

The Business Connector

A Quarterly Newsletter from AmSpirit™ Business Connections

Singles Score Runs Too!

Summer 2006 Vol. 8 No. 2

Everybody has played baseball at least once in his or her life. It may have been just a pick-up game in the street. It may have been at school in gym class. It may have only been tee ball. Whatever the case, we have all played baseball.

Let us reflect back to the first time we were up to bat. What did we do? Did we attempt to bunt? No. Did we earn a walk to first base on a series of bad pitches? No. What did we do?

We tried to hit the ball as hard as we could. Now in all likelihood, we may have struck out in the process. Or we may have ground out to the shortstop. Or we may have popped out to left field. Whatever the case, our intent was to whack the ball out of the park and then enjoy a slow meander around the bases.

Unfortunately, for all of us from time to time, this is indicative of our contact with others. When life presents us with an opportunity to interact with others, we look for the home run ball. That is, we save our effort for those, and only those people, that will yield some results – runs or scores, in baseball vernacular.

We seemingly reserve our eye contact for the potential new clients. We tend not to flash our warm smile unless we can deploy it on those people responsible for hiring and promoting. We ostensibly cannot muster a “how are you doing?” “hello,” or even a “hi,” unless it is directed at someone of significant consequence to us.

Far too often, we do not want to be bothered with that person who does not

appear to have the potential to provide us direct benefit. They might represent getting to first, second or third base, but little more. As a result, our actions reflect our attitude. For these people, we offer no polite pleasantries. We generally maintain a straight face when we encounter them. Moreover, if we have eye contact at all, it is for a fleeting uncomfortable split second.

While not every contact creates results in and of itself, every contact serves as something upon which we can build.

Nevertheless, we need to take a lesson from baseball. According to Major League Baseball, in the 2004 season 167,353 players were up to bat. From those trips to the batter’s box, 23,376 players safely rounded the bases to score.

However, those players scoring only generated 5,451 scores from home runs. That is, if the only way players could score in baseball were to hit a home run, there would be over 75% fewer runs in Major League Baseball.

In baseball, runs are largely the result of activities other than home runs. Teams attempt to score relying infrequently on blasts out of the park. Rather, baseball teams score runs by stringing together a series of walks, hits and stolen bases.

Certainly, the home run is responsible for driving in runs other than just the batter. However, those extra runs

batted in are the result of preceding walks, singles, doubles and triples.

In baseball, there is a combination of strategy and luck involved in getting a player safely home. However, no successful baseball team relies entirely on the home run bat day in and day out.

We should follow this strategy in our approach to developing our network. Certainly, some new contacts generate immediate results. From these we get clients, jobs, and other opportunities. These are the home runs. Just as in baseball, we should rejoice at these accomplishments and celebrate.

However, not every new contact will generate immediate results or value at all. Nevertheless, value still exists. There is opportunity in every contact. While not every contact creates results in and of itself, every contact serves as something upon which we can build.

Some contacts we can deem as singles, some doubles, and still other triples. They all move us closer to scoring runs.

With everyone we encounter, we should make eye contact. And while we are at this, we might as well smile. And if we have gone to all this trouble, we might as well say, “How are you doing?”

Home runs – in life or with personal contacts – are great. Often they make our day, year, or even life. All the same, despite the attraction of realizing these moments of celebration, we need to keep in mind that singles score runs too! ▼