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## What are the Eight Common Keys to Success Shared by Olympic Swimmers, Top Sales People and Leading Restaurant Owners?

It has been exciting watching the breakthrough performances by the young Australian swimmers Stephanie Rice and Eamon Sullivan at the Olympic Swimming Team Trials here this week in Sydney. Rice breaking two world records 200 Metres and 400 Metres Individual Medley and Sullivan at just 0.02 away from breaking the 100 metre Free Style World Record. Sullivan was so close yet so far away. What incredible performances!

**So what makes these swimmers so great?** What parallels can we draw from their spectacular performances when we compare their performances to our top sales people and indeed our leading Restaurants? In fact we could really compare their phenomenal performances with how we perform in any business or career that we wish to pursue. They all have some common success attributes.

1. **A very clear Vision** – can you imagine Stephanie Rice just having a she will be right attitude – “I will jump in the pool and see what happens?” Of course not! You can bet she clearly visualised herself as being the best, of crossing the line first, of being a winner, of standing on the winners platform and receiving all the accolades.

The Top Sales Person visualises already having made the sale, they assume the customer is going to buy; they begin with the end result clearly focused in their mind. They don't see the obstacles but are clearly focused on the end result. They visualise the enormous benefit they are bringing to their customer and so all they say and do is framed in a way that makes the sale inevitable.

The Leading Restaurant Owner again has a clear vision for his/her business. They see it as providing the best service, the best food, the best wines, the most satisfied customers, the best surroundings, a place where people recommend to their friends, where people queue to get in the door, where they have to book two weeks in advance as the place is so popular.

***So what is your vision? Do you have one? Have you written it down? Are you clearly focused on your vision? Do you regularly visualise the end result? How does it feel? What are the emotions?***

2. **An enormously strong belief in one self** - that you can do it, that you are unstoppable, that there is no obstacles that you can overcome, that you have all the resources available to make it happen.

The Olympic Swimmer has this incredible mindset and focus. A subconscious belief; that they have the resources and power within to win. To go where no one has ever been before! To stretch the limits of human endurance! To use the enormous power within!

The Top Sales person believes they are the best! They constantly tell themselves they are best! The service they provide is the best! The product they sell is the best! They have this enormously positive attitude that they can do it! They can solve any customer problem! There are no obstacles but just opportunities to succeed! They use every small win as an opportunity to build their self esteem and belief in themselves and what they do!

The Leading Restaurant Owner believes he/she have the best restaurant. They instil this belief in their team. They ooze success and quality! They believe strongly in what they deliver! They listen to their clients! They demand the best! They have a total mindset and focus that they have the power to deliver an unforgettable experience for their customers! They look for the positive experiences to build a strong belief in themselves, their teams and what they are doing.

***Do you believe in what you are doing? Do you look for the positives in any situation to build a stronger belief in yourself? What do you do to help build the self esteem of your people? How do you build your own self belief in what you do within yourself and your team?***

3. **Clearly Defined Goals** – to have no goal is like drifting in the Atlantic Ocean in a life boat, aimless floating along hoping that one day you will find land. How long will it take? You drift with the currents and winds but you never seem to get there. Until you take out your compass, look at your map and then set a course to make land fall.

You can bet Stephanie Rice and Eamon Sullivan clearly had set goals to achieve when they dived into the pool at the Sydney Olympic Stadium. Rice had a goal all season to break the world record. Then to drop 1.43 seconds off the world record and 6 seconds off her personal best at the meet, truly shows the power of goal setting. Do you think she would have done this if she hadn't set a goal to strive for!

To strive for something that is very specific in itself significantly increases tenfold the chance of success and often you will be surprised at what you actually achieve. Stephanie was surprised at her actual performance – 6 seconds off your personal best is enormous in swimming terms. If she hadn't set the goal and strived for her best she never would have made it.

The same can be said about the Top Sales People. They all set goals. Goals for the year, month, week, day, product, number of calls, presentations, sales, income, etc. The simple act of writing down their goals and then breaking them down into manageable chunks significantly increases the chance of success. If you don't know where you are going, how will you be able to measure your success and how will you know if you need some help if you have no goals to measure yourself against.

The Leading Restaurant Owners all have goals for the number of "plates" they will serve in the evening, how many customers they can get in the door, the takings for the night, week, month or year, customer satisfaction, cross sell, new customers in their data base, etc. They set specific goals and measure everything they do.

***Have you set some specific goals for you, your business? Are they written down? Are your goals realistic? Do you monitor them? Do you celebrate their achievement? Do you seek help if you are unable to meet your goals? Do you graph, monitor and compare your results and trends?***

- 4. Careful Planning for their Success** – do you think Stephanie Rice just went out there and broke that world record! You bet not! This result has been part of years of years of training and planning.

At some point she would have set the goal to swim at the Olympics. She would then with the help of her coach worked out a comprehensive training plan, doing kilometres and kilometres of swimming, exercising in the gym, running, attending swimming meets all over the country, internationally and getting all the advice from Sports Psychologists and other successful swimmers.

Her success would have been part of a carefully thought out plan. Even down to the Olympic Trials there would have been a plan of how many seconds to complete each length of the pool and careful strategies thought out for how she was going to "play the game" on her big day against the other competitors.

In the same way the Leading Sales People very much plan for their success. Do you think they just walk into a sales presentation and just "wing it"! Of course they don't. They carefully think about the potential client. What are their issues, fears, needs, wants and frustrations? What are the hot buttons? What are the questions they need to ask? What is the sequencing of their presentation? What are the potential objections and what is the strategy to overcome them or to answer them

before they are asked? How can I make an irresistible offer that they ask to buy? Careful sales planning right from the initial call to the final presentation will differentiate the top sales people. Everything Counts, but like the Eamon Sullivan who just missed the world record by 0.02 of a second the differences between top sales people and the rest are only small but the income differences from being the best to average are enormous.

Again if we look at the Leading Restaurants there is enormous planning in ensuring their success; from ensuring you have enough food ordered to ensure you can meet the demands of your customers, to planning to have enough staff to ensure you can provide the prompt, attentive service, to the seating arrangements, to how reservations are handled, to managing walk ins when you have a busy restaurant or forward reservations but empty tables and managing the customer perceptions. The need to plan the phone scripts for taking reservations, to the scripts to manage the cross sell of wines, deserts, entrees, etc. The careful planning and in how staff greet the customer, serve the meal, handle customer complaints or how they are empowered to solve issues before they become a problem are all part of ensuring you have a leading restaurant. It is the detailed planning and training that truly marks out the leading restaurant. Again everything counts and it is the small differences that really matter in the eyes of the customer.

***Do you carefully plan for your success or do you just wing it? Have you studied your processes in detail? Have you used a process map? What improvements can you make to what you do? What can you eliminate to shorten the time you take to deal with the customer, solve their problem or issue?***

- 5. They all know their numbers** – Olympic Swimmers and all successful sports people are totally driven by their numbers. They monitor everything they do. They know exactly how many lengths they have swum, they know what the time of each lap was, they time everything, they watch for trends, they know when they are their slowness, they know what part of the race they have the most strength, they know the kick rate, the stroke rate, they know the average time they swim a race, what their personal best is and what they have to do at what part of the race to improve. You see the coaches out there with clip boards and stop watches monitoring everything. They have learnt to be the very best in the world they need to meticulously monitor everything they do.

In the same way whenever you come across a Top Sales Person and you talk to them about what they do, one of the first things you will find they know exactly what their numbers are. How many calls they have made, how many presentations they have made and how many sales they have made. They will also know what their percentages are for every step of the process. If they are working in a team they will know what the bench marks are and whether they are

under or over performing against their peers. They will keep daily records and charts showing their performance so you can see trends and where they are going. I used to say to sales people that I used to coach; “How do you know if your sales engine is misfiring if you don’t monitor your results? If your sales engine is misfiring then it is time for a tune up! Time to spend time with your coach! Time to revisit the basics of what you are doing! If you know your numbers you can quickly focus on the problem and tune your engine so you become again a high performing cash generating machine!”

The Leading Restaurant Owner also knows exactly his/her numbers. How many customers have visited the restaurant? What did they buy? What is the most popular course? What is the most profitable meal? What is the average profit per sale? How many have eaten several courses? How many have bought wine? What is the average sale value? What the Gross Profit is? How many are walk ins? How many reservations? How many no shows? What is the customer feedback? How many complaints/ meals being sent back? How many regulars/new customers? When are the busiest times during the day? When do we have spare tables available? Etc. By knowing the numbers you can calculate the lifetime value of a customer and work out the best way to promote your business and stop doing the things that are value diluting to your business.

***Do you know your numbers? What numbers do you need to collect? What things in your business should you be monitoring? How are you going to collect the information? How are you going to use the information? It is no use collecting it if you aren’t going to use it so develop a clear information strategy that is specific to your business.***

6. **They take action** – do you think Stephanie Rice would be a world champion today if she hadn’t decided to take action and to do the hard yards required to be a champion? She made the decision to follow her dream! To start doing the training! To working the tough schedules! To sacrificing much of her personal life and to commit to being the best! Without taking action she wouldn’t be where she is today!

The Top Sales People are all the same. They commit to being the best and to taking action. To making the calls! To picking up the telephone! To chasing the sale! To doing whatever is necessary to make the sale! Without action there is no sale.

The Leading Restaurant Owner takes the action by leading from the front! By setting the standards and expectations! By deciding to be the best! By being the Leading Restaurant in town! By deciding to do what most other restaurants choose not to do because it is too hard! By monitoring the all the key components of the business! By taking action in establishing a marketing and promotional plan

that will drive business to the door! And finally by taking action in putting in place the systems to ensure total customer satisfaction is almost always assured!

***What things can you take action on now! What things have you been procrastinating on? How can you move the blockages that are stopping you from taking action? What can you delegate or outsource to get the things you want done now? What help do you need or advice do you need and where can you get it? What do you need to do to develop an action mentality?***

7. **Persistence** – wow this is where the Olympic Swimmer really excels! The enormous discipline in getting up early each morning and pounding out the lengths of the pool. Back and forth. It doesn't matter how cold it is, how well they feel, they just keep on and keep on as they slowly improve and grow their stamina, their skills and their determination to succeed! They have the determination to overcome the daily challenges and temptations of life outside of swimming till one day they make it! And they are world champions! What a rush!

The Top Sales People also show this enormous dedication. They get doors slammed in their face, No s everywhere, but they just keep on making the calls, following the process. They have an enormously positive expectation that they only need to make one more call and they will make it. They overcome the hurdles, do the hard yards until finally they reach their goal and Eureka they make the sale. Oh what a wonderful feeling! They have overcome the odds.

Running a Leading Restaurant is never easy! You are relying on so many other people to deliver the ultimate dining experience every night, to every customer! The challenges that must be faced in a very fast paced environment are enormous! Where the food and service delivery has to run like clockwork, but then something comes at you from left field! Someone complains! Something goes wrong in the kitchen, but still you have to smile and continue! So you persist! You just keep going till at the end of the evening when a customer makes it all worthwhile and says "Thank you. That was a wonderful meal! What a fabulous team you have! I will be back soon with my friends!"

***Do you have the stamina to meet your goals? Can you do the hard yards, little chunks at a time to reach your milestones? Do you have someone who you can rely on to encourage you on when the going gets tough and to bring you back on track when you start to drift?***

8. **They all have a Coach** - who provides the discipline, the guidance, the challenges, the monitoring, helps with the goal setting and the planning for success. It is inconceivable these days for an Olympian to not have a coach. As to be your very best, where winners are made or broken in tenths of a second, every ounce of help is required to achieve Olympic Gold.

So does the Top Sales Person who in many situations is supported by a Sales Manager. More and more of the very best now employ a Sales Coach who is on hand by telephone or internet hook up to provide the timely support, advice and mentoring before entering a challenging sales situation. To review the script, to ask the hard questions, help develop strategies and help the Top Sales person get their head right and over the line with the sale.

All the very best Leading Restaurant Owners also employ a business coach to fill the gaps. The best restaurant owners know their business really well but often they need help finding the right ways to market and promote their business. Maybe some help with advertising. Or they need help developing the right sales scripts and systems that make the difference in the restaurants sales performance. Just like the Olympic athlete it only takes a few adjustments in a few key places and overnight the results can be significantly different.

***Do you have a coach/ or a mentor who can challenge you, guide you and help you to become an Olympic Champion in your business?***

So you can see with a clear vision, a strong belief in yourself, clearly defined goals, careful planning, monitoring, knowing your numbers, having an action orientated mindset, incredible persistence and the help and guidance of a coach anything is possible and you can be the best in your business or career!

**About the Author:**

Alistair Gray is a Marketing and Profit Improvement Specialist who works with small to medium sized businesses that have the potential to be turned into market leaders often resulting in sales and profit gains of 45-60% within 90 days or less, with the goal of expanding, selling, licensing or franchising the business at a huge profit within 3 years or less.

You are invited to meet Alistair for a confidential; no obligation free discussion on how you may achieve significant sales and profit growth in your business. At the same time he will give you a **FREE copy of Peter Sun's bestselling book "Maximum Profits in Minimum Time"**.

You have absolutely nothing to lose so call now on **02 9739 6755** or **0438 752 596** to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet.

By the way Alistair is paid on results and provides all his customers with a written results money back guarantee. How many other consultants do you know who are prepared to do that.

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