



The Sixty Second Spark™

August 2008

Are You Going for the Gold?

With the Olympics coming up, I'm thinking a lot about athletes and competition and gold medals. I'm sure you've heard about the "doping" that is plaguing the Olympic community as well.

When it comes to customer service (either internal or external),
are you going for the gold or "doping"?

Many athletes measure their physical strength by how fast or far they can run or by how much weight they lift. The drugs that athletes are taking today provide a temporary advantage, but have long term side effects. The same thing applies to service delivery at work. Some "doping techniques" - like leaving someone on hold too long or being lukewarm to folks - may seem okay when done once or twice, but over time, the side effects add up to no good (for you, your company and customers).

As a student of Stott Pilates, I have come to learn the value of core strength - the strength that literally comes from the center of your being. That's where Service Strength begins too. Let's use a Viewpoint *SHIFT* (changing the way you look at or think about things - and the actions that follow - to decrease stress, increase energy and get remarkable results) to look at Service Strength.

Service Strength is present when your focus is on what you can do for others, instead of what others can do for you. It's the "real deal" - no doping involved! Service Strength definitely comes from your core. Every successful business person exercises some degree of Service Strength every day. It's just the right thing to do!

Here are five Service Strength *Sparks* which I have learned in my seven years of having my own consultancy.

Spark #1: *Service Strength involves flexibility.*

Viewpoint *SHIFT*: Are you able to see things from someone else's perspective?

Spark #2: *Service Strength is often a stretch.*

Viewpoint *SHIFT*: Are you able to move outside your comfort zone to help someone else?

Spark #3: *Service Strength requires heavy lifting of your values.*

Viewpoint *SHIFT*: Are you including service to others in your core values?

Spark #4: *Service Strength entails a warm up and a cool down* - the fun, relaxing part of exercise - where you are excited to dive in and happy to feel the positive results.

Viewpoint *SHIFT*: Are you giving yourself the chance to be grateful for opportunities you have to serve?

Spark #5: *Service Strength helps you live a longer, happier life.*

Viewpoint *SHIFT*: Are you willing to include service to others over time - to be in marathon shape?

So, next time your boss, your coworker or your customer asks you to be of service - remember that Service Strength is powerful and leads to the Gold Medal for you AND the other person!. Service Strength develops you in ways you may not recognize right away - just like muscle strength. One day when you look in the mirror, you see that the subtle changes over time have been worth all the effort. The time and effort comes back five fold in smiling faces (yours included), "thank you's", business opportunities and so much more.

Try a *SHIFT* today and enjoy the gold!

Vicki



