

Olympic Inspiration

By Bill Bachrach, CSP, CPAE

What were the most inspiring moments of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver for you?

Did you watch certain moments and find yourself saying something like, "If he or she can do THAT... what's possible for me?"

I hope so, because that's one of the biggest benefits of watching sports that most of us only watch every four years. There are valuable lessons to be learned. Let's not miss them and, more importantly, apply them to our own lives.

When was the last time you crossed your finish line at the end of the day and screamed with the joy, relief, and satisfaction of knowing you laid it all on the line? Think about Lindsey Vonn after her gold medal downhill run.

Did you watch some of the cross-country skiing or biathlon with amazement as competitor after competitor collapsed as they crossed the finish line wondering what your own life would be like if you pushed your limits just a little farther? I didn't catch his name, but one of the cross country skiers commented about how his sport is the only one where it's normal to puke after practice. That's commitment. I'm not suggesting that you should throw up at the end of good day's work, but maybe you could leave a little more on the "field of play." What do you think?

Who will ever forget 24 year-old figure skater Joanne Rochette whose mother, to whom she was very close, passed away unexpectedly shortly after arriving in Vancouver? Instead of packing it in, just four days later she skated with extra inspiration and won the bronze medal. Could there possibly have been a dry eye in the house or living rooms around the world when she looked to the heavens at the conclusion of her program? It's no wonder she was awarded the Terry Fox award as the athlete who best exemplifies courage and selfless qualities.

My favorite quotes from the games were:

"Before you go to sleep at night ask yourself one question: Did you do every single thing you could today to make sure that you did your best? It's hard to answer 'yes' every single day." - Apolo Ohno; Short-track speed skater

"The more awkward positions that I become comfortable with, the fewer situations I'll be uncomfortable with." - Graham Watanabe; Snowboarder

"I don't like to look at it as competition. It's about me conquering myself... me being able to face my own fears, distractions, and weaknesses and say that I overcame them." - Apolo Ohno; Short-track speed skater

How does this apply to you? What if being a financial advisor was an Olympic Sport?

How good would you have to be to make the team? Where would your client service

experience and client acquisition skills have to be in order to compete with the rest of the financial professional "athletes" on the world stage? How good would you and your team have to be to earn a spot on the podium or win the gold medal? These are great questions for you and your team to consider as you continually look for ways to be your best.

Fortunately, being a great financial advisor is not a zero sum game with only one gold medal. And you don't compete against other financial advisors only against your own potential. There is plenty of business for all of the great financial advisors in the world. As the saying goes, "it's only crowded at the bottom."

Take some inspiration from the athletes of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, Canada and use it as propellant to achieve your next level of success.

Remember... anything is possible.

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