

# DOING THE IMPOSSIBLE

Where will the records stop? In 1954 Roger Bannister ran a sub-four-minute mile and it ignited the athletic world. In 1994, Eamonn Coghlan of Ireland, at age 41, ran a sub-four-minute mile. Incredibly enough, Kip Keino of Ethiopia, at age 55, ran a 4.06 mile. The fastest mile run to date [when this column was originally written] is 3:43.13 accomplished by Hicham El Guerrouj of Morocco.

But back in 1954 more than 50 medical journals had published articles saying that the four-minute mile was not humanly possible. Doctors were warning athletes of the dire consequences to anyone who broke that unbreakable barrier.

In the meantime, coaches all over the world, with stop-watches in hand, were encouraging their charges to do their best — but to forget about breaking the “impossible” four-minute barrier.

Roger Bannister broke the barrier and changed that thinking by his performance. He refused to believe what others were saying because he didn't want to limit his own potential. His breakthrough proved that the barrier was a psychological one, not a physiological barrier.

Jerry Lynch, Ph.D., said that when you believe and think “I can,” you activate your motivation, commitment, confidence, concentration and excitement, all of which relate directly to achievement. On the other

hand, “Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right in both cases.”

Dr. Lynch says that the path to personal excellence is cluttered with obstacles. It is my own personal conviction that you can't develop your full potential without encountering serious obstacles along the way.

Dr. Lynch also says that you can't stretch your limits without encountering some rough moments. You need to understand that failure and losses are acceptable learning experiences that can help improve your performance. This is true in every part of life, whether it involves athletics, academic achievement, business or sales success.

It's true that airplanes and kites rise fastest when they fly into the wind. Individuals grow stronger physically, mentally and spiritually when they are “tested” with resistance or opposition. Think about it and I'll see you at the top!

*Zig Ziglar is a teacher and motivator. He offers a newsletter filled with more of his inspiring stories as well as practical ideas to help you in the areas of sales, marketing, customer service, and related topics. You can visit him at [www.zigziglar.com](http://www.zigziglar.com).*