

Strictly 6 Strategies for Success

Someone once asked me what the best present I'd ever received was. Only the day before, two tickets from the Strictly Come Dancing random draw had landed on the mat. I was going to be in the audience for a live recording! I was ecstatic – the sequins, the glamour, the celebrities, the stunning dance moves – everything lived up to my expectations.

Now, as you can probably guess, I'm a bit of a Strictly fan. Have you been following it? Are you supporting Team Cola or Ricky 'back-flip' Whittle? The more I've watched it, the more I see business lessons that can serve us all well going forward into a new year.

1. Be open to new opportunities

When Brendan and Anton, two of the longest-serving professional dancers, were originally approached to appear on this newly devised dancing programme they admitted that their immediate reaction was a definite 'no'. However, once they realised the BBC was serious about it they agreed (albeit with some reservations) and that one act of saying 'yes' has had life-changing significance for them. They told Claudia on "It Takes Two" that it has changed their lives completely, and opened up new possibilities for them, such as TV presenting, that they would never ever have envisaged or had the chance to do otherwise.

2. Work hard

Although the celebrities all start with different levels of dancing ability, the one thing the winners have in common is hard work and dedication. Literally, they often work until their feet bleed (or far worse) and then keep going. Erin Boag, aka Miss Whiplash, lives up to her nickname by saying, "When my guys complain to me that their right leg is hurting I say, 'Well, let's make the left one hurt to match'".

3. Listen

Sometimes others do know best. In Strictly the professional dancers teach, demonstrate, guide and encourage. In business, seek out people who can help you achieve your goals for they will inspire you to do your very best, share their talents with you, and help you on your journey.

4. Accept feedback

It's striking to see how people react very differently to feedback. This series it's been a pleasant change not to have all the tears (think Penny Lancaster) but Brendan, of course, has been true to form and even exceeded himself by marching offstage, defensively protecting his partner. On the other hand, Chris Hollins has reacted brilliantly, with respect, humour, and a sense of perspective. He has also worked to address their concerns so, fingers-crossed (mine, not his!), he will have sorted out his spatula hands by Saturday.

5. Have fun

Chris and Ola are the embodiment of a couple having fun while they work. They have formed a brilliant partnership and are taking pleasure in the journey, day by day, rather than working themselves into a frenzy trying to win. They have grasped that life is for living, and each day should be savoured as they strive to achieve their goal.

6. Visualise success

For all 16 Strictly couples starting out this year, getting their hands on the glitter ball signified success. And, like Brendan and Anton have said, success on Strictly can lead on to even bigger and better things. So, what will constitute success for you in 2010?

Think big and bold. Define clearly what you want to achieve. Find someone who will encourage and push you to believe in yourself and realise your dreams. It might be a friend, partner, manager or coach.

Now is the perfect time to stop, take stock and start making some big decisions about the future. I'd be privileged to help you. Just allow yourself the time to focus on you and where you want to be this time next year. Then you can enter 2010 with unwavering focus, determination and desire to have your best year yet.

© Jennifer Hampson, 2009. Reprints are permitted provided the material is unchanged, links are made live, and the following information is published intact:

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jennifer Hampson is a certified coach, inspirational trainer, and speaker. She helps organisations create a coaching culture with wide-ranging impact on all who work there. Her online newsletters for HR Managers, Learning & Development Managers and Line Managers is crammed with useful tips, strategies and 'How to...?' Guides, to keep you informed, enlightened and inspired about how you can use coaching to make a real difference to YOU and YOUR ORGANISATION. Sign up for it now at <http://www.creatingacoachingculture.co.uk>