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Johnson & Company

**“Marketing Alpha”
Fundraising Intelligence For
“Sub-Institutional” (\$0-\$100 Million AUM)
&
“Smaller Emerging” Managers.**

Bryan K. Johnson – Managing Partner

**How Small Managers Meet The “Marketing Standard”
in a Crowded + Hyper-Competitive Fundraising Climate.**



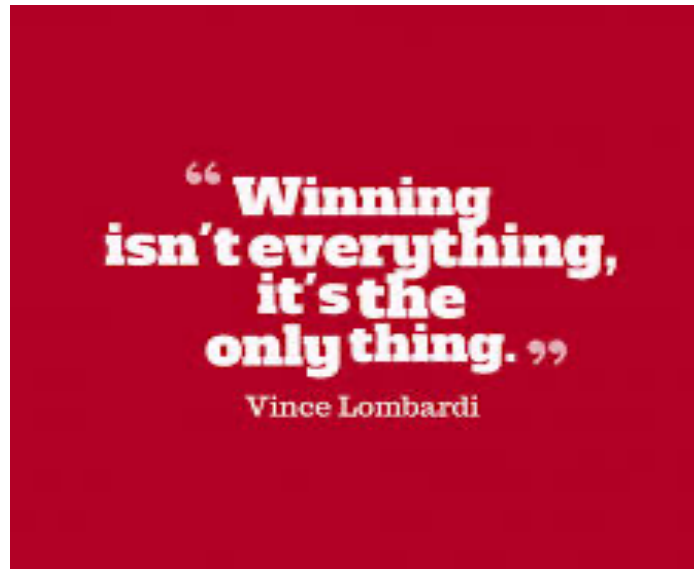
The NFL season kicks off tonight!

YOU may be ready for some “football” but.....

Are YOU ready for “FUNDRAISING”!?!

The marketing bar is HIGH, especially for smaller managers. It takes more than "performance" to raise assets. Investor allocation decisions are now comprised of a multi-factor evaluation encompassing qualitative and quantitative criteria with a high degree of idiosyncratic behavior. All of which is now supported and empowered by a variety of sources, which has shaped a new type of investor who is resistant to "typical marketing" i.e. "pitching, posting and partying".

Smaller managers who understand this reality and adapt will consistently WIN raising assets.



The quote "Winning isn't everything; it's the only thing" was popularized by UCLA football coach Red Sanders in 1950, though it is often misattributed to Vince Lombardi, for years there's been controversy over how the legendary coach intended the statement he is now synonymous with.

While it is true that Lombardi did indeed repeat the statement often throughout his career, it's also true that he spent a lot of time trying to explain that his words were taken out of context. "I wish to hell I'd never said the damned thing," Lombardi once told a reporter. "I meant the effort... I meant having a goal... I sure as hell didn't mean for people to crush human values and morality."

So why did Lombardi repeat the phrase so often if it was something he knew could be easily misunderstood? First, Lombardi used it to motivate his players with a sense of urgency. He wanted them to understand just how ruthless the business of professional football was. If the players and coaches didn't win and win now, they'd be fired. Period. That was the nature of the business and Lombardi didn't shy away from reminding his players of this reality.

But Lombardi had another, more compelling, reason for repeating his famous statement. He felt it bluntly conveyed an important message for society at large. That is, Lombardi looked around and saw too much apathy, which he despised. He felt too many people had lost their competitive spirit and he wanted them to once again strive for excellence.

Here's how Lombardi put it...

"We will never create a good society, much less a great one, until individual excellence is respected and encouraged. Being part of a football team is no different than being a part of any other organization. The objective is to win."

Think that's harsh or cruel?? I don't. Football can be ruthless, so is fundraising for small managers.

It is a reality of life that men AND women are competitive, and the more competitive the business, the more competitive the people. They know the rules, and they know the objective, and they get in the game. And the objective is to win—fairly, squarely, decently, by the rules, but to win.

Each of us, if we would grow, must be committed to excellence and to victory; even though we know complete victory cannot be attained, it must be relentlessly pursued with intensity.

When you read the quote from Lombardi and you think about the message he's passionately trying to convey, it sounds an awful lot like John Wooden's and Nick Saban's dedication to "PROCESS". Anyone who knows me knows a few things: I'm about "PROCESS" and a BIG Steeler Fan! (more about that in a min!)

Lombardi's point is clear: We must never fall into complacency. Instead, we must strive for excellence, strive to constantly get better, strive for victory. The will to consistently prepare day-in and day-out is what makes a winner and some become Champions. A "winner" is often defined by a single or occasional victory. A "champion," however, is defined by consistent, long-term success and a deeper level of commitment.

- **Resilience and recovery:** The phrase highlight's the difference in how people handle failure. Champions are distinguished not by avoiding loss, but by their ability to get back up after falling, learn from their mistakes, and keep moving forward.
- **Process over outcome:** The "champion" mindset is about the relentless pursuit of improvement, rather than being solely focused on the end result. Former Alabama coach Nick Saban is known for his relentless focus on "Process" not results.
- **Mindset and attitude:** Becoming a champion involves a high level of mental fortitude, discipline and willingness to do whatever it takes to be the best. This includes collaborating with others, training relentlessly, and maintaining a positive, passionate attitude.

This leads me to my beloved Pittsburgh Steelers and their Head Coach Mike Tomlin (who has NEVER had a losing season in 18 years as Steelers coach...let that sink in! + he is the longest-tenured active head coach in the "Big Four" sports leagues). "Mike T", as he is called, has a saying:



What that means is clear + simple: A benchmark for excellence and performance is a non-negotiable. It emphasizes **unwavering commitment**, **accountability**, and **consistency** with **no excuses**.

The Message: Maintain a culture of high expectations and discipline, focused on winning.

- **Unwavering Excellence:** It sets a single, high bar for performance that everyone on the team is expected to meet, every day.
- **Accountability:** The phrase stresses that every individual is responsible for achieving the same level of execution, regardless of their role or the team's overall situation.
- **No Excuses:** It serves as a leadership philosophy that discourages accepting reasons for a lack of success, such as player injuries, opponent difficulty, or challenging circumstances.
- **Consistency:** The goal is to maintain a consistent level of effort and performance, ensuring that the team's output remains at the established benchmark.
- **Continuous Improvement:** The underlying message encourages players to continually strive to improve their skills and understanding, as what was once sufficient will not be enough moving forward.

WHAT'S THE TAKEAWAY?

"Sub-institutional" and "smaller emerging" managers that want to survive and ultimately thrive must significantly "step-up" their marketing: **"The Standard is the Standard"**.

Simply, smaller managers that want success raising assets must have a **structured and focused MARKETING PROCESS** consistently executed with intensity, precision and discipline.

Those who understand this reality and adapt will get prepared and resourced to consistently **WIN** raising assets by executing a **"marketing process"** with unwavering excellence, accountability, consistency, continuous improvement, relentless intensity, discipline, focus and **NO EXCUSES**.

Btw, that's ME at Heinz Field. "Acrisure Stadium"?? GTFOH! Heinz Field = ALWAYS!



ENJOY THE GAME TONIGHT! + THE ENTIRE NFL SEASON!

Since 2011, Johnson & Company has been the only specialist providing
"Marketing Alpha" to "sub-institutional" (AUM \$0-\$100 million)
& "smaller emerging" managers to optimize success fundraising.

FOR A "NO-BS" MARKETING PROCESS CONVERSATION.

CONTACT:

Bryan Johnson – Founder + Managing Partner

Johnson & Company

Direct: (512) 786-1569

Email: bryan@Johnsn.com

www.johnsn.com

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