

VivaNews – April 2007 Issue

A Jumping-Off Point

“It Ain’t Bragging...”

I was discussing business the other day with Allison, a colleague of mine, and during the course of our conversation, Allison apologized if she had come across as “a braggart” earlier in the day at the networking event I had hosted. Karen, another colleague of mine, had told Allison how much she admired her talents (which, by the way, are prodigious!) Allison is a solopreneur in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Allison answered Karen in her usual forthright manner, stating some facts about her business, some of her accomplishments and people’s perceptions of her because of the dearth of women in her field.

Later, Allison grew concerned that perhaps she sounded “too boastful”. Having heard the remarks she had made to Karen, I told Allison that I had not perceived it in that way. I then added a quote by a legendary baseball player “It ain’t bragging if you done it!” (In my research, I found that this quote had been attributed to two baseball greats...Dizzy Dean and Satchel Paige [even one attribution to the great boxer Mohammad Ali]. It had also been quoted as “It ain’t bragging...if it is true or...if you can back it up or...if you can do it.” I’m sure that there is a crack researcher out there who can find the correct wording and source. My bets are on “Dizzy” as he also is reported to have said “He slud into third”.)

Perhaps we were told when we were growing up that humility was a virtue and to boast about oneself was wrong. We could spend time trying to figure out why we do this, but as the motivational speaker Jim Rohn says, “I wouldn’t sign up for that class.” Knowing the “why” can be important but not as important as doing something to change it.

In her highly acclaimed presentation “*What Matters in Business...For Women*” at a VivaNetworking Breakfast for Women in Business, Melodie Reagan of Auromira Executive Advantage (www.auromira.com) said: “Have a Voice and Be Heard. Blow Your Own Horn. We were taught to not brag. We were taught if you are good it shows. We were taught hard work gets rewarded. Effectively, we were taught to let our hard earned rewards go to someone else.” She also said (As women...) “We Have Found the Enemy and It Is Us. We are hardest on ourselves and each other. Empower yourself and others.”

John L. Herman, Jr. author of the newly published “*Hermanisms...Axioms for Business and Life*” and “*The Innkeeper Tales: Modern-Day Canterbury Tales to Entertain, Enlighten & Empower*” was the keynote speaker at the April 14, 2007 VivaNetworking Special Event. Herman spoke on “*Failure Isn’t Fatal: How to Fail Successfully: 3 Things You Must Do To Succeed...and 3 Things That Almost Always Cause Failure*”. Herman talked about the factors that contributed to success and failure and when

discussing one of these success factors - networking - he stressed the importance of being “ambassadors for ourselves and others”.

Knowing and communicating effectively the truth of our talents allows the possibility of our being of great service to others. It is networking at its best. “Being an ambassador for ourselves” and “blowing our own horn” is all good advice that can serve as a jumping off point for our growth.

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