

LONE STAR

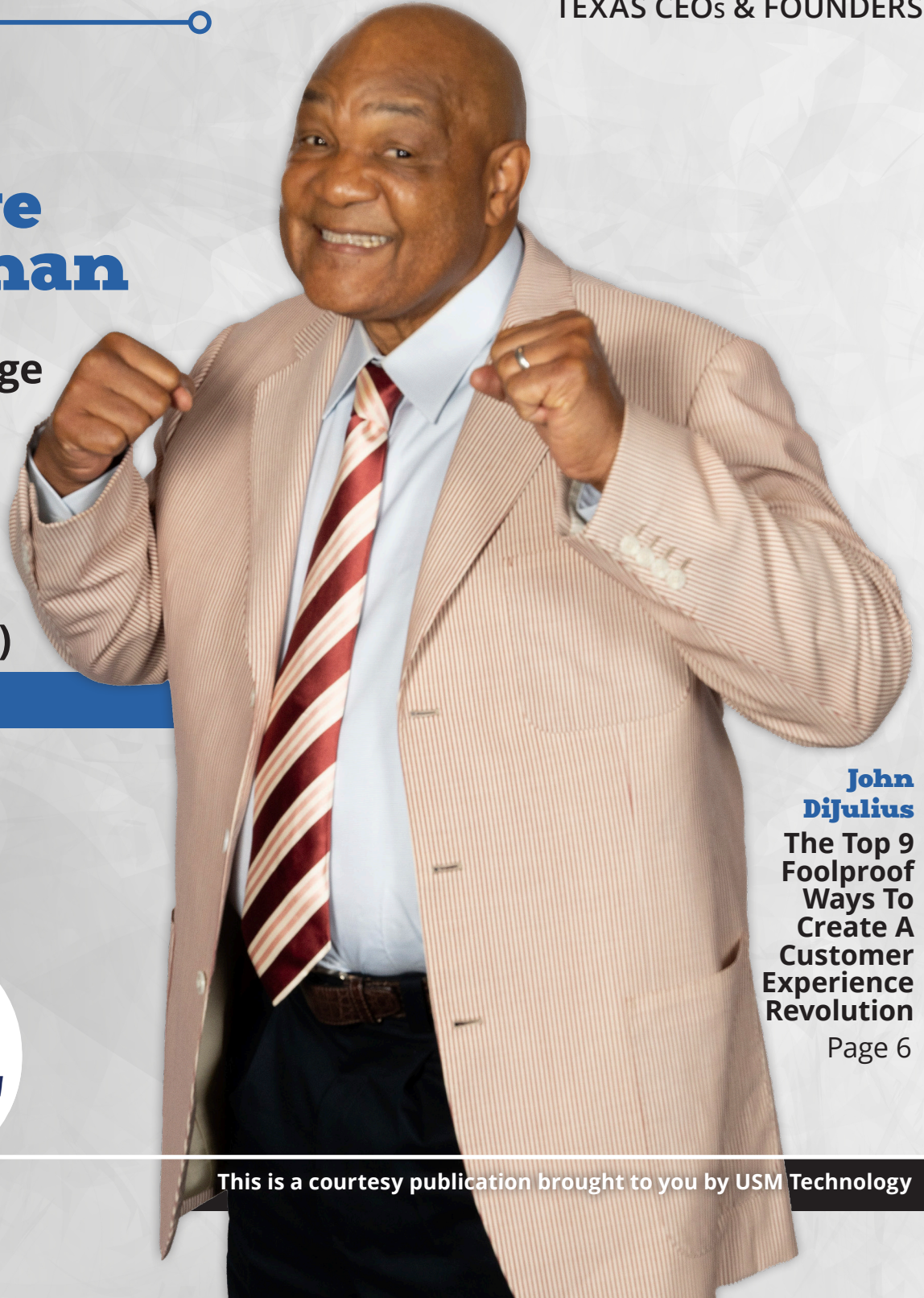
BUSINESS JOURNAL

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION FOR
TEXAS CEOs & FOUNDERS

George Foreman

10 Rules
From George
Foreman
On What
It Takes To
Reach The
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Stay There)

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Ways To
Create A
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USM Technology

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Hello!

Welcome to the spring 2024 issue of *Lone Star Business Journal*. Featured in this issue is an article from entrepreneur, author, and former heavyweight world champion boxer George Foreman. In our exclusive interview on page 10, George shares his inspiring journey, lessons learned, and advice on resilience in the face of adversity.

I had the opportunity to meet George a few years ago. He's had a fascinating life and is an all-around great guy. It's an honor to have him featured here in our magazine.

This fourth issue marks the one-year anniversary of the *Lone Star Business Journal*, so I want to take a moment and reflect on our "why," the reason we launched this magazine. As many of you know, my motivation for starting this publication was to connect with my peers and share insights from business leaders who have been instrumental in the growth of USM Technology. The positive feedback and encouraging words from our readers have been a source of inspiration and motivation for all of us at USM.

Speaking of pride in projects, I'm also very proud and excited about a new program we launched last quarter to help our clients operate their compliance program. This offering systematically examines the controls you need to have in place to meet industry and government regulations. Our platform provides you with the structure to gather evidence of your compliance and translates it into easily accessible reports for the senior leadership team and regulators. Our goal is to help our clients to prepare for the day an auditor walks in the door, asks for proof of your compliance, and you say, "Yes, absolutely, here you go," without hesitation.



If you're struggling with compliance, know that we can help, and we would love to talk with you about where you're at and where you want to be. Flip to the back page for more information on the program and how to meet with our team to learn more.

As keen as we are on compliance, we're just as keen on artificial intelligence (AI), which has a big theme in questions I've been asked this year. Many of you are eager to try Microsoft Copilot for the first time, and we are ramping up to support you in these endeavors. If you are considering augmenting your operations with AI, please contact me so we can work together on a plan to make it happen.

I'll close by highlighting our speaking engagements for this quarter. We just spoke to members of the IEEE community on cybersecurity in early April, and we're working on more speaking engagements on cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and compliance in the coming months. I'll keep you posted online and through our social media channels.

On that note, I'll leave you to enjoy the magazine. As always, I welcome your feedback and hope you won't hesitate to reach out and tell me what you learned and how you're applying these concepts to building your business. ■

All the best,

Stephen Cracknell
Editor, *Lone Star Business Journal*
CEO, USM Technology

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MEET GEORGE



Holding Your Team Accountable

BY DR. GEOFF SMART

Leaders often fail to hold their team accountable. During research for our book *Powerscore*, we found that only 8% of leaders are good at holding people accountable. One of the main reasons that leaders fail in this area is because when it's done wrong, it makes things more difficult for everyone.

Here's an example: I was giving a keynote speech at a Fortune conference a few years back and asked the audience, "How many of you have goals for your teams that are written down?" Only 10% raised their hands. Failure to write down goals opens up the door for confusion.

IT BECOMES NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD SOMEONE ACCOUNTABLE FOR DELIVERING A RESULT WHEN YOU HAVE FAILED TO ARTICULATE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

In order to hold your team accountable, you need to be specific with goals and use numbers that others provide to measure performance. When I was still

a young CEO with ghSMART, I struggled to hold a consultant accountable. She was brilliant and had great technical skills but failed to call clients proactively and didn't follow up with them. Many clients did not ask for her to come back as their trusted advisor.

I called her into my office and told her that she needed to work on her client relationships. She disagreed and stated that her clients loved her work. I said, "Well, one client told me that although he values your work, he feels you treat him like 'processed cheese' and that you rush to finish projects with him, then you move on to your next client project." She said that her work spoke for itself, and the meeting abruptly ended.

This was a huge failure on my part as I failed to set specific, mutually agreed on goals and used vague wording. I talked about this with a mentor, and he said, "Make sure you have clear goals, in writing so your consultants know what 'great' looks like. Then, have somebody other than you collect data on their performance. Then you can sit down as a coach to review their results versus their goals."

It was great advice that I immediately put into practice. When you properly hold people accountable, high performers will know they are performing, and they will keep doing what they are doing. And lower performers will know they are not performing well, long before anybody has to sit them down to have a conversation. ■



Dr. Geoff Smart is Chairman & Founder of ghSMART, a leadership consulting firm that exists to help leaders amplify their positive impact on the world. Dr. Smart and his firm have published multiple *New York Times* bestsellers. He stays active in his community and has advised many government officials.

GeoffSmart.com



The Top 9 Foolproof Ways To Create A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE REVOLUTION

WITH JOHN DIJULIUS

Successful entrepreneur and international customer experience expert John DiJulius refuses to compete on price. Instead, he competes in “experience wars,” where his customer service is so superior that customers don’t think about what they pay.

DiJulius has been winning experience wars for decades. Years ago, at one of his John Robert’s Spas—a chain of upscale salons repeatedly named one of the top 20 salons in America—a new salon moved in a few doors down. While his salon charged between \$100–\$150 for a haircut, the new salon put a sign up that said, “We do \$10 haircuts.” After his worried staff wanted to offer discounts, DiJulius said no. He told his team to focus on their customer experience and non-negotiables and said, “Make sure you are brilliant at the basics.” Then he put a sign in his salon window that said, “We fix \$10 haircuts.”

DiJulius is also the founder of The DiJulius Group, a customer experience firm that provides consulting, training, and executive education to help simplify, systematize, and

create accountability for the experiences companies deliver. Working with Fortune 500 companies including Starbucks, the Ritz-Carlton, and Nordstrom, DiJulius maintains that customer service is the place to compete. “There are a lot fewer people who don’t know how to do it as well,” he said.

During a private training, DiJulius taught people how to create a customer experience revolution, which he defines as a radical overthrow of conventional business mentality designed to transform what employees and customers experience. “This shift produces a culture that permeates people’s personal lives at home and in the community, which in turn provides the business with higher sales, morale, and brand loyalty,” he said. “This is our value proposition, thus making price irrelevant.”

DiJulius explained that your perception is flawed when it comes to how good your customer experience is. Citing a survey where 300 leaders from 300 different organizations were asked if they thought their company provided superior customer service, he revealed that 80% of the leaders said they believed they did a good job.

But after sending the survey to their customers, they discovered that only 8% of their customers agreed with them. “Your employees need to understand they are in the customer perception business,” DiJulius said. “What customers think is their reality.”

Here’s how to improve your business’s customer service.

1. INVEST IN CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.

Training. Hiring is critical, but culture and training are even more important because customer service is not common sense. “A customer experience comes down to one thing and one thing only: your average service aptitude from the CEO to the janitor to the newest employee,” DiJulius said. “Service aptitudes are a person’s ability to recognize and exceed a client’s expectations regardless of the circumstances.” People are not born to serve. Service aptitude comes from three places: previous life experiences, previous work experiences, and current work experiences. “The only leaders who don’t invest in customer experience are the ones who don’t realize the financial impact it has.”

2. AVOID POLICIES. MAKE GUIDELINES INSTEAD.

“Policy is the worst word you can have or use with your employees,” DiJulius said. Policies punish the masses because they force your employees into making decisions that are “black and white with walls” and stifle your employees’ creativity, empathy, and innovation. Years ago, DiJulius banished policies after a client called him about a salon policy that charged people if they didn’t show up for their appointment. DiJulius discovered a manager who wouldn’t refund a client even though the reason the client missed her appointment was because her husband died that morning. DiJulius promptly refunded her money. “People get afraid to go against policy,” he said. “Change the word to guidelines, because policy punishes 98% of your clients for what 2% might be trying to get away with . . . I’m okay if 2% take advantage of me or my company because of what I get back from [the] 98% who can’t believe how we handle it.”

3. LOVE WHAT YOU DO AND MAKE IT OBVIOUS.

Get people excited when they hear the passion and the expertise you have for working in your niche with your clients.

4. HELP THEM SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS.

Your client should never meet anyone smarter than you at what you do — this goes for anyone your client encounters at your company.

5. IF YOU’VE GOT BAD NEWS, OPEN WITH IT.

“Don’t disguise bad news, hope it doesn’t come up, or try to squeeze it in at the end,” DiJulius said. “Open with it, then talk about how you can fix it.”

6. BE COMMITTED TO THEIR SUCCESS.

Know what your client’s top three goals are for 2024. “Whatever their theme or goals are, send them a book on that, an article on that, and introduce them to whomever can help them.”

7. EDUCATE, THEN SELL.

Don’t just sell them something because they ask for it. Educate them instead of sell them what may not be in their best interest. After an Apple employee discovered that DiJulius didn’t need the extra functionality in the iPad 2 that DiJulius asked to buy, the employee advised DiJulius not to buy it. “He educated versus sold. I didn’t buy it, but as a result, I’ve bought anything he’s told me since because I trust him so much.”

8. DEVELOP A CUSTOMER BILL OF RIGHTS.

One of the easiest things to implement right away is a Customer Bill of Rights. “World-class brands have non-negotiables, things you would never see an employee do,” says DiJulius, such as never point, show them; never say no; and never do a cold transfer when handing off a client. The Customer Bill of Rights also includes things your employees should always do: Always introduce yourself, deliver at least one compliment, and remember you’re on stage. Choose 8–10 items for your Customer Bill of Rights, train your employees on them, then roll out your new plan in a soft launch so your employees can practice.

9. CREATE A DAY-IN-THE-LIFE CUSTOMER VIDEO.

Help employees be more empathetic and compassionate when dealing with clients by creating a video that takes them on an emotional roller coaster to demonstrate what is happening in their customers’ lives. “Compassion and empathy—those are the two most powerful things your employees can have,” DiJulius said. Become a partner your client can’t live without. Make your employees realize everyone they come in contact with has an invisible sign above their head that says, “Make me feel important.” Obsess over and invest in the customer experience just like the leaders of Disney, Zappos, and Nordstrom. When you do, you’ll create a customer experience revolution and be known for world-class customer service. ■

John DiJulius, bestselling author of five customer service books, is the Chief Revolution Officer of The DiJulius Group and works with the top brands in the world on customer and employee experience.





Company Name:

North Texas Behavioral Health Authority (NTBHA)

Name & Title:

Henson Rogers,
Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Location:

Dallas, TX

Website:

NTBHA.org

Industry:

Mental Health Services



**COMPLETELY
COHESIVE
CO-MANAGEMENT:
HOW STEPHEN CRACKNELL AND
HIS TEAM AT USM TECHNOLOGY
HAVE ENABLED HENSON ROGERS
AND HIS TEAM AT NTBHA TO
ACHIEVE UNPRECEDENTED
GROWTH AND SUCCESS**

When you're the CIO of an organization dedicated to providing mental health services and substance abuse resources to low-income community members, you have enough high-level planning to execute without worrying about the company's day-to-day technology needs. Then, on top of all this, add a huge reorganization of the business, and it was clear why Henson Rogers and his team at North Texas Behavioral Health Authority (NTBHA) needed some technology assistance. Luckily, they found

Stephen Cracknell and his team at USM Technology, and together, their partnership has enabled NTBHA to grow exponentially both in terms of their internal organization and their ability to service their local communities.

AN INSTANTANEOUS TRANSFORMATION

Though NTBHA has been around since 1996, it wasn't until 2016 that it underwent a massive transformation. "NTBHA was actually a pilot program that the state of Texas started," Henson explains. "When I joined the organization in 2016, I wasn't here long before the state decided to sunset the program. But the thing was that there was still a large need for these services, so the state allowed NTBHA to recreate itself." He continues, "However, with this transformation, NTBHA also had to take on all the other functions that another organization previously did. In other words, our technology needs multiplied overnight."

With this transition, Henson and his team were tasked with launching an IT department and building all the IT processes from the ground up. "Previously, the company's data and IT needs were pretty minimal," Henson says. "There were some basic reports, like service and demographics reports, but nothing extensive. Now, it was obvious that we needed support. So we put out a request for proposal [RFP] for the technical services we needed, and USM Technology was one of the firms who responded." After hearing what Stephen's team had to say—along with all the other candidates—USM Technology won the RFP, and the partnership began.

ADDITIONAL IT SUPPORT

Immediately upon landing the contract, Stephen and his team got straight to work figuring out a co-managed IT relationship that would work best for Henson and his team at NTBHA. "Reflecting on it now, I don't know how we would have done it without them," relates Henson. "There was a tremendous amount of activity. We were hiring new staff, moving offices, and trying to get our internal processes ready before our new launch date. From integrating the Azure Cloud resources to setting up the networking and Wi-Fi to implementing robust cybersecurity protocols, USM Technology was integral to the success of this transition period."

After the initial reconfiguration, USM Technology became a crucial component of NTBHA's daily operation. "One thing in particular that USM helps us with is our fairly complicated onboarding and offboarding processes," mentions Henson. "Due to the different grants and funding—not to mention the fact that many of our clinicians work in other provider's facilities—we needed someone who would be able to execute these procedures while also being flexible enough to adjust to our ever-changing needs." For NTBHA, this "someone" is Stephen and his team at USM Technology.

SMOOTH SAILING

According to Henson, one of the best parts about working

with USM Technology is that he gains access to senior-level technicians and expertise without paying another full-time employee. He notes, "Other than data analysis and custom internal programming, Stephen and his team handle everything else IT-related. They've helped us move everything over to cloud-based solutions and incorporate a voice-over-IP system (which ended up being especially terrific when the pandemic hit). They are always looking for ways to strengthen our cybersecurity protocols to protect us. They're just a very valuable partner and are honestly the equivalent of having many more full-time employees, so it's worked out in terms of capability and cost management."

Beyond these things, this partnership has also resulted in one major thing for NTBHA: expansion. "In 2016, our projected business plan was to have 35 employees and be a \$35M funded organization," Henson explains. "Well, we've smashed these projections and are sitting at 120+ employees as a \$100M+ funded organization—over triple our initial goal." When asked if USM Technology played an integral role in creating the infrastructure and protocols that facilitated this growth for NTBHA, Henson responded simply with, "Absolutely."

Regarding what he would tell other business owners or decision makers who need some technology support, Henson says, "Give Stephen and his team a call.

THEIR KNOWLEDGE, CUSTOMER SERVICE, AND COMMUNICATION SET THEM APART FROM OTHER TECHNOLOGY FIRMS, AND I'VE NEVER HESITATED TO RECOMMEND THEM TO ANYONE I'VE TALKED WITH. THEY HAVE A 60-SECOND GUARANTEED RESPONSE TIME, MEANING YOU'LL ALWAYS SPEAK WITH A REAL PERSON WITHIN A MINUTE OF CALLING, AND WE'VE JUST GENERALLY HAD AN EXTREMELY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE."

He adds, "With USM Technology, it's more than just a vendor relationship; it's a true partnership."

Ultimately, by taking the brunt of the technology needs off Henson's plate, USM Technology allows Henson and his team to focus on doing what they do best—building out the technology strategy and supporting the executive leadership as they continue to grow and provide much-needed mental health and substance abuse services to people throughout Dallas, Ellis, Hunt, Kaufman, Navarro, and Rockwall Counties. So, if you've been searching for an IT firm that will help support you with all your technology needs to allow you to focus on your core mission, look no further than Stephen Cracknell and his team at USM Technology. ■

10 RULES FROM GEORGE FOREMAN ON WHAT IT TAKES TO REACH THE TOP (AND STAY THERE)

George Foreman, the second wealthiest boxer of all time, is a household name today, but he didn't become one easily. To truly understand and appreciate his resilience, you must look back at his life and the obstacles he's faced.

The two-time heavyweight champion, Olympic gold medalist, record-busting salesman, author, and serial entrepreneur had a troubled youth in Texas.

Foreman's father abandoned him, his mother, and his six siblings when Foreman was only 5 years old. Often roaming the streets as a youth, he got into trouble and didn't like school. Bigger and stronger than most kids his age, he got into fights, lived in abandoned houses,

and robbed people. At 15, he dropped out of school. He was street smart, but he could barely read and write.

After being chased by police, he awakened to the truth about the destructive path he was headed down. The next day, he signed up for the Job Corps. "I'd heard a commercial with Jimmy Brown and Johnny Unitas," Foreman said. "They were great football players, and they said, 'If you're looking for a second chance, join the Job Corps.'" There, he learned bricklaying, forestry, and carpentry as well as how to read and write. He sent money to his mom each month to help support his family. He took up boxing as a challenge after listening on the radio to the heavyweight title match when Cassius Clay fought against Floyd Patterson. "I was always trying to be a tough guy and kept getting into fights," Foreman said. "All

EXPERIENCE TAUGHT FOREMAN THAT PEOPLE BUY YOU, NOT YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE.

the guys in the day room [at Job Corps] said, ‘George, you’re always picking on people, bullying people. If you’re so tough, why don’t you become a boxer?’”

He moved to California, met a boxing coach for the first time, and started learning how to box at the gym. After a couple weeks, the coach matched him up with a light heavyweight. “The guy was so skinny, and I told every friend I had to please come down and watch me,” Foreman said. Expecting to win, he was instead humiliated and decided to quit boxing. “The kids at the gym just laughed me out,” Foreman said. A few weeks later, the trainer ran into Foreman on the street, asking him where he’d been. Not wanting to admit the real reason, he made up an excuse that he didn’t have shoes to box in. After the trainer gave him a pair of boxing shoes, Foreman had no more excuses and returned to the boxing gym.

Only 20 months after his first boxing match, Foreman won a gold medal at the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City. He caused controversy among African American civil rights activists after winning when he waved an American flag around the ring. The activists saw this as a way of appeasing the oppressive, white-run society. Foreman told *Ebony’s* Hans Massaquoi, “I was so proud that I had won. I wanted the world to know that I was from America.”

Hurt by the reaction, Foreman adopted a surly, tough-guy image and became known for his mean facial expressions, which made him unpopular and rejected by the public. Foreman fought his way through the ranks, and in January 1973, he became the heavyweight champion of the world when he knocked out the undefeated Smokin’ Joe Frazier in two rounds. In 1974, he experienced his most humiliating and famous fight. After a 19-month reign in which he was undefeated (with a career record of 40 and 0), he lost to Muhammad Ali in the eighth round of the fight known as the “Rumble in the Jungle.” →



HIS POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND BELIEF THAT THE BEST IS YET TO COME REMINDS HIM TO BE THANKFUL AND THAT BAD TIMES DON'T LAST FOREVER.

“I lost the most wonderful position I’d had—the heavyweight title,” Foreman said. “I was devastated. I couldn’t live with myself, so I had to start fighting again to be a champion.” He fought his way back to the top and once again was a No. 1 contender. But then, one night in 1977, after losing a 12-round brutal fight against Jimmy Young, Foreman had a profound religious experience and became a born-again Christian. He retired from boxing as a changed man. He got rid of his luxury cars, several houses, and his pet tiger and lion and started living more of a “regular guy” lifestyle. He preached on street corners, cofounded a small church, and founded the George Foreman Youth and Community Development Center in Houston with his brother, Reid. “For 10 years, I never even made a fist,” George said. “I became an evangelist with The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ and never fought anybody.”

But by 1987, because of a series of terrible investments and his former extravagant lifestyle, George was broke. Without enough funding, his youth center faced getting closed, so he made the difficult decision to come out of retirement. When he returned to boxing, reporters made disparaging remarks and accused him of staging a publicity stunt, partly because he’d become a pitchman for products to supplement his income. Despite looking out of shape and past his prime, he began beating younger, fitter boxers. He also displayed his new persona—a pleasant, likable guy with a sense of humor. After 24 wins, including 23 knockouts, he once again contended to regain the heavyweight title and was scheduled to fight Michael Moorer for the World Boxing Association (WBA) and International Boxing Federation (IBF) heavyweight titles. However, the fight almost didn’t take place because the WBA didn’t have Foreman ranked on its list of contenders and remained unwilling to sanction the

bout. The promoters even canceled the fight. But Foreman took his case to court and won. The presiding judge said the WBA acted “capriciously” in not sanctioning the fight, and as long as Foreman obtained medical clearance from Nevada doctors, he was eligible to fight for the WBA title.

In 1994, George Foreman shocked the world when he became the oldest heavyweight champion, winning back his title after losing it to Muhammad Ali 20 years earlier. Foreman was 45 years old and spent most of the match getting beat by the 26-year-old, undefeated Michael Moorer, who had physicality and youthful energy on his side. But in the 10th round, Foreman used his power to knock out Moorer in one of the most memorable moments in sports history. Foreman defended his title three more times. Out of his 81 career fights, Foreman posted 76 wins and 68 knockouts. He’s been inducted into the World Boxing Hall of Fame and International Boxing Hall of Fame and is rated the eighth greatest boxer of all time.

As a result of winning the heavyweight championship a second time, Foreman received countless endorsement offers and became a successful entrepreneur, building an empire outside of the ring. He became a brand ambassador for several multinational companies, including McDonald’s, Doritos, Nike, and KFC. He spent over a decade promoting Meineke Car Care Centers and grew the business to over 1,000 franchises. Considered one of the most successful pitchmen of all time, Foreman made a deal that solidified him as a household name outside of boxing. After Salton Inc. approached Foreman to sell their grill, he made a deal to put his name on it and become their spokesperson. The George Foreman Lean Mean Fat-Reducing Grilling Machine earned him 40% of sales and later, a staggering \$138 million to buy the rights to use his name on the grill in perpetuity. Selling over 120 million units, 1 out of every 10 people in the United States owns his grill. Between royalties and the buyout, Foreman pocketed a minimum of \$250 million from the grill, making it one of the most successful endorsement deals in sports history.

George Foreman shared his biggest lessons learned and how you can become more resilient in the face of adversity.

1. LOOK FOR THE POSITIVE.

Even in the lowest moments, there are advantages. Foreman looked at being at the bottom as an opportunity. “I think you have a major advantage when you start from the bottom because you have nowhere else to go but up,” Foreman said. “And I started from the bottom.”

2. CREATE GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

Principles are the foundation of our beliefs and values and guide our actions. Foreman's life changed positively when he found his principles one night after robbing someone. Being chased by the police and dogs, he climbed under a house where he covered himself from head to toe with sewage water from busted pipes under the house so the dogs couldn't smell his scent. While hiding, he thought about a speech his mom had made about not having a thief in the family. "I was so scared," Foreman recalled. "I realized for the first time I was a thief. I thought to myself if I can get from underneath this house and the police don't grab me, I'm never going to steal anything from anyone again. After a while, the sirens passed, and I crawled from under that house and said, 'That's it.' . . . I had been on the journey of my life, and I never stole anything again because I had something I'd never had before: principles. I had a badge of principles, and I knew if I could come from that bottom, I can make it all the way to the top."

3. FIGHT THROUGH THE TOUGH TIMES.

Real champions fight hardest when faced with adversity, and they never give up. Foreman learned this lesson after returning to the gym following his first loss. This time, Foreman learned how to box extremely well, so his trainer entered him in the Golden Glove fight. When the bell rang in the second fight, his opponent, Bob Winters, hit Foreman so hard that he went down and became dizzy enough that one woman appeared to look like eight women wearing the same outfit. As he heard the referee count down, one or two of the women would disappear with each count. "I remember there were only two left, so I thought I should get up before they all left," Foreman said. "I jumped up and I thought, I'm going to put this boxing and bobbing and weaving down for a moment and just fight this guy . . . I turned into a windmill and the next thing you know, I won the boxing match. I learned that sometimes, you just gotta fight. All the rules you've got to play with and your skills are nothing. You've just got to come out and swing and fight."

4. ALWAYS STICK TO YOUR CONVICTIONS.

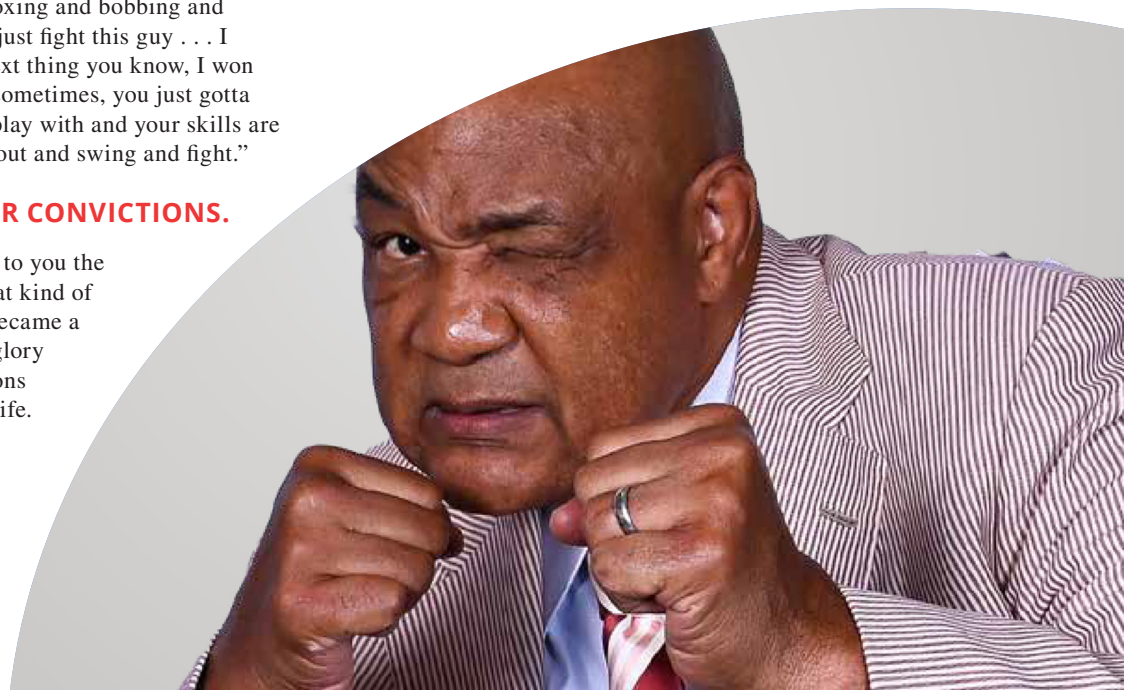
Your convictions are what matter to you the most and signify to the world what kind of person you are. When Foreman became a boxer the first time, he did it for glory and fame. Declaring his convictions changed his motivations and his life.

After losing the fight against Jimmy Young, Foreman found himself in the fight of his life. In the dressing room, bleeding from his forehead, hands, and feet, Foreman began having a conversation with himself, justifying that he didn't need to worry about the match. During his internal conversation, he reviewed all he had—a big television contract, a home, horses, a Rolls-Royce, and all the money he needed. Telling himself he "could retire . . .," he heard an unexplained voice that concluded ". . . and die."

"After a while, death multiplied in my conversation," Foreman recalled. "I realized I was about to die, and I didn't know what to do . . . I was in this dark space. Over my head, under my feet, and around me was absolutely nothing. If you multiply every sad thought you ever had in your life, that's where I was in this dump yard of nothing. I got mad . . . I said, I don't care if this is death, I still believe in God . . . that's when someone grabbed me, a hand pulled me out of nothing. I was alive in that dressing room . . . and I wasn't afraid anymore. I saw blood on my hand and my forehead, and I was screaming, 'Jesus Christ is coming alive in me.'" Foreman quit boxing, became an ordained minister, and began sharing his experience. "The lesson I learned was conviction," Foreman said. "You've got to believe in something. It doesn't matter how powerful and wealthy you are if there's no guide."

5. BE HUMBLE.

Foreman recalled being overconfident when heading into his fight with Muhammad Ali. He'd expected to knock Ali out in one or two rounds and didn't study Ali's fighting strategies. He never looked at a newspaper



or watched an interview that Ali did. If he had, he would have heard Ali explain exactly how he planned to beat Foreman and could have adjusted his own boxing strategy.

6. GIVE PEOPLE SOMETHING THEY WANT.

Don't be discouraged if people don't buy from you. Figure out what they want and give it to them. When George became an ordained minister, he began preaching on street corners at a friend's suggestion. But nobody would stop to listen to him. "This broke my heart," Foreman said. "After a while, I realized I'm going to make these people stop and pay attention to me." He began telling his boxing story about beating Joe Frazier, which brought people in droves. "I learned how to sell myself on that street corner," Foreman said. "You can't be shy. You can't let it break your heart; you just got to say the next one will stop. I found out it's not easy to make someone stop on the street and listen to you unless you've got something for them, and I had something—that story."

7. BE PROUD OF YOURSELF.

Don't let ego get in your way. Foreman learned not to shy away from his beliefs. If someone rejected him, he said a kind word. "I didn't want anyone to know that George Foreman was on the street corner preaching," Foreman said. "I decided I'm going to be proud of this."

8. LEARN TO SELL.

When Foreman went back into boxing, he was getting a lot of criticism in the newspapers and on TV. Reporters were making jokes about his age and weight and talking badly about him. Foreman investigated buying newspaper ads to promote himself, but when he discovered a full-page ad in *USA Today* was almost \$100,000, he decided he needed to learn to appreciate the criticism. "I learned to play with it," Foreman said. "I'd talk my head off when I'd get on television. I learned to sell George Foreman, the boxer, and Madison Avenue started to pay attention." Foreman did commercials for Pepsi-Cola, Doritos, hotels, Meineke, and so on.

After selling a lot of products for other people, a friend suggested he get his own product to sell. This is how he came to partner with Salton, Inc. for the George Foreman grill. "We did an infomercial and talked about how it worked," Foreman said. "I'd see people at the airport, and they'd yell, 'We love you, George.' . . . They loved the grill, and it started to sell. I would mention it everywhere. I was a favorite of Jay Leno, David Letterman, and all those guys. They'd invite me over and want to make

fun of the grill. I'd bring one over, and I'd cook on their show. It became the talk of the town because I sold it."

9. DON'T DESTROY SOMEONE ELSE TO MAKE YOURSELF LOOK BETTER.

Foreman refuses to tear down another person. When shooting the first infomercial for the George Foreman grill, the script put down competing products. "I looked at the script and said, 'Nah, I'm not going to do that,'" Foreman said. "I'm not going to tear up someone else's product just to make mine [look] good. We're going to make it good. We're not going to destroy anything that someone else is working on to make my products the best. It's got to be the best because it is. They took my advice and said, you were right, and I said, 'No, that is right.'"

10. BE KIND.

Foreman was inspired to change to a likable person after observing how kind people were to him. "They didn't care about money," Foreman said. "They just liked me . . . and they treated me so nice. You don't have to be the champion of the world. You don't have to be rich or have a nice custom car. People are kind to you. I wish I would have known that when I was champion of the world. I would have treated people so much better."

Experience taught Foreman that people buy you, not your product or service. "It doesn't matter what you have," Foreman said. "People buy you. So don't hurt anybody. Don't disappoint everybody. If you meet that expectation of yourself, then they'll buy your product because they feel like they're buying you. Be the nicest human being in the world, not the second nicest. Find out who's the nicest and see what he's doing so you can 'out nice' him—and you can sell anything."

Foreman's journey has taken him from poverty to being a multimillionaire to being broke and back to where he now has a \$330 million net worth. He's displayed courage and resilience and says without principles, fight, and conviction, "You're not fit. No one is going to give you anything. I never let anything discourage me. As long as I have my principles, my fight, and my conviction, I can succeed."

His positive attitude and belief that the best is yet to come reminds him to be thankful and that bad times don't last forever. "Every day, I put my feet on the ground and [am] thankful for that day and happy I'm alive," Foreman said. "Because there's a possibility of me doing great things if I can just stay alive this day." ■

Beware Of Cybersquatters!

BY STEPHEN CRACKNELL

Have you ever searched for a specific website but landed on a completely different one after misspelling a letter or two in the URL? This deceptive tactic is known as cybersquatting. This practice not only jeopardizes the online presence of businesses and individuals but also poses a significant challenge in the ever-evolving landscape of cybersecurity. The scariest part is that you can be a victim of a cybersquatted domain and not even realize it.

Here's what you need to know about this type of cybercrime:

WHAT IS CYBERSQUATTING?

Cybersquatting, also known as domain squatting, involves the malevolent act of registering a domain name that is confusingly similar to that of a legitimate entity, be it a business, organization, or individual. The primary motive behind this maneuver is often financial gain, with cybersquatters aiming to exploit the recognition and success of well-known brands. However, the repercussions extend beyond monetary losses as cybersquatting can stain the reputation of its victims.

TYPES OF CYBERSQUATTING

There are many types of cybersquatting scams, but here are the most common ones that you need to be aware of:

1. Top-Level Domain (TLD) Exploitation: A TLD is the final element of a domain name, such as “.com,” “.co.uk,” and “.org.” Because there are so many variations, it's difficult for small to medium-sized businesses to register all of them for their brand, and it's even more difficult for celebrities or famous individuals.

Cybercriminals will register matching domains using different TLDs and either create offensive or inappropriate websites, requesting the original domain owner to pay them to take them down, or they will use these websites to gain customers' trust and make them susceptible to phishing attacks.

2. Typosquatting: This form of cybersquatting involves intentionally registering misspelled domain names to capitalize on common typos, leading unsuspecting users to malicious sites.

Using the domain name *Facebook.com* as an example, here's how a cybersquatter might buy their domains: *Faebook.com*, *Facebokk.com* or *Faceboook.com*

Typos are easy to make, so misspelled domains can generate a lot of traffic.

3. Look-Alike Cybersquatting: This form of cybersquatting involves creating domains with common words added to mislead customers, even if they aren't confusingly similar at first glance.

Here are a few examples:

1. Original: *Google.com*. Lookalike: *G00gle.com*.
2. Original: *Amazon.com*. Lookalike: *amaz0n.com* or *amazonl.com*.
3. Original: *Microsoft.com*. Lookalike: *Microsofity.com*.

Looking at these, you might not think they'd easily trick users, but they still do!

HOW TO AVOID BEING A CYBERSQUATTING VICTIM

You can avoid being a cybersquatting victim by taking a proactive approach. Here are a few steps to take:

1. Register Your Trademark: To benefit from the full protection of the Anti-Cybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA) and Uniform Domain-Name Dispute-Resolution Policy (UDRP), it can be helpful to register your trademark early. These regulations will still apply if a cybercriminal registers a cybersquatting domain name and you have an unregistered trademark; however, you'll need to prove you were using it for business before the domain was registered. Trademarks aren't required, but they can make this easier.

2. Invest in Multiple Prominent TLDs: When you register your domain, also register it with the most popular TLDs, like *.co* and *.org*.

3. Be Cautious of What Websites You Visit: When typing URLs into a web browser's address bar, double-check to make sure you're going to the correct website.

This applies to links you click too! Hover over links with your mouse to confirm that it is the correct link. For extra security, skip clicking links and type them into the search bar on your own.

Cybersquatting is only one method hackers use to cause chaos. Cybercriminals are constantly coming up with new ways to scam businesses and individuals alike. If you want to double down on security to make sure you and your company are protected from sneaky attackers, we can help. ■



Stephen Cracknell is CEO of USM Technology. They are based in Texas and to find out more about what they do and how they could help you, please visit USMTechnology.com.



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