

Bouncing Back

Sometimes success means being the first to recover from a mistake

Editor's Note: In this column space of *Vet-Advantage*, we will give you insight into both basic and advanced tactical selling techniques that will help you serve customers better than ever before. But let us preface this with a warning. The material in these articles is not for salespeople who are not ready to push themselves harder than ever before. It is for the professional who seeks constant improvement, fresh ways to serve customers, and constant learners who are never satisfied with being average. If this is you, it's great to have you on board. Now let's get to work!

Bonnie St. John lost a leg at the age of 5. Several years later, she would go on to become the first African-American to win an Olympic medal in skiing, as she was awarded a silver and two bronze medals in the 1984 Paralympics in Innsbruck, Austria. Recently on my radio program, I asked Bonnie to tell her story about how she won the silver. She said, "I was leading in the slalom after the first run. Then in the second run, I slipped on an ice patch and fell down the hill.



By Brian Sullivan

Recover

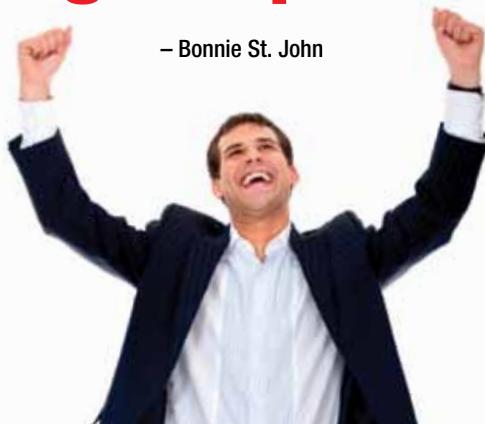
What about your business? In this tough economic environment, do you feel like you have slipped on a patch of ice? Well if so, now is the time to get up ... and get up faster than your competition. Because there is only one gold, and it's either going to be you or them.

To make your business move faster:
Get out of bed 30 minutes "faster" and

People fall down, winners get up, and gold medal winners just get up faster.

— Bonnie St. John

I thought for sure this would cost me a medal, but I got up and continued racing. Several other competitors hit the same patch of ice and also fell ... even the one who eventually won the gold. The only difference, however, between her and I, and the gold and the silver, was she got up faster ... and *that* won her the gold."



earlier each morning. Then use that extra time to learn something new about your Product, Industry or Competition (PIC Knowledge).

Stop procrastinating! It's time to quit talking and start doing. Write down a list of high value activities that might be painful but necessary

to make you successful, then schedule time each day to do those things.

Network and cold call more than the competition. If you are speaking to 10 accounts each day, increase to 15 accounts each day.

Expect speed. Make decisions more quickly and ask for decisions to be made more quickly from customers and colleagues.

Training

I then asked Bonnie, “How did you train to become a champion?” She said, “I trained with Olympic athletes who didn’t have the physical limitations I had. Because my goal was to be the best skier, not to be the best Paralympics skier. To be a champion, you need to surround yourself with the best.” To be a champion:

Surround yourself with people who are what you are trying to be. Seek out top performers in your company or industry and schedule a breakfast, lunch or beer. Then ask who, what, when, how did they get to the top.

Pick valuable training partners. If you are a distribution sales rep, seek out your top 10 manufacturer partners. Be proactive in scheduling time with them. Manufacturer salespeople will do more for distribution salespeople who they are friends with. Which means more leads, more knowledge and more sales. The same goes for manufacturer reps. If you are the type who says, “I never get any leads from that rep,” you need to ask yourself if you are doing enough to earn those leads.

This season, train to be faster! By this time next year, you will look back on the beginning of 2010 as the great-est New Year of your career ... the turn that couldn’t keep you down.