

# BE YOUR OWN BEST PROMOTION TOOL

## A guide for Athletes

The following is a transcript from an interview of Australian Beach Volleyball star, Kerri Pottharst. The 3 time Olympian and Sydney Gold Medallist was quizzed by Annette Huygens-Tholen on 12 August 2009 to help athletes better manage their own careers and to help them succeed beyond sport.

*Annette: Hello and welcome to the telecall for Success Beyond Sport. Welcome! Today I will be interviewing Kerri Pottharst.*

*Let me tell you a little bit about our guest. I'm real proud to have her here, she has been on my hit list for quite awhile to interview, it was just a matter of timing for what I was doing and for herself as well. She is often traveling around the globe herself. Kerri won Olympic Gold in Beach Volleyball in Sydney 2000 and that was after winning a bronze in Atlanta in the sport of Beach Volleyball. She has also followed up with competing for Australia in the Athens Olympics. Kerri is a 3 time Olympian and a member of the team of the decade in beach volleyball; she was recently inducted into the International Volleyball Hall of Fame.*

*One of the reasons I wanted Kerri on the call is because not only is she a very successful athlete but she has created a series of success after her sporting field. Kerri has lifted herself out of a low profile sport to be a quite highly celebrated Australian personality-being on Australian TV shows and being regularly interviewed. I think she has a lot of useful advice for athletes who are currently competing or about to be retired on how to manage the career of being an athlete both on the field and off the field.*

*So welcome to the call Kerri, how are you?*

Kerri: Good Morning, I'm great, I'm really good- it's a lovely day here today and I'm really excited to chat with you Annette!

*Annette: I wanted to start off by asking you a little bit about your mindset. We go way back – back into 89/90 period when we were both in Europe playing indoor volleyball in our prospective European countries. You've been playing volleyball for a long time-did you always have the mindset to succeed and win a gold medal in the Olympics? Or was there a turning point in your career that switched that on?*

Kerri: I think it came when I was in my mid-teens. I played a lot of sports, bits and pieces thru high school, but I never really excelled at anything. I never really found what I really wanted to do. I did a bit of this and a bit of that. Obviously being 6 foot tall and reasonably coordinated, lots of the coaches wanted me to be involved in their sport. It wasn't until my brother gave me the opportunity to fill in for a social game of volleyball. He actually just wanted me to stand on the court and when the whistle blew

just get out of the way so his team could play. They just needed an extra player. That's how I actually started playing volleyball.

After that I thought maybe this sport is something I could do. I was a shy teenager, really sensitive, easily teased, I would cry when people were mean to me. I didn't have a lot of confidence and all of a sudden I found something that gave me confidence. I was getting patted on the back for being good at this sport and quickly got into state teams. From that moment on, I thought I had found something that my height is good at and people are making me feel good about.

From that moment on, I started saying I want to be really good at this. I set myself little goals like I want to be the best in my club team, I want to be the best in my state team, I want to be the best in the Australian team. I was about 15 or 16 when I started and back then I never even dreamed of going to the Olympics. It took a long time of going thru the motions of indoor volleyball and then into beach volleyball because of a knee injury. I finally then realized that I might be able to get into the Olympics.

*Annette: Beach Volleyball wasn't named as an Olympic Sport until 1993 so did you set your sights then? At what point in that did you think – ok, I'm going to win a medal? What were your goals?*

Kerri: I just wanted to get back into the sport. I had a very serious knee injury and I couldn't even imagine playing volleyball in the beginning. It wasn't until my boyfriend then gave me a white volleyball one day and said on each panel of this ball I want you to write a goal and date that goal and step by step get back to what you want to do. He got me to fill this ball in with all these little goals. The last panel on that ball ended up being beach volleyball. It had crossed my mind that I might not get back into indoor volleyball. I had heard that beach was being made into an Olympic sport and I thought wow- all these years of playing indoor I would have never had that opportunity. Our indoor national team was never good enough to make it to the Olympics. But on the beach some of our Australian athletes were having some success and I thought if they can do it, I can do it. And maybe I can go to the Olympics. So it was from the adversity of having a serious injury that gave me some passion and drive and something to aim for.

*Annette: So what do you think is the difference between you and Natalie Cook with whom you won the bronze and gold medal that enabled you to create success on the world stage? Because leading up to Atlanta you didn't have that many podium finishes. How many did you have before Atlanta?*

Kerri: Going into Atlanta we were seated in 6<sup>th</sup> position. We may have had some 4<sup>th</sup>s places and some 3<sup>rds</sup> but nothing much. Going into Atlanta our goal was to win a medal. We achieved our goal. Going into there we wanted to get a medal. The big difference between Atlanta and Sydney and we got together and had a team meeting where we brainstormed and we developed our plan going forward. I It wasn't just Natalie and I, it was the team we built around us. We had our volleyball coach, Steve Anderson, we had our success coach Kurek Ashley and we had our fulltime physical trainer, Phil Moreland. There were 5 of us that made our team. Without all of those people we couldn't achieve what we achieved.

Our success coach, Kurek Ashley, was the one who really made the difference. When he came on board he realized that we had a lot of fear and doubt about whether we could beat the Brazilian team who was winning at that time. And he really started to push us past our limits. We did all sorts of crazy things like fire walking and glass walking and blindfolded rock climbing and all sorts of things that other people thought were a little bit strange. He knew at the time that getting us out of that comfort zone and got us to believe that nothing really is impossible- like walking across the hot coals. That maybe beating the

Brazilians was just a thought and we could get past those limits. The first time we wanted to win a gold medal was as soon as we won our bronze. We split up for a year and a half because we started to rest on our laurels and blame each other for our mistakes and everything went downhill after the 96 Olympics. So we had time apart. But then we got back together again and things went full steam ahead.

But we thought if we just go for a gold medal who says we could come away with a gold- we could still come away with a bronze or a silver. So we decided to come away with something more than a gold- we decided to call that gold medal excellence. All that meant was in leading up to the Olympics we would act like we were already gold medalists. We would become gold medalists in order to achieve the gold medal. A year and a half after the Olympics we looked at what it would be to act like we were gold medalists, to train like gold medalists, to talk to our sponsors as if we were gold medalists - all these characteristics that gold medalists have not just in our sport but in any sport. We took on all those characteristics so we could become that sort of athlete before the Olympics. We thought that if we could be gold medalists already along the way we would pick up the gold medal. And that's what it ended up being, gold medal excellence.

We broke that down into what our purpose was and why we were doing it and that gave us the motivation to get out of bed early. We had our rules, our volleyball specific rules; things that we needed to have in order to beat all those teams. It was a very specific plan that we put together and a lot of direction from our success coach and we decided to live that life a year and a half before the Olympics.

*Annette: from there, how do you now bring that excellence into your life as a non-athlete?*

Kerri: Well I suppose everything I learned along the way and that it worked- that everything we did at the time seemed a bit outlandish but it worked. I think I bring that into my life without even thinking about it. I have the belief that I can achieve anything. For me there are 3 things that you need to have to achieve, passion, preparation and belief. If I have the passion to start something off I know that I have to do a lot of preparation, I know that I need to learn and do what I have to do in order to get there. And then just the belief to do it is just ingrained in me and I apply it to everything I do. I apply it without any fear and doubt. I have learned that from 25 years of sport and now it just comes naturally.

*Annette: Well it's a great habit to have. To have such an empowering habit is a big part of your success. Since your gold medal, you've had a great number of media opportunities. Did they just fall into your lap? What did you have to do to create those opportunities?*

Kerri: If you have a look now at the newspapers and TV, the amount of women's' sport on TV is absolutely minimal. Inside the paper there is only a couple of inches everyday or maybe just a mention of a female athlete. When we realized that we needed funding to get on the world tour and this was before the Atlanta Olympics, we needed a lot of money to get out there and travel the world and play. We needed to better our circumstances to get ready for tournament, to get out there and train and pay for our coaches because initially we didn't have any funding from our federation. We knew that we needed to get sponsors so we would actually ring the media and say look this is what we are doing and would you like to come out and do a story on us. I'm sure it helped that we were on the beach in a swimsuit but still the media found that quite refreshing that as athletes we would actually contact them. I think that's something athletes forget about these days- that it is a 2 way communication street and they can ring the media and say come and do a story on us. That we are about to go to the world championships and this is our dream and this is our goal. The media really needs stories. They are getting a lot of men's stories

because there is a lot of money in men's sports. But they do want to have women's stories if they can get them- they just don't get a hold of them.

Give them a story

The first thing I would say to any athletes out there is if they want some media to just ring them up and give them a story. They want some sort of angle so think up that angle before you call them. Work out what you want them to write about –whether it's the world championships you are going to or whether it's the struggle that you've had to get where you are today. You build that media profile bit by bit.

To build that sponsorship it's about getting out there and meeting people, it's really about networking. We used to send out proposals cold to people who hadn't heard of us and who we hadn't met before, we would barely even get a response of no- let alone a response of yes. The successful sponsorships that we did enjoy in the first couple of years were all through people we knew. It's about networking and going to all sorts of functions and always being on the lookout to see if the person standing next to you is someone you might be able to team up with. I think team up with is the key word because it's not about you give us money and that's where it ends. It's sort of a team situation. We came on board with those companies; we treated them like they were part of our team. We would communicate with them frequently, we would tell them what we are doing-I just had a laugh with someone about how we used to use fax machines. We laugh about that now but now it's all about Facebook and all the social media networks. I used to type out all my newsletters that I would write on weekly or biweekly occasion to my sponsors. I would type them then photocopy all the media we had gotten, whether that's a newspaper articles or a video we had from TV and I would post that to them. Now it's email. We are very lucky that we have the technology now to email.

Keeping in contact with your sponsors is very important and bringing them on board as a team. Going in and talking to them and showing them a medal if you've just won something-go in and show them and get them to enjoy it with you. And then think about different ways you can help them. We used to get them out onto the beach and we started a corporate volleyball session. We would bring them out onto the beach with all their staff and get them to play volleyball with us. We turned that into a big team building event. And then of course I began speaking and I could offer that to them. You just have to open up your mind a little bit and see how you can bring them on board and become a big happy family. Probably one of my longest sponsors, who first sponsored me in 1989, is Bolle Sunglasses and I still get product from them. Over the years they paid me quite a bit in sponsorship money but I still get product and clothing from them and that's 20 years ago. That's all been built by just having great relationships.

*Annette: It's definitely about nurturing relationships. You've talked about contacting the media yourself. How do you work out the right contact? How do you get into those contacts?*

Kerri: Basically start with the receptionist. If I needed to get a hold of somebody at channel 10 or one of the media networks, I would call the receptionist and say "hey, I have a story it's on Beach Volleyball- who do I need to speak to?" They are happy to put you through to the right people. It is that easy, it really is that easy, especially at the local level. Like I said before, the most important thing is to have an angle. They are not just going to do a story on you because you're playing your sport. They need to have some sort of angle, have a think about your story and your journey and what you have coming up and that could become your angle.

*Annette: The big problem is that a lot of people rely on sending in press releases and they receive so many now with email and social media and thinking outside the box and having that direct approach can be beneficial in getting your story across.*

Kerri: And making it personal. Press releases are great but like you said, whether they read it amongst the other 50 they got in that day... just pick up the phone and don't be afraid to ask the question.

*Annette: Do you think a large part of your post gold success was as a result of all that nurturing of those relationships prior to winning the gold medal?*

Kerri: Definitely through nurturing relationships because I still have friendships with people who have been my sponsors or who were in the media so that goes to show they were real relationships. I think that's very important that you don't treat them in a way where once you don't need them you don't speak to them anymore. That's sort of a greed type of situation. It's also the confidence that I gained through sport that gave me the confidence to be myself in front of the camera on television. I always get nervous. It's sort of a good sign because you know when you're nervous you want to perform well and that's why your body is reacting that way. It's the confidence about knowing that yes I'm in front of the camera and I have a little plan about what I want to say. I think when you in front of the media and your being yourself that wins you more points than anything. If you're trying to talk like somebody different or get across a point you're not really sure about its going to help you. Being yourself and having a bit of fun relaxing and sometimes even something that helps me, is to before you go on is to have a bit of a joke with the people around you. That's what works best with me. I get to know them a bit, have a bit of a joke and that gets them warm to you. It's just like having a bit of a chat

*Annette: You talked a bit about having goals and setting goals. Was it a goal of yours to have a speaking career or to be a sporting personality?*

Kerri: It wasn't really a goal back when I was playing the sport. But as I was going through my journey and the most impressionable years, between the Atlanta Olympics and the Sydney Olympics, those 4 years when we were trying to do everything we could to get to the gold medal. It was sort of a side thing where I knew that if I became good at speaking and if I was really aware of any opportunities in the media that would help my profile that it would all add up to the success at the end. Because in improving my profile and keeping that going through the media that would keep the sponsorships coming in which enabled me to keep playing the sport at a high level. And then I was able to keep treating my body to all the things it needed like the physical things I needed like staying in the good hotels and getting the good flights. All the things we needed for resting and recuperating.

The speaking part of it came... I knew we had a really unique story. The moment we got our volleyball coach on board and were doing things away from our federation so we really had a unique story. I had just gone through such a major knee injury and turned it around and got into beach volleyball and played in an Olympics. I thought this makes such a great story and I want to get out there and tell it. I realized over the years that I like to teach and that's why I'm coaching beach volleyball now.

I think if I hadn't got into sports I would have become a teacher. So I wanted to inspire people and teach people from the lessons I have learned as well. That's sort of how I started and people enjoyed the story and I wanted to get good at this. So I would go and watch other people speak or in front of the camera to see how they were in front of the media. I was always looking at other people around me to see how I could get better.

When I finished playing sport I realized that I still needed an income and the story ended with the pot of gold at the rainbow so I'm going to keep telling it. I've evolved it over the years and added things to the presentation and I've realized I can continue to tell it and derive an income from that story. And I love it. I'm passionate about it and I'm always prepared and I really believe that I'm doing something to help others. I guess the goal about being successful with that was never really something that I only wanted to do- it was something on the side. But now in my life it's become my biggest income earning stream, the speaking and that sort of thing. I feel very grateful but I've had to work very hard at it. The first speech I did I wrote it out and I read which was in front of 500 accountants back in Sydney in 1995. It started back when I was totally nervous and totally green and now I could speak for over an hour without a note at all. It's a lot of hard work, it doesn't just come naturally. But again, if you have a passion for something and you realize that's what you really want to do then compare yourself and learn from other people who are good around you and then just go for it.

*Annette: I think athletes can all realize that they all have their own unique story and they can create success at the highest level or at some level. It's getting in touch with that story about what makes them unique that can be their profile. So when do we get that story in print?*

Kerri: You talked about good and bad habits before. My worst habit is procrastination and I have these wonderful ideas. I have one person helping me with my biography which I may have missed the boat on. And I have another book about the business of being an athlete and all the things that go along with sport such as the media, the marketing, the speaking, the sponsorship-the whole kit and caboodle about treating your athlete career as a business. That's on the back burner and I have a 3 year old son now who keeps me pretty busy. And I'm coaching a volleyball team that includes a lot of international travel and you really have to prioritize what's important in your life. It's about priorities and our days are just so action packed and busy so right now the book is on the lower end of my priority list. My family is on the top. I'm just making excuses Annette!

I have them stuck up in front of me all those things I want to achieve in 2009. A few have kicked off already but I have a bit of work to do before the end of the year.

*Annette: We can always help you with that procrastination, we have techniques for that. What's the big picture for Kerri Potharst?*

Kerri: I've sort of split my goals into different areas. One is my own personal fitness. After 20 years of being an athlete, some people enjoy that part of it and being fit. I actually always loved the volleyball but never enjoyed the conditioning part. That part sort of dropped off after I stopped playing and having a child. I have fitness goals where I want to stay in shape and run after my child. I have to stay after my injuries; I've had 6 knee surgeries which has made it more of a challenge.

My book, the big picture, is getting that out. I want to continue to be an elite volleyball coach. After all those years of playing volleyball, I've learned so much from the coaches around me. I had some of the best coaches in the world; I now want to pass that on to others. I went to 3 Olympics as a player and I went to Beijing as a commentator and I'd love to go to London as a coach. Then I could knock them all on the heads and then there wouldn't be much more to go to an Olympics for now would there?

For me it's just if an opportunity comes up, I see the opportunity. Some people close themselves off. If an opportunity comes about their limiting beliefs cut them off to realizing they can even give it a go. I don't have limiting beliefs to where an opportunity comes about my belief system is so open and wide I think

why I can do that. Then I think well no I don't really want to do that and that's not really my passion so I go onto the next one. So I always see all these wonderful opportunities and I think it's amazing. So when I hear all these people who are stuck in a rut, I think wow there are so many opportunities how can you be like that. It's often their doubt about being able to achieve something which is stopping them from realizing there are opportunities. For me the world is so open and it's about finding their niche and about what they want to do.

You talk about retiring athletes not really knowing what they want to do and I'm still a little like that. I have a lot of opportunities but I'm not really sure which one I want to give 100% too. But then sometimes I don't want to give 100% to something like I did with sport and maybe I want to give 30% here and 40% there. And then I've got my family which is 50% and then there is the volleyball coaching and then the speaking. I'm doing the volleyball coaching which I have a passion for. Then the speaking which provides the income. I don't really have any massive dreams.

*Annette: They are probably massive for other people you just probably keep them in proportion. I have a question from Jenny in Massachusetts. How much time do you spend on your speaking career? And do you have an agent?*

Kerri: I've tried over the year with various management companies. And I've found the best person to manage me is me - because I know the most about myself and my movements. I've found that most management companies that unless you have a very very high profile and you don't have the time to manage the requests you get in they just kind of leave you behind and forget about you. You thinking that every day they are working for but they aren't really. I've been with some really nice management companies who treated me well and I got more opportunities myself by just getting out there and networking. As far as speaking, I went exclusive with one company and I still found that I got more opportunities myself.

I have a website which is quite extensive that has a lot of information on which is more a business site with all the information of what I have to offer and speaking and such. It's all about how much time I spend on it. In between my family and my coaching, I'm on the computer a lot. I've just found that doing it myself and for the profile I am and in my country it's just better to do it myself. If I had a higher profile and had a lot more inquiries and contacts every single day then I would definitely get a management company to do that. It really depends where you fit in. If you're just starting off then you might need a speaking company to take you on board and help you put together your presentation. Maybe give you opportunities where you are speaking for free. I've spoken to a lot of charities and schools where I spoke for free but it was all about getting experience. Eventually as you get better you can list your price and get a profile with all the speaking bureaus. We have about 20 speaking bureaus in this country that all have my information where I put together flyers and put out newsletters every 6 months to keep them updated and keeping me in the forefront in their mind. So when a client calls and they need a speaker they think hey Kerri would be good for that. Then they contact me and I say whether or not I'm available. I hope that sort of answers your question but sometimes I feel like I need an assistant.

*Annette: Are you proactive in getting speaking events or is it more through your website or through the contacts you've made? Or are you out there making calls?*

Kerri: At times when I have the time and it's slow in inquiries, like I said there are so many speaking in the world, you sort of have to be in the forefront of the minds of the bureaus that you're with. So I do a bit of everything. I network with people; I'm always telling people I'm a speaker. I give out my card which

said I'm a speaker which has a picture of me so in case they forget they can look at the card. I'm a speaker and I am also an MC for events. Just to give me options to get more work. I keep the bureaus up to date with all my information so they see my fees and my travel info so they know how I travel. I have no problem going coach. So once you start speaking then start getting testimonials and list them on your website so people can see. And that really helps. Being punctual and being organized is really important as well. I'll send those testimonials through so they have some proof there so that they are not just hoping you will be ok on the night.

*Annette: You mentioned earlier you were part of a big team that you didn't get to Sydney on your own- you have your physical coach, your success coach, your volleyball coach. Who do you have on your team now? Who supports you to help continue to create success where you are?*

Kerri: Probably my husband and my close friends. That's a really good question maybe I need to make my team a little bit bigger. Sometimes I think you tend to get into a bit of a cave and think I can do this myself and I can take on all those responsibilities. During my sporting career team was a really big important thing. I couldn't play volleyball without Natalie or without a coach. Doing what I'm doing now I think I rely on different people at different times. At the moment I'm teaming up with the international wealth academy which is a business that provides wealth information and training to sports people, to footballers and cricketers because they get a lot of money in this country. The young ones aren't sure how to invest it and they help them invest it in real estate and share and things like that. Now they are getting more into mindsets. This is an example where I have teamed up with them and we are doing a mentor club. There is a small team there. The coaching part of it, I'm the head of y volleyball team which is a Belgium national team and I have another coach in Australia who helps me when I can't go on tour with them. So that's another little team there. So I guess in a way I have little teams for different projects and not big teams for everything. I guess is sort of have to have an overview for rht different areas. You just can't do everything yourself. I've learned that in writing my book.

*Annette: It's finding the appropriate teammate for each situation. I think a lot of athletes are used to being in teams. Especially the ones used to being in big teams like softball and baseball or whatever that it. They may not even actually think about that they need to build a team to start creating success. Or perhaps not even thinking about success*

Kerri: They have to learn what the team they were in before used to do with them. That was the beauty of the team I was in before-that we had to do everything ourselves. We had to book all our accommodations, our flights; we had to nominate ourselves for tournaments. Nowadays the players just sit up on the stand and then go home- they don't have to do much at all. So athletes that don't have to do much other than play the sport really need to go back and figure out what they need to do to keep the team on the road. It's really about learning.

*Annette: What are some other things in your athlete career that people could take note of? What other things have you found you needed to manage you talk about time management, other than you sporting personality, etc? What else comes to mind when you think about managing an athlete career?*

Kerri: Nutrition-what you put into your body is pretty important. I was one of those athletes that didn't have to change my diet before because I already liked good food. There is a bit of education needed in those areas.

In terms of the girls I look after now, managing their emotions sometimes is quite tricky. That's something I had to learn. There were times when my emotions really affected my actions and behaviors in a negative way. Learning to manage my emotions throughout important competitions.

The biggest thing that helped Natalie and I in the years leading up to the Olympics in that everything we did and it became a rule of ours is that we tried to have fun. We tried to remember to enjoy the journey. And you have your really low moments when you are losing to teams you shouldn't be losing too. You're fighting and nothing is going right but somehow we would have some fun with it and find something good out of it. Is that we tried to have fun and being grateful for being where you are, that we are in Rio De Janeiro and we are living the dream of a lot of other athletes around us. We did make it to the Olympics and yes we may just have lost the semifinals in atlants but how are we going to turn that around and fight for the bronze medals.

One incident that comes to mind where we were in Atlanta and we were playing in the bronze medal match against the Americans on their home soil. The whole stadium was going off shouting USA, USA. And we sat down and it was really hard to focus through all the noise and Natalie said turn it around- the letters around AUS. I went ohhh, AUS, AUS-they are cheering for us. We made it into something that was funny. When we went back out onto the court and the next time they started going USA, USA- we looked up at the crowd and thought yeah they are cheering for us and we started chanting with them but saying Aus instead of USA. All that did was turn around a bad moment so we had a bit of fun. We learned to do it in a good way and we were able to refocus.

*Annette: I think that's a good skill in being able to reframe a situation and turn it into a positive. What are some of the challenges you face now? Now that you don't play sports, do you miss it? Do you have any urges to come back? Any regret? Any negative energy about your experience now that you are retired?*

Kerri: When I first retired it wasn't really difficult because I was in a lot of pain. I had 5 knee surgeries up until then. At first it was like thank goodness my body can relax now and I had been playing in pain for the last couple of years. I probably shouldn't have been playing the last couple of years so it was sort of a relief. Then I sort of sat home for the first season while everyone was overseas and I thought I really miss it. At first I really did miss it. Then I sort of forgot about it because I wasn't involved. Now that I'm coaching and I'm out there on the scene and I sometimes have these days where I wish I could get out there and show them how it's done. I know that if I did it would be hilarious. I do miss it. But then I quickly tell myself how many years I was on the scene and how it was enjoyable and I think I've had my time. Whether you play and end up with a gold medal or you play and represent your country or whatever level you're at, you've probably done everything you could have done. You can just be pleased and grateful for what you've done because there are probably a lot of people who couldn't have done what you've done. It's about moving forward and looking for a new passion.

*Annette: I just got a message from Simon in Melbourne, he wants you to name a date –when is the book coming out?*

Kerri: It is important, and I do a lot of presentations that it is important to put your goals out there. You never know if you put your goals out there who might be able to help you. I did a presentation once and afterwards a woman came up to me with a contact from Random House and said to contact her.

I'm going to say next year, by the end of 2010; I will have the 'business of being an athlete' out.

*Annette: There is nothing like a little bit of pressure to help you get over procrastination.*

Kerri: You motivate me Annette too, because your book is almost out isn't it?

*Annette: Yes, it's in the process of publishing. It's due out November of this year. That's all going smoothly. We are almost up to the hour Kerri. Perhaps if you would like to sum out some important message you would like to get across.*

Kerri: Whether in terms of if you are still playing sports or retired or not even a sports person at all, I think setting goals is probably one of the biggest aspects of success. Physically writing them down and breaking them down into small achievable steps. Looking at them every day because if they are out there in front of you then can't possible forget about them. And if you have an opportunity that day to take a pathway that leads to you goal or away from it, if your goals are right there in front of you it's easy to make that decision. Put them right there in front of you and come back to them every now and again to figure out what you can do that day to lead you to that goal.

In terms of creating a career after sport with the PR and marketing, I always look for opportunities. Don't be afraid to get out there and do marketing. You are your best salesperson and get other people on board and build your team. Use social media and everything that's available to communicate with your team. Network, have business cards, create autograph cards to have with you. Always look good because first impressions are important. Keep records of all your achievements because that will help down the track when you create bios. When you want to put together information for the media and magazines this will be important. Enjoy it.

The biggest things I can say about my career is I've had a ball. Sure I've had some really horrible moments with knee injuries and breakouts in relationships both personal and in volleyball. It's all part of it and it's what you make out of it and the lessons you've learned. You just keep going forward and follow your passions and make sure they are your passions and no one elses. Make sure you have total control over your goals, don't set goals that other people want you to do, set the goals for what you want to do. And the best of luck as well.

*Annette: Thank you so much Kerri. A couple of things I really got out of your call are that your keys for success are passion, preparation and belief. And I love that you talk about finding your own unique story and how if they can find their own unique story can do a lot for your success and even guiding them in the future. And also the benefits of nurturing relationships can do a lot for them. And thanks for sharing the benefits of your success with our listeners.*

*Thank you very much Kerri.*

Kerri: Thank you for providing such a wonderful service, network, business for athletes and retired athletes and everyone in general to helping them in their journey to success.

*Annette: This is part of my journey and it's really guided me to what I want to do in the world. I look forward to catching you in other areas!*

For further information and to follow the success of Kerri Pottharst, visit her website at <http://www.kerripottharst.com>