

# Seminar reveals success secrets

By Phil Angelo  
Managing editor

In order to reach your goals in life, you have to have dogged determination. David Hicks, a motivational speaker, gave that nugget to an audience of 35 Friday afternoon at the Mezzaluna in downtown Kankakee.

Hicks was speaking to interested persons at the Center for Successful Living Showcase, a series of motivational workshops organized by local success coach Charles Betterton.

Hicks told the story of Steve Jenner, an unknown Olympian, as an illustration.

Jenner, after a lifetime of training, was preparing to swim in the Munich Olympics, when he was informed that he had appendicitis. He needed an operation.

Just taking the painkillers would mean he would not pass the Olympics drug screening. Rather than give up his dream, Jenner had his appendix removed, using only a local anesthetic. Less than a week later, he was on the starting block. Diving into the pool, he tore every stitch. From the beginning of the race to the end, he lost two pints of blood.

He came within two fingers of a gold medal, breaking a world record in the process. Today, though, no one knows his name because he was beaten by Mark Spitz.

"Is he a champion? Yes," Hicks said. Hicks, a former Eagle Scout and the Salutatorian of his high school class, is now president of Success Motivation Institute, after being a top salesman.

He told the audience that they don't have to sacrifice their family to be successful in business. The key is to set a goal and stick to it. An older father, one of his goals today is to live to a healthy 100 and see his son grow up.

"You need to crystallize your thinking," he says. "If you don't know where you're going, you'll wind up somewhere else."

Most people, he said, spend more time planning their vacations, than they do planning their lives.

"The bigger the goal you have," he said, "the more likely you will be to achieve it." All people have the will to win, he said; what sets winners apart is the will to prepare.

Optimism and self-confidence are essential. He said a firm once experimented by avoiding its hiring guidelines, instead hiring salesmen who tested "more optimistic" on a psychological test.

Even though the new hires did not have as many technical qualifications as the rest of the sales force, sales went up 24 percent the first year and 54 percent the second among that group, just on the basis of their optimism.



Journal/Kathie Vantassel

David Hicks, (left), president of Success Motivation Institute, greets event organizer Charles Betterton Friday at the Center for Successful Living Showcase. Hicks inspired the luncheon audience with stories of Olympic triumphs, and a challenge to set higher goals.