



## The Sales Olympics – Three Ways to Win the Gold

All across the world, people are glued to the TV watching the Winter Olympics. The attraction to the Olympics is universal. Spectators are addicted to “the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.” “The Games” serve as a fertile ground for teaching sales teams how to win. There are many learning points and below are three to discuss with your team:

### 1. Do the Work

It's a good thing our athletes didn't subscribe to the hours of work suggested in the book, “The Four Hour Work Week” by Timothy Ferris. I'm pretty sure mastery at this level isn't accomplished by practicing just four hours a week.

The biggest takeaway sales teams can learn from top athletes is the allocation of time; They invest more time practicing than performing. They invest hours in preparing for five minutes of glory on the ice or snow. They are masters of the emotional intelligence skill delayed gratification. They are willing to do the work in order to reap the reward. Unfortunately, most salespeople don't invest enough time in practice. In fact, their practice sessions are often conducted in front of prospects. (And wonder why their close ratios aren't better!)

Give this quiz to your sales team today to determine level of mastery:

- Please give me your value proposition for this buyer in this industry.
- What's a common problem your prospects have? What are the questions to quantify the cost of the problem?
- Throw out a common objection and listen to the answer given by your sales team.

Are the answers worthy of a bronze, silver or gold?

### 2. Mindset – “It ain't over 'til it's over.”

Johnny Spillane, Steamboat, Colorado resident and member of the Nordic Combined United States Olympic Team, looked like he was set to take the gold until Jason Chappuls from France edged him out by four tenths of a second. Johnny gave his best throughout the event, and ended up just short in the last seconds. (I think he just ran out of gas.)

How many of us in sales have given up before crossing the finish line because we are tired and/or the competitor is in the lead? Closing business is as much about selling



skills as it mindset. When you have lost a piece of business, can you look yourself in the mirror and say, “I gave 150%. I engaged until the very end.”

### **3. Mastery – “Good is the enemy of great.”**

This quote by Jim Collins nicely sums up the type of athletes showing up at the Olympics. They don’t have the luxury of being good because good doesn’t earn them a seat on the Olympic team. Olympic athletes are masterful. They invest thousands of hours in practice and being coached.

“Sales Olympians” possess the same qualities and mindset because they know today’s business environment is competitive and good is not good enough to win business. Great is now entry to the game of sales. Is your sales team good or great?

Enjoy the 2010 Winter Olympics. It is a great tutorial in building high performance sales teams.