and figures.

BETTER: You enter each sales call fortified with research you downloaded from the Internet that morning.

BEST: Your pre-call preparation began a week ago and includes Internet research, phone interviews and more. You are up to date on all that client is doing, has done and will do.

According to Chuck Reaves, CSP, CPAE, CSO, and author of *Kaizen for Sales* and *The NANOSECOND Salesperson*: "continuous improvement in every endeavor is a worthy pursuit." Chuck shares my belief that language informs experience and continuously improving our speaking is also key to improved sales performance. Chuck continues: "Words are powerful tools that can create, improve or destroy, depending on how effectively they are deployed. As you speak and lead more effectively this year than last, and better next year than this year, and your successes will grow resultantly." I concur.

Bests and Personal Bests

Definitions differ as to what it means to be the best. You must decide for yourself. For some, the best is defined by standards, records and measurable achievements. The best derives from sales contests, annual sales or other barometers. I prefer the definition of success shared with me by a 97-year old retired English instructor and sports coach in a recent interview. According to legendary UCLA basketball coach John Wooden, a member of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame as both coach and player: "Success is the peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you were capable of becoming." If you use this as your guiding light for professional and personal excellence you will be a success by your own definition.

Goals and Gold

We've seen how the difference between Gold and Silver, or between medaling and not, can be as miniscule as 1/100th of a second. To be Phelpsian, you've got to commit to be your best each time out. Whether you're oriented by gold or goals, continuous improvement holds the key to your being the best you can be. ■

San Francisco Bay Area-based Professional speaker Craig Harrison founded *Expressions of Excellence!*™ to provide sales and service solutions through speaking. For information on keynotes, training, coaching, curriculum for licensing and more, call (888)450-0664 or email to: Craig@ExpressionsOfExcellence.com

