

Just A Little Bit More

By Mike Stewart, CSP



"I don't spend enough time at it to be really good," Randy said to me today at lunch. Our table overlooked the golf course and we were understandably talking about golf. He is a long-time Client and Vice-President of Sales for his company, so we began talking about the parallels between golf and sales.

"Golf is simple, but it's not easy," I said. Although there are lots of rules that regulate play, a par round of golf only requires that you hit the ball three, four, or five times into a hole, and repeat this 18 times. Scoring par is virtually impossible for millions of amateur golfers, although par is never good enough for professional golfers.

Sales is simple, too. A successful sales performance only requires that you put enough prospects into your sales pipeline and close enough deals to reach your sales target each month, quarter, or year. How simple is that?

Sales isn't easy, either. Theoretically reaching their sales targets should be achievable by every salesperson, but it seems to be impossible for way too many. However, like professionals in golf, real sales pros continually raise the bar and strive to exceed what is expected of them.

Tiny differences in performance produce enormous differences in results. Comparing earnings to average strokes per round, the top golf pros in 2005 posted these results:

2005 Rank: # 1

Tiger Woods
\$10,628,024
68.66

How other high achievers' numbers compare to Tigers':

2005 Rank: # 2

VJ Singh
\$ 8,017,336 = 75.44%
69.04 = + 0.38 (0.55%)

2005 Rank: # 10

Sergio Garcia

\$ 3,213,375 = 30.23%
69.64 = + 0.98 (1.43%)

Number 50

Heath Slocum
\$ 1,606,185 = 15.11%
70.73 = + 2.07 (3.01%)

The number one golfer in the world last year, Tiger Woods, earned 32.56% more than the number two player although his performance, based on stroke average, was only one-half of one percent better.

Tiger earned three and one-third times what number 10 earned although there was less than one stroke difference per round between them. Tiger earned 331% more than Sergio although he out-performed him by only 1.4%.

Tiger earned six and two-thirds times what Heath Slocum earned, yet only beat him by two strokes per round. In percentage points Tiger earned 661% more than Slocum although he out-performed him by only 3.01%

Top pros do a little bit more in preparing. Top golfers practice daily, invest heavily in coaching, and work constantly on developing and nurturing a winning attitude and competitive mind-set. Winning sales pros do the same things. Although their routines are different, they continuously work to improve their skills and seek the input of others, whether in person or through educational materials such as books, articles, and audio products. To take maximum advantage of their knowledge and skills, top sales pros, like top golf pros, constantly:

- focus on achieving their goals, and
- manage their self-talk and interactions with others to produce a positive, can-do attitude.

Top pros do a little bit more where it counts most. For golfers it may mean they are 1% better at driving the ball, hitting approach shots, bunker play, chipping and putting. Top salespeople may be only 1% better at prospecting, asking questions and listening, making presentations, handling objections and closing. In both cases that little 1% may mean all the difference in the world between being just a good performer and being a champion.

What is the little 1% more you can do, that will enable you to realize the sales potential in your territory and finally begin earning what you're worth?

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If you are a member of the media and would like to interview Mike or feature more of his articles in your publication, please contact him at Mike@StewartSalesDynamics.com or 1-866-515-0022.