

Spotlight Article

PRACTICE

What are you practicing today? This week? This year?

I watched the Oscars recently. While I don't watch much TV, I was impressed with the Oscar event. The hosts, as well as the presenters, did a great job. I sat wondering how long they had practiced their lines so as to make them flow naturally, with grace and ease.

I am sure these actors took the time to practice often. Do you? They are no different than you or I. Or, are they? Maybe we don't practice and they do. Maybe they make more effort or put in more time than we do. They practice. The result of all their practice is a natural flowing presentation.

Can you guess how many times they 'failed' at the presentation before they got it right? It doesn't matter. What matters is they practiced until they got it right and then practiced until it was natural.

Did you notice the awards winners who had practiced 'just in case' and those who hadn't? It was most obvious. Which one are you?

What have you been afraid to practice? What goal or objective have you not started or stopped for fear of failure? For fear of not knowing what or how to do it? For thinking you can't do it perfectly?

The difference between you and the Oscar hosts and presenters is practice. Yes, practice is the only difference. If you don't believe me, ask them. They have spent years practicing.

What do you want to excel in? Well, practice is the path to excellence. There is no short cut. We can all practice. We can all allocate the time if the end result is meaningful enough to us.

I write and practice my speeches a week before I have to give them. I tape myself, watch, and improve (hopefully) each time I do a new version. When I finally give the speech, it is never exactly what I prepared. I know it well enough I can ad lib and adjust based on the audience and the reaction of the audience.

It doesn't have to be a speech to an audience of hundreds. It can be an interaction with a client, with a board of directors, or with your family. If you have something important and meaningful to say or promote, practice it. With the practice comes the confidence and the proper delivery. Your clients, your board, or your family will take notice. You will be far more likely to reach your objective if you practice first.

If it is worth saying or doing, it is worth saying or doing correctly. Therefore, it is worth practice. People know when you have prepared and respect it. People respect the fact you have practiced in order to speak to them or show them something.

You are practicing for the delivery to others. But, you are practicing for yourself. It is your self worth, your pride of doing it correctly, your pride of performance that counts. What you think of what you have done is critical. It's critical to you. Do your best for you, and others will join in the appreciation of a job well done.