



Corsini's Point of the Week™

July 7, 2008 Part 3 of 6



Last Comic Standing

Let's get back to our series on overachieving and growth during challenging times. We've talked about maintaining your focus and working on the fundamentals of your job. We've offered reasons for optimism—plenty of people are currently overachieving. And we've talked about your "sweet spot" and how to be in it as much as possible. (Go to www.corsini.com and visit our archived Points if you want a refresher on these ideas.)

This week, let's take an unorthodox approach to success during challenging circumstances.

There is an Emmy-nominated television show called Last Comic Standing. It features struggling (and mostly unknown) comedians in a weekly competition. Like a couple other of the wildly popular reality TV programs, contestants either get booted off the show, or they move on to the next round. The idea, of course, is to be the last comic standing. Now the show is pretty funny (OK, some weeks are funnier than others), but it occurred to me that there's more going on here than just entertainment.

There's a certain degree of stress and difficulty associated with the competition. Like in our current challenging economy, this atmosphere makes competition harder. So I believe smart salespeople and business-development professionals (especially those with a real sense of humor) can take a few hints from the comedy crowd. Let's connect some dots.

- Positive energy is everything. No matter how many times a comedian has told a joke, they must deliver it with the same energy and vigor that they had the very first time they told it. When gathering information, advising your clients and building new relationships, it doesn't matter how many times you've been in a situation—you have to be energized, engaged and present in the moment. Every moment. Every time.
- Offer something different. Comedians constantly try out new material. Bring something different to your next business call. Use a different vocabulary than the

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Comedy is acting out optimism."
— Robin Williams

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competition. If everyone is saying, “We’d like to quote your insurance,” say something different. Tell the client: “We have a whole new way of looking at health care coverage. It’s smart, innovative and saves you money. Let me know if you’d like to explore our concept.”

- Make your time together memorable. We love comedians who really make us think and laugh. Those who can do this, get our attention, applause and support. Those who don’t, well, don’t. In business, you have to make your clients’ experience with you memorable and enjoyable. Even new relationships need to leave your very first meeting with a solid, favorable impression. I’ll even go so far as to say you can approach the experience in a “Disney-like” fashion. Do more than is expected. Stand out from the crowd, and make any time spent doing business with you special.
- Give it all you’ve got. On the comedy competition series, the comics must get better and better each week. They have to hone their material and perfect their timing. In these challenging times, you, as a successful businessperson, have to give it all you’ve got. All of the things you did last year to win a big project or deal might be the first things you do this year. Then you do more. It’s about laying it all on the line.

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CORSINI’S POINT

Funny as it might seem (no pun intended), comedians and salespeople have a lot in common—especially when it comes to competition during challenging times. Very often, success is about performing well under pressure. It comes from having a positive attitude. Then you have to show your audience something they haven’t seen before. You have to make your time together memorable. Don’t be afraid to try new approaches. And always, always give it all you’ve got—and then some.

Remember, we’re here to help you Do What You Do Better. We have our half-day conferences for executives and salespeople coming up at the end of this summer. Both events are designed to help you overachieve in today’s challenging business climate. Also, our newest book, *Do What You Do Better for Salespeople*, will be released in August.

Do What You Do Better™ with CCG Seminars

The Executive Briefing: Booming Business During Uncertain Times is designed for leaders who are looking for sustainable success during today’s tough markets. This half-day seminar from CCG will be held in August and will feature an outside speaker. Contact Briana Dudley at briana@corsini.com for more information.

Next, CCG will offer a seminar just for salespeople: *Making It Rain During Uncertain Times*. Also a

half-day format, this workshop will help salespeople recognize their true talents—the sweet spot that will help them succeed during trying times.