



## **SCORE column: Lessons from the 'Family Feud'**

On Saturday, some family members and I teamed up for the local "Family Feud" auditions. While it will be several weeks before we find out if we were one of the lucky few teams selected, the audition itself provided some solid lessons that are applicable to business.

In the game, two families compete against each other in a contest to name the most popular responses to a question posed to 100 people. As families were called to the front, it became evident that people think very differently. Some teams were only able to come up with one or two correct responses before striking out.

That provided the first lesson. If an entrepreneur is basing decisions on personal preference, he or she might be missing the target. Family Feud uses surveys; an entrepreneur should use research to find out what their customers are really thinking. What are your customers looking for? Where can you reach them?

The other lessons came in rapid fire from the program directors. They advised us to:

» Work as a team. They were looking for families that connected with each other and were enthusiastic. When we were waiting for the other team to strike out, we were told to huddle together and share ideas so that we could burst from the huddle with a correct answer. For businesses, that is valuable advice. Employees who work together and value each other's opinions create a winning environment.

» Listen. Some of the family members repeated answers that were just given. Businesses need to listen to customers and really hear what they're saying or they'll have very little chance of meeting their needs. That means lost business.

» Be positive. Your team is down two strikes and things are looking bad. What should you do? Cheer on your team members, of course! A winning team doesn't

discourage other members with negative talk. A can-do attitude will give you the best chance of coming out with a win.

» Look good. We were told to dress in business casual and present a good image. Every business should do likewise and put their best foot forward with a clean and attractive facility and neatly attired employees.

» Be quick on the buzzer. The first to hit the buzzer gets the first shot at winning. Entrepreneurs need to be quick to react to changing market conditions and new opportunities before the competition beats them to it. Be alert to trends.

» There is a reward when you win. The best news is that if you play as a team, listen, maintain a positive attitude, present a neat and clean image, and know your customers.

Even if we're not selected, our family played like winners. We cheered each other on and listened carefully to responses. With two strikes down, a family member came up with the final answer and we swept the board. Now, just like a business awaiting the financial results of a strong month, we're seeing gains but haven't yet made it.

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