

May 27, 2007

A maverick himself, a billionaire by the time he was 40 and the owner of the Dallas Mavericks, Mark Cuban shares his twelve key factors to success in the May 2007 issue of *Selling Power*. [www.sellingpower.com/magazine/abstract/current\\_abstract.asp](http://www.sellingpower.com/magazine/abstract/current_abstract.asp). (a second site provides a self-test for success [www.sellingpower.com/success](http://www.sellingpower.com/success)). Other than the arduous hours he keeps, the passion he has for succeeding and the intensity he embodies for learning, his fly-by-the-seat-of-his-pants style is a dramatic departure from the typical style of most corporate leaders. Rather than spending exorbitant resources on focus groups to study what his clients want, communication departments to carefully craft measured statements and public relation departments to broadcast his intentions, he applies unconventional spontaneity and honesty to everything he does, which is anathema to conventional wisdom. For example, after a Maverick's game in which he stated that he would not, "Hire him (the league referee director) to manage a Dairy Queen", he seized the opportunity for publicity and spent a day managing a local Dairy Queen. This approach has been famously successful and has made his companies, his clients (the fans and players) and the public the benefactors of his passion.

Although his style may be incongruous with the personalities of most individuals, there is one element of it that is universal: he has a mission that drives his actions, "Have fun and make money". Similar to passionate mission statements of the best companies, his mission is the vehicle by which he delivers his values and culture to his employees, clients, suppliers and investors. It is simple, easy to understand, easy to implement and easy for everyone associated with him and his company to embrace. It personifies the reasons he purchased the team and made it one of the best in the NBA. It also epitomizes his passion for life, for business and for others.

In many large corporations, and even small businesses, the passion for life, for business and for others may not be epitomized by their mission statement, and therefore cannot be delivered from the corporate leaders to the rest of the organization. This is unfortunate because these passions may be exactly what companies need to in order to be the best. Many companies place a premium on the desires of their investors, supplanting the needs of their employees, clients and suppliers. However, a passionate mission of having fun and making money can be the unconventional catalyst of a process that places a premium on employees. Once duly recognized, these employees will become not only quintessential ambassadors but also financial assets who will propel the company to success without the need for expensive and wasteful productivity programs.

As exemplified by Mark Cuban, passionate, unconventional actions result in unconventional success. A bit of passionate non-conformity may be exactly what corporations need to successfully compete in today's global economy.