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Article published - Oct 1, 2007

# **CHUCK TALK: There's a lot more to the rat than just catching it**

## **To reach full potential requires one to unleash competitive nature**

**by Chuck Mache**

The other night I went out to the garage to get some dog food for my lab Charlee. As I flipped on the light, a not-so-small dark rodent with a long tail shot across the floor of the garage.

"I've seen that move before," I said aloud to myself. Faster, bigger and darker than a mouse, with a tail the same length as the body, it was as though the pre-game warmup was complete and the competition was about to begin. I was being taunted. At least, that was my reaction.

I got the food and brought it back into the house and quickly fed the dog. My wife must have noticed that I was moving quickly, a result of a visit from my friend called adrenaline.

She looked at me with that puzzled smile that she gets when she knows that her half-crazy husband is up to something. Obviously unable to bridle my enthusiasm, I said, "We have a rat! Let the games begin."

The rest of her comments, something along the lines of me seeming happy about the rat, were followed by "I'm surprised you aren't putting on some camo gear."

While I could give you all the battle details, I'll cut to the chase of the story. A little peanut butter, a strategically placed rat trap and within an hour, the rat was no more. Victory.

### **'It was me vs. the rat'**

It did, however, get me thinking about success in business, as most events of a given day do. Life is a classroom

of insight if you pay attention. In the above example, albeit kind of a bizarre one, the word competitiveness comes to mind. Truth is, it was me vs. the rat.

I enjoyed the challenge, the hunt and most importantly, the victory.

In my experience, salespeople, sales managers, general managers, executives and leaders – I'm talking about the best – tend to be very competitive people. Constantly creating self-motivating competitive situations in their own minds, they use this as a tool to fuel their behavior. It gets them places, advances agendas and gives them the ability to put a line through their action items that signifies that they completed what they set out to do. They compete to win. And in most cases, winning is defined by getting better.

Individuals may actually express their competitive nature in different ways because in general people express themselves differently.

## Always measuring themselves

Some are outgoing and expressive, while others are more internally passionate. However, the one thing that

real "doers" have in common is that they are fueled by their competitive mindset. Said differently, they're scorekeepers, and they are tracking whether they are winning or losing each and every day. They are motivated to win by things like:

- How they match up against their peers: The best do a real analysis on the best and compete against the great ones to outperform them.
- How they match up against their outside competitors: The best know the strengths and weaknesses of all of their key competitors and compete to position themselves and their companies for victory.
- How they match up against themselves: Sounds strange, but the very best are competing to overcome their weak areas while they emphasize their strengths. They don't just talk about it. They take real action that makes them better.
- How they match up against their daring and bold goals: They compete to reach heights that most people scoff at. The scoffing only drives them.

Show me someone in business without a competitive drive, and I'll show you performance well below their capabilities. Show me someone that doesn't view their business life like a "scorecard" that tracks whether they are winning or losing, and I'll show you someone who is either stuck in a comfort zone or struggling to define their focus. Show me someone who is not working on their weaknesses while they maximize all that will come from their strengths, and I'll show you someone who is not marching toward their potential.

So the rat story is a little over the top. I mean, there is an argument that it's just a rat. I saw the rat, set a trap and exterminated the rat like all good husbands probably do. While that would be completely accurate, I tend to look at it a little differently. The rat was competing to live in my dwelling. If I could get the rat, I wouldn't have to call the exterminator. If I could get the rat, I wouldn't have to listen to the "we have a rat problem" noise that was certain to follow. If I could get the rat, a lot of problems would be solved. If I could get the rat, I could win. I got the rat. Next issue please.

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Chuck Mache, president of Chuck Mache Communications, is a speaker, executive coach and consultant. His work is dedicated to helping companies and individuals break through to their next level and he is the bestselling author of the "The Four Kinds of Sales People: How and Why They Excel and How You Can Too." Learn more and sign up for Chuck's complimentary monthly newsletter at [www.ChuckMache.com](http://www.ChuckMache.com).