

SELLING POINTS

The Power of Focus

By Ruben Gonzales

What's the most important factor in making your dreams come true?

Focus!

Being focused on your dream is critical to making it become a reality.

Back in 1984, when I made a decision to take up the sport of luge and make a run at the Olympics, I took an 8x10 photo of a luge racer and hung it up across from my bed.

The first thing I saw every morning was "The Luge Man." He reminded me to work out, eat right and surround myself with winners.

The last thing I saw every night before I turned off the lights was "The Luge Man." All night long I would dream about the luge and about the Olympics.

I never met "The Luge Man," but he is one of my heroes. He helped keep me focused on my objective. And he was a factor that helped make my dream come true.

Ruben Gonzalez is a three-time Olympian, a peak performance expert, and a motivational speaker. For his free e-zine, go to www.thelugeman.com.

Going for the Gold

Dedication key for athletic and customer service success

by Connie Brubaker

The athletes of the winter Olympics are a fascinating breed — especially for someone like me who really *hates* cold weather.

In the pursuit of that elusive gold medal, they practice for years for just the chance to compete in an arena that is cold, slippery and totally unforgiving. Their sports are often misunderstood or even ignored by most of the public until the Olympics roll around every four years, when they may temporarily find themselves in the limelight.



Connie's Comments

Clearly, these Olympic athletes must be driven by something other than money or fame, at least in the conventional sense. What is it? The quest for perfection? To be the best? To cap years of training and preparation with the performance of a lifetime?

Watching fellow Texan Chad Hedrick win gold in the speed skating event gave me some clues to what must drive these exceptional individuals. The joy in his face as he crossed the finish line was the exclamation point to a goal achieved and a journey accomplished.

Olympic gold isn't accidental. Each of these world-class athletes have spent literally thousands of hours practicing their skills. Regardless of how they felt or what the weather was like, they made the commitment to be the best, every day, every time they set foot on the ski slope or the skating rink or the bobsled chute.



And believe it or not, that's the same dedication companies must have if they want to achieve a reputation for exemplary customer service. It takes daily practice and repetition — just like the figure skater who practices the same jump hundreds of times, so that the move becomes reflex under the pressure of competition.

Employees must daily cultivate the attitude that the customer is the number one reason that they have a job. They have to develop an automatic positive response, so that if a customer becomes difficult, they are never unclear about what to do. Those skills can only be developed through constant practice.

During the early years of my training and speaking business, I received many referrals to businesses that desperately needed customer service

continued on next page

Integrity
Training
Solutions

Connie E. Brubaker
Business Consultant

8125 Gutherie Drive
Austin, TX 78750

(512) 346-7270

connie@conniebrubaker.com

www.conniebrubaker.com

In this issue of SOLUTIONS:

- Going for the gold in customer service
- The power of focus
- Perspective from the Olympic platform

Connie's Upcoming Speaking Engagements:

March 8th: Central Texas Association of Mortgage Brokers

April 7th: Fort Worth Texas Women's Chamber of Commerce

Gold medal service takes practice, persistence

continued from page 1

training. What I discovered, though, was that most of these companies were unwilling to make the investment necessary to correct the problems.

Contrast that to the businesses who embraced my suggestions and dedicated themselves fully to consistently providing excellent customer service. They set goals, held themselves accountable and constantly looked for new and better ways to improve their service.

My role is like that of a coach. I en-



courage, evaluate, demonstrate, motivate and help maintain employee focus — and ultimately demand that they perform up to their full potential.

It's pretty clear which employees are cut out to compete at this level and which aren't. Some don't want to make the effort or dislike the notion of teamwork. They're easy to spot: the person sitting in class with crossed arms and glazed-over eyes, just trying to pass the time without improving themselves.

That's not how champions are made.

Occasionally, I've been able to break through that attitude of malaise. Once, I was even hired specifically to correct just one employee's attitude — though the entire company was involved in the training. Her breakthrough was a moment of triumph for me, a validation of my own hard work and dedication.

For most athletes, the quest for the gold isn't about money or fame. It's about the desire — and the dedication — to achieve perfection. Getting to the Winter Olympics in Turin is the culmination of years of practice.

For companies striving for gold medal customer service, the demands are the same. Do you have what it takes?

WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR SALES TO WOMEN? Sign up for one of Connie's informative, insightful and fun workshops on *Women's Role in the New World Market*. Choose from:

- *The Difference Between Men & Women and How They Buy*
- *Marketing to Women*
- *Selling to Women*

Connie Brubaker is a certified Integrity Systems® business consultant and professional speaker who focuses on sales, customer service and leadership.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"My life was changed not because I stood on the victory platform, but because of the struggle."

— Anonymous Olympian