

The **POWER** Of Determination...

*Rayne Herzog is always moving forward,
and never looks back!*



In this interview, Rayne Herzog reveals powerful strategies that have made him a successful businessman and unstoppable entrepreneur.

Rayne is founder, partner, and general manager of the Shelburne Athletic Club – a thriving, profitable health club in Vermont’s most competitive city.

Opened in 1998, the success of his health club is no mystery. Rayne is an innovative, disciplined businessman with top leadership skills, a finely tuned staff, and an acute knowledge of what his clientele want – and will buy.

Using his inventive mind and endless energy, Rayne has developed local and national strategic alliances with the likes of Vermont Teddy Bear, Kathy O’Brien (Survivor, Marquesas), and Karhu USA, an American distributor of winter gear, just to name a few.

Read on to learn how Rayne does it – from setting standards, to insuring his club’s success, to achieving goals, and to developing himself as a visionary and a leader.

Scott: To begin with, Rayne, why do you think your business is so successful?

Rayne: Many factors. There is no status quo around here. I listen closely to my clients, use a management coach and am always training to be a better leader. Operationally, we are always raising the standards of doing business – always. The employees are always challenged – every day. They work harder than they ever have at any other job before. It keeps them energetic – never complacent. They like working here.

Scott: You are always creating something new – challenging the status quo. How does your mind work? Where do your innovative ideas come from?

Rayne: I listen and research. Between my staff, my mentors (of which I have many), my clients, the internet, industry publications, and my own fertile mind, I have more ideas than I will ever be able to use. I don’t want my clients to get bored doing business at the club. For example, we created two new programs - one with a rock-climbing center, and the other, an elite training program

sponsored by Vermont Teddy Bear, featuring Kathy O'Brien, from Survivor, Marquesas. The programs are unusual, appeal to many of our members, and are attention getting. We have lots of other programs going on as well.

Scott: What makes your mind so fertile?

Rayne: Physical and mental strength. I am in a physical environment and take care of my body. I am athletic– I eat well, focus on possibilities, take a nap every day, read business and management development books, and meditate. I allow my mind to wander and develop idea after idea. Most don't hold water but some do. It's a lot of fun – but it is also tiring.

Scott: How important is the nap?

Rayne: More important than you might think. Without it, I couldn't stay "switched on" for fifteen or sixteen hours a day.

Scott: Ever have off days?

Rayne: I try not to have too many.

Scott: Rayne, you are known for your high standards and dutifully maintaining them. How is this important to your business?

Rayne: Real important. It defines your business' potential. When you set high standards, they must be absolutely achievable and sustainable.

Scott: How do you set standards, generally speaking?

Rayne: First, I determine what they are. Then I must be able to perform them myself – to make sure they are achievable and show the way to my staff and clients. Take cleanliness, for example. We have the cleanest health club in the industry – worldwide, I think. Our entire market area knows it and talks about it. This club is as spotless as the day it opened (over five years ago). We invest time, people-power, payroll and subcontract dollars to maintain this standard of cleanliness. Keeping the club clean has paid off. Our reputation spreads like crazy and brings in new clients every day of the week.

Scott: Where does leadership fit in?

Rayne: The basics. I don't ask anyone to do what I won't do. I clean just like everyone else. For a long time – years – I was the first in and the last to leave. When it comes to my staff, I compliment worthy performance and correct, train, and coach less than acceptable performance. I keep my standards visible and never compromise results.

Scott: Let's talk about adversity for just a minute. What gets in Rayne's way when it comes to being successful?

Rayne: Hmm... too much on my plate. Sometimes it's setting the bar too high for myself or for other people.

Scott: *What's your secret for dealing with adversity.*

Rayne: Going to my home and doing work on my house.

Scott: *When you think about yourself as a businessman, where are you weak – what is your Achilles heel?*

Rayne: Stubbornness sometimes.

Scott: *What are you doing to change that?*

Rayne: Taking more deep breaths. Putting a pause between my reaction and my response.

Scott: *And when you do that, what happens?*

Rayne: It has a calming effect. I can become less emotional and more objective.

Scott: *What is the bottom line for you?*

Rayne: It's paying attention to the financials – making sure that we're making the profit we should. It's also making sure that the employees are taken care of. And then there is the bottom line of our clientele – ensuring that they are getting their money's worth.

Scott: *Overall, Rayne, if you had a suggestion for most business people, what would it be?*

Rayne: Keep the mind open, have a willingness to make mistakes, know there are pitfalls. Be willing to change on a dime when necessary – alter your emotional and intellectual starting point, you know – shift to the left or the right – be light on your feet.

Scott: *Thank you*



To contact Rayne Herzog: rayne@shelburneathletic.com

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