**Competition**

**Although the number of passengers traveling by major airlines has returned to pre-September 11 levels, there are now 200,000 fewer employees to serve them due to intense competition and cost-cutting. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine, April 14, 2006)***

**Competition brings out the best in products and the worst in people. *(David Sarnoff, American broadcasting pioneer)***

**A Park Avenue physician, after examining a twitching, snarling, haggard businessman who had already amassed ten million dollars, but was avidly seeking twenty million more, advised, “I want you from this moment on to work and scheme only six hours a day instead of sixteen, and promise me that three days a week you’ll drive out to the cemetery.” “The cemetery,” exploded the tycoon. “What for?” “Just look around,” said the physician, “and meet some of the chaps you’re going to have to compete with to be the richest fool there!” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Competition doesn’t create character, it exposes it. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**You don't breed cheetahs by putting a male and female together in one cage. They tend to develop a brother-sister bond and ignore romance. The way you make them multiply is to put two males into a cage with one interested female. The competition triggers romance. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**When composer Johann Strauss Jr. made his debut, Johann Strauss Sr. planted friends in the audience to boo. It seems father, a composer himself, didn’t like the competition. *(Samantha Weaver, in Tidbits)***

**For the first time in 17 years, the U.S. has lost the top spot as the world’s most competitive economy, as measured by Switzerland’s IMD business school. The U.S. slipped to No. 3, behind first-place Singapore and second-ranked Hong Kong. Only three European economies – Switzerland, Sweden, and Norway – made it into the top 10. *(Bloomberg BusinessWeek, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 16, 2010)***

**The competitor to be feared is one who never bothers about you at all, but goes on making his own business better all the time. *(Henry Ford)***

**My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there is less competition there. *(Indira Gandhi)***

**Imitation: The sincerest form of competition. *(Leonard Louis Levinson, in Bartlett's Unfamiliar Quotations)***

**While it’s important to win, it’s imperative to compete. *(Dave Weinbaum)***

**What a stinker! In 1970, an international competition was abandoned because it was thought to be too dangerous for anyone but the Swedes. The competitors had to eat rotten herrings. (The Diagram Group, in Funky, Freaky Facts, p. 47)**

**In too many industries, our labor costs are now too high to be globally competitive. Reducing wages and benefits in those industries would not only help to create and save jobs, but would also force a further reduction in consumption and living standards that is necessary to bring the U.S. economy back into balance. The question is not whether this is an ideal outcome – obviously it’s not. But however unfair or unpleasant, it is precisely these kinds of structural adjustments that are necessary if the U.S. economy is to find a new equilibrium, one that provides not only for full employment but a sustainable balance between how much we consume and how much we produce. *(Steven Pearlstein, in The Washington Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 29, 2010)***

**Years ago, after interviewing students at a well-known New York City college for computer sales positions, I realized that there were no qualified candidates. None had demonstrated a desire to compete -- an essential ingredient for any career. When I commented to the recruiting office about the candidates' lack of competitiveness, the officers said the college had stopped grading students to eliminate academic pressure. I told them that they had done their students a disservice by not adequately preparing them for careers in the real world, where performance is evaluated and graded. *(Robert Wintermeier, in Newsweek)***

**Late-night talk show host David Letterman says he owes his whole career to Johnny Carson, even though he felt they were in stiff competition for many years. “Hosting my show, I always felt like a man drowning in quicksand,” says Letterman. “And then I’d turn on Johnny’s show and say, ‘He’s just easy, cool and funny. He looks good, he’s got babes hanging on him, he’s saying witty things; and he’s making fun of Ed.’ It so intimidated me that I couldn’t watch it.” And Carson always appeared to enjoy the competition. Letterman gives an example: We had a producer who used to work on “The Tonight Show,” and he told a newspaper reporter that while Carson would arrive at work around 2:00 each afternoon, I was coming in at 10:00 every morning. So Carson read this and started calling my office at 10:00 that day. In reality, I didn’t get in till about 11:30. As soon as I got on the phone with him, he was howling. “Oh, get in at ten, huh?” he said sarcastically. “Where ya been? Car trouble?” *(Bill Zehme, in Rolling Stone)***

**One of the reasons marijuana is illegal today is because cotton growers in the 1930s lobbied against hemp farmers – they saw hemp as competition. It is not chemically addictive, as is nicotine, alcohol, or caffeine. *(Noel Botham, in The Book of Useless Information, p. 153)***

**The moon missions of the 1960s were the product of Cold War competition between the U.S. and Russia, but today, NASA’s robotic missions are exploring Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter in exquisite detail – at a fraction of the cost of manned space flight. To propose manned missions to the moon – and a colony populated by thousands of people -- “is not a vision of the future. It’s nostalgia.” *(The Week magazine, February 10, 2012)***

**More employers are requiring their employees to sign non-compete agreements, and they're enforcing them: The number of lawsuits over such agreements has increased by 61 percent since 2002 to 760 cases last year. Employers say the agreements protect trade secrets and customer relationships, but experts say they "have a chilling effect" on entrepreneurship. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 30, 2013)***

**As long as one competes toward a goal with a constructive attitude, the competitive effort is creative. It is when the competitive spirit so takes over that we become personally involved and emotionally off base that chaos follows. Competition nibbles at the basic peace of God’s people like an energetic band of termites, and still most of us fail to recognize it for what it is. And on it goes unhampered, wrecking relationships and dreams. *(Dr. Normal Vincent Peale)***

**How men react to political losses: When John McCain lost the election last November, his male supporters also suffered a blow – to their manliness, a new study found. Several times over the course of Election Night, researchers had a bipartisan group of voters salivate into test tubes. The contents were later analyzed to measure levels of testosterone, the hormone linked to stress, risk-taking, and aggression. The results were striking: Male McCain supporters saw their hormone levels plummet, while Obama backers’ stayed stable. (Women, who have much less testosterone, also maintained stable levels, regardless of party affiliation.) “This is a pretty powerful result,” neuroscientist Kevin LaBar tells ABCnews.com. “Voters are physiologically affected by having their candidates win or lose an election.” The results square with prior research showing that competition affects hormone levels – though in those cases, subjects were direct participants. Researchers say the loser’s testosterone reduction may be a survival mechanism, helping him chill out so he doesn’t press his case and risk injury. “Elections are highly unique dominance contests,” says researcher Steven Stanton – affecting even those who participate merely by watching television. *(The Week magazine, November 6, 2009)***

**The healthiest competition occurs when average people win by putting in above-average effort. *(Colin Powell, in My American Journey)***

**In swimming especially, athletes use “peaking” to prepare for competitions, as follows:(1) Several months before the time, they train very, very hard, swimming 4-5 hours a day. (2) Then 4-5 days before the meet, they stop the intensive training and begin to peak. That is, they reduce the training to 1/2 hour a day, doing nothing to dissipate their energy, cut down on studies, rest in the afternoon, read and watch TV, eat and sleep. Given no outlet to their tensions which are now building up in them, at the competition, they will just explode! *(Paul Lee Tan, Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations, p. 1281)*The problem with competition is that it brings out the best in products and the worst in men. *(David Sarnoff)***

**Being involved in major sports competition for the last 30 years has helped me to see that you should not allow other people to determine your behavior. Pressure should come from inside and then you transform that into a feeling of excitement and exhilaration. Fears and pressures that most people experience are usually external. They worry about how they're going to be perceived, or what people will think of them if they lose or if they fail. When you can shed those apprehensions you will find that competition is something to embrace and look forward to. *(Pat Riley, in Personal Selling Power)***

**Those who think that the competitive spirit is dead ought to watch the customers in a supermarket when a cashier opens a new checkout lane. *(James Alexander Thom, in Nuggets)***

**The U.S. fell in the ranking of the world’s most competitive economies this year, dropping from fifth to seventh place. The World Economic Forum, which compiles the ranking, blamed the drop on “inefficient government bureaucracy,” and a growing budget deficit. *(TheDaily.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, September 21, 2012)***

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