

# It's the Execution...Stupid!

By T. Scott Gross

When *Positively Outrageous Service* was first published, several of my friends asked why I had written a manual that my competition could use against me. "What if your competitors read the book and then start doing the things that you write about? Isn't that like handing them the gun and teaching them how to aim?"

Actually the answer is yes...and no. Yes, in the sense that anyone who read the book would know exactly how to compete with me and perhaps beat me at my own game. But no, in the sense that human nature being what it is, my competitors were highly unlikely to either pick up the book or actually act on its ideas.

And there lies the biggest distinction between the winners and the alorans.

Winners execute while the alorans think about it. The alorans are in a constant state of getting ready to get ready. But in the end, they never actually do anything.

Winning ways can be described as a four step cycle.

- \* Study the best.
- \* Create an action plan.
- \* Play 'Idea Triage'.
- \* Study the best.

Winners are quick to seek and study the best. They rarely take the position that an idea has to be home-grown to taste good. In fact, winners are constantly on the lookout for ideas that they

can borrow whole or use as a foundation for adaptation.

And studying the best isn't limited to the same industry. Winners are natural students of the world in general. This opens their eyes to great ideas in non-related endeavors.

Simply collecting great ideas is of zero value. Some years ago, a colleague remarked that we had been very lucky in our business of writing, speaking and training. While luck certainly is a factor, maybe, just maybe, some of our so-called luck had something to do with the fact that we studied the best and then worked like the devil to put their ideas into action.

Too many folks attend seminars and read books only to return to work without a plan to put those new ideas to work. That's why it didn't worry me at all to write a book that my competitors could use against me. I knew darned well that if they read it, they wouldn't get off their duff long enough to throw off their old habits and try on my ideas about *Positively Outrageous Service*.

Winners have a decided bias toward action. They would rather put an idea to work and adjust it on the fly than to study it to death. Nike has the winners motto in three simple words: Just do it! So while winners study ideas, they make the process short, preferring to create action plans than white papers.

Having enough good ideas is never a problem for winners. Their problem is having too many ideas to use at once. So the best of the best know how to say no as quickly as they are capable of saying yes. They never throw out a good idea but they do set them aside as they play "idea triage" to focus on those ideas with the greatest potential in favor of good but less promising possibilities.

There is one final quality that defines the winning personality—winners are naturally curious, lifetime learners. While many successful business people get one good idea and then ride it for the rest of their career, winners never cease re-creating themselves and their businesses.

We are in an age where change will be more than a constant. It will come at an increasingly rapid pace. This will mean that it is no longer possible to live a full career on old ideas.

If you work best from bullet points try these on for size:

Winners...

...thrive on change and intelligent risk.

...love learning for the sake of learning.

...know that failure is a step to success.

...are biased towards action.

Do you see yourself in these words? If you do, look in the mirror and say hello to a winner!

