Howard Stern Essay

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Things I learned from Howard Stern: the stuff that will enhance my career, not my sex life. It’s probably important to remember that Howard Stern’s rise to fame was a one-in-a-million shot. It could happen again, sure, but will it? Doubtful.

Certainly not in Canada, anyway.

The most important lesson I have learned is to be myself. There are many stations, many formats and many expectations associated with on-air personalities, but until you find your own personality none of those stations, formats or expectations are going to be fulfilled naturally. Howard Stern took his family experiences, his personal influences and let them show. He talked about things that were taboo, and in doing so he made himself the most honest and approachable kind of personality imaginable. People want to relate to people. Honesty is the best way. Howard Stern was a smart man. A raunchy man, sure, but a smart man, too. He was identifiable to the little devil on all our shoulders. The lesson of course is not necessarily to appeal to that little devil, but to find a way, by being true to ourselves, to connect with our audiences. In the future I will strive to be Amanda Grant all of the time, I can market myself better than ANYONE else.

But first you need to establish yourself as a good worker. In the very early stages of Stern’s career it was his work ethic that got him his first promotion. He “stunk” as a DJ, but he was always on time, and a hard worker, and he was rewarded with a promotion. The promotion didn’t work out, but that’s not the point – the point is to do whatever you’re doing 100% and you will be recognized accordingly. To enhance my career I will make efforts to get organized, be punctual and sink my teeth into projects. I don’t want to just do something; I want to do it well.

That brings me to point number three. Follow your instincts. Stern knew that he wasn’t cut-out to be a Program Director. He had a passion for Disc Jockeying, and he knew that was the path to follow. A ‘good job’ is only as good as it makes you feel. When things were starting to get off the ground for Howard, the first time he let loose on the mic – Howard said, “that felt good” and that ought to be the touchstone for a promising career: When it feels good. It’s about knowing what you’re capable of, and what you’re not capable of. To enhance my career I will do my best to make the right decisions for me, and not for my pocket book.

Be genuine. That’s lesson number four. When Howard was adlibbing a commercial, he let himself get carried away with trying to please the sponsor, and that resulted in an embarrassing situation. If Howard had made an effort to be genuine he wouldn’t have come off like a jerk. It’s probably important to note as well that making a mockery of a commercial is not only going to make you look like a ridiculous liar, it’s not going to please the sponsor, either. The thing to remember in this situation to enhance my career is to be as genuine as possible.

Lastly I think it’s important to remember that Howard Stern didn’t become a star over night. Howard moved from city to city to find the right fit. He worked at his craft over years and years. He didn’t wait for the work to come to him; he went to find the work. In my career I will not set boundaries for myself. I am prepared to work hard, and to find opportunities for myself.

These are the lessons Howard Stern taught me, and as I conclude this essay: I’m still wearing pants – so I think I learned just the right amount.