



AESNATION.COM

ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

EPIISODE
187

John Naber

Show Notes at: <http://www.aesnation.com/187>



AESNATION.COM

Episode #187

John Bowen and John Naber

Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

We are thrilled that you have joined us here at AES Nation, where we're dedicated to accelerating entrepreneurial success—your success.

We hope you find this transcript to be a valuable supplement to the podcast and encourage you to share it with like-minded entrepreneurs in your network.

In addition to our five-times-a-week interviews with leading entrepreneurs, keep in mind that we have plenty of other resources to help put your success on the fast track:

- Our **monthly live, interactive webinars** co-hosted with Dan Sullivan of Strategic Coach feature today's top entrepreneurs. These are world-changing entrepreneurs who have the insight to help transform your business.
- Our **virtual conferences** showcase business leaders and experts in elevating your success and your life. These one-day online events give you access to the in-depth presentations and interaction that you'd get at a live conference from the comfort of your office or home.
- The **AESNation.com weekly newsletter** will always keep you on top of the latest interviews and events. [Sign up here.](#)

Thanks for being part of the AES Nation community. We'll see you online.

Best of success,



John Bowen
Co-founder, AES Nation

John Bowen: I am so excited to bring to you a remarkable entrepreneur that has made a huge difference in my group, my company, our mastermind, a financial advisor, some of the top in the world. This is someone I normally don't bring people over from this, but I've got to share him with the world because he is an amazing entrepreneur and inspires tremendous action. It's not only that. He is a remarkable individual on so many fronts.

He's a champion swimmer. Some of you will know his name, Jon Naber from the Olympics in 1976 where he won, count them, five medals, four golds. He was also in the Olympic Hall of Fame. This would be enough just right there to probably have him on, but that's not why I invited him.

He's also the President of the, he has been elected twice as the President of the U.S. Olympics, chosen by U.S.A. Today as one of the Xerox 100 top Golden Olympians. The reason though I wanted to have him here is because quite honestly, he inspired me so much. He is an observer of excellence.

As a broadcaster himself, he's covered 30 different Olympians, or Olympic sports, filing 10 games and both winter and summer. What I loved about his work and when we had him come speak, one of my partners, Jonathan Powell who was captain of the Stanford Swim Team, so a fellow swimmer with John, he told me how great this individual was. I'm going, geez, it would be fun to see somebody that was a former Olympian.

What John did, and imagine 200 of the most cynical fellow entrepreneurs out there, financial advisors. They were all just, it was after dinner, after a wine tasting event and so on. Not one of them left the room. John shared what he has learned in working with so many Olympians, not only himself and others. There's kind of an eight step strategy that I wanted to bring to you that is going to be so valuable that you don't want to miss this.

I am John Bowen. We are at AES Nation. All about accelerating your entrepreneurial success and stay tuned. You want each of these eight lessons.

John, I am so excited to have you here with us today. Hopefully, you heard that in my voice for the introduction, but you knocked it out of the part at our group. I've never seen, I mean with all the speakers, I've been doing this for many years, to have everyone line up for over a half an hour to get their photo with you, was just amazing. Thank you for that event, but also thank you for joining me today.

John Naber: It's my pleasure, John, and thank you for your kind words. I take that as a sixth gold medal.

John Bowen: You definitely, if we were awarding gold medals for that presentation, we would have done it for the conference. What I want to do, John, is I want to dive in real quickly into the eight steps of awakening the Olympian within each of us. Before that, I want to just make sure I did justice to the back story, I mean because this is so often we ... Many of us that do events and so on, we have kind of celebrity speakers come. You are a celebrity.

I've got to tell you, you're not a celebrity speaker, and what do I mean by that? You are a phenomenal speaker, sharing a very powerful message that was not all about your own personal story, but the journey you've had and the privilege of working with so many other people to make a difference. Maybe just a second, a few seconds for the back story. How did this all come together?

John Naber: When I spoke to your group, you had Joel Weldon in the crowd, and he is a master professional speaker. When he said I wasn't a celebrity speaker, I sort of turned at him, and he said, "You're a professional speaker," and that's the highest praise I could possibly ask for.

I don't want to be known as a guy who tells his own story. I want to be known as a guy who delivers value when he explains how anybody can think and act like an Olympian. They can behave with the same kind of competitive drive, and achieve the same kind of exceptional results as an Olympian.

That's why the process, the Gold Medal Process, is more important to me as an item of conversation than the John Naber story. I didn't have a thrilling, exciting story, but I do know that there's a way to accomplish extraordinary results when you follow the examples that Olympians use all the time.

John Bowen: You know John, I do know you actually do have a thrilling story, because I watched you during those days. Very impressive, but what I did love, and I think this is one of the reasons why Joel Weldon, one of the top professional speaking coaches, we had him attending at the event, as well, said that you're in the top 20 speakers out there nationally today.

I think the reason was that so often people love to tell the story about themselves. But what you did was share, you brought us along on this journey of becoming an Olympic star and introduced us to so many of the people who were involved in your life and how they did it. You did it around a framing that I want to share with our fellow entrepreneurs. I'd like everyone to really execute these and take them to heart.

We're going to make available at AES Nation the transcription. You're going to have these. This is so important but let's kick it off right away, John. I mean the very first, you talk about the dream. Tell me what you mean there.

John Naber: Well first of all, the Gold Medal Process is a means by which any individual can make their dreams come true. It's not just watching it happen, but it's actually making it happen. The first step of making your dream come true, is to have a dream. Now I'm not talking about drifting off into slumber land and having the fantasy dream with Angelina Jolie appearing. No. I'm talking about having the desire to experience a particular emotional response.

Now in business, people take things very professionally and they say, "Don't get all emotional on me, let's keep this professional." But I have found that Olympians begin with the desire to experience a particular emotion. Let me say that a different way. I didn't want to win the Gold Medal in the backstroke as much as I wanted to feel like the best in the world at something. If that feeling comes true, then the dream comes true.

I encourage my audiences to allow themselves to stop for a minute and say, "What feeling do you want to experience at the end of the week or the month or the year, or of your career? What do you want to feel like?" We all want to feel competent at our jobs, but especially, we want to feel excellent at it. We want to feel respected and admired by our peers, we want to feel the affection of our loved ones. We are emotional beings and to not allow ourselves to think about those emotions is really missing the chance to use one of the most powerful arrows in our quiver.

Allow yourself to start by saying, "What do I want to feel like? What's the emotion I'm looking for?" That is the definition of a dream.

John Bowen: It's great, John, and then you continue with number two, is about faith. Boy, this is one for all of us that's just so important because nobody gets out of life unscarred.

John Naber: I think everybody has lots of dreams growing up, but the ones we pursue are the ones we believe we can achieve. Faith, I happen to have a religious faith but that's not what I'm talking about. The faith in the process is do you believe that your dream is in fact achievable? If my dream was to ride the winning horse at the Kentucky Derby, at 6'6" and over 200 pounds, I would never have the faith to do so, and so I would probably choose a different dream.

Well in swimming, I looked at my face in the mirror as a high school freshman and I said, "Is there a chance that you might be declared the best in the world at this sport?" I heard the

words in the back of my mind. "Why not? Why not?" Since I had no answer to the why not question, I began believing maybe so.

Once you get to that point, once you say to yourself, "It could happen, it's possible," then all of a sudden you've accomplished step number two, and it's time to move on.

John Bowen: John, one of the things, I want to just, as you're listening to this everyone, I want you to imagine what was going on in our dinner meeting as John's sharing this. Everybody's just pausing and we start with number one, the dream. As entrepreneurs, each and every one of us has a dream and that faith, sometimes why not, and some of use four letter words in that why not.

You've got to, as we go through this, I want you to be thinking about your own personal experience because this was something that was so moving for everyone in the room. John, we can have the dream, we have the faith, okay, but this is something as entrepreneurs, we've got to quantify it, and you went to the gold right away.

John Naber: Yeah. Once you realize that the dream is achievable, then you have to find a measurable standard of performance. That of course is a goal. In the sport of swimming, I was a back stroker and so what I did was I said to myself, "How fast must I swim the 100 meter back stroke at the next Olympics in order to feel like the best in the world?"

Using my dream that I now believed in, I had to quantify how many yards must I swim, how fast did I have to go? I took the winning time of the previous two Olympics, and I extrapolated the curve four years into the future and I said, "How fast will the world be swimming this race then, and how fast must I go to be the best in the world?" I anticipated 55 and a half seconds, 55.5 was a number I could write down on an index card and put that on the bathroom mirror next to the face that I brushed with the toothpaste and said to myself, "This is how fast I have to go." By writing it down, it stopped moving away. It became a concrete goal and a target that stopped drifting, and now I could focus my energies on only those things that would reach, that would affect my ability to reach that goal.

John Bowen: John, this is great. I mean one of the key things that, you know as entrepreneurs we do get ... Most of us understand the concept of goals and sometimes though as we have more and more success, we let it go. Once we get clear on where we want to go, I love your step four, it's just such a logical one. To hit the 55 seconds, there's got to be a plan. There's got to be a strategy that you implement. How do you see your fellow entrepreneurs actually putting this together here?

John Naber: One of the easiest ways to accomplish great results is to mimic or copy those that have gone before. As an athlete, what I wanted to do was I needed a really good coach

who could articulate and teach me how to perform the skills necessary to be good. You might get a mentor. You might hire a CEG Worldwide to guide you. You might ask your boss for advice. You might study in literature, somebody who's in your line of work, who is greatly successful.

Some of the great coaches of all times say read the fabulous books, the Think and Grow Rich, the Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends and Influence People. Learn what successful people have done before you, and then you can mimic it. I would also study what the existing world record holder, an East German back stroker named Roland Matthes, I studied what he did, both in training and in competition.

The goal is to be as good as somebody who's been there before, and you need a strategy to do that. How many yards must I swim? How much weights must I lift? Where's the best competition? Which races should I enter? All of these factors played into my ability to be the best at some point.

John Bowen: It's so, I mean this is something that we see over and over again, is that there's someone who's done it before us, or is doing it currently and as entrepreneurs, there are only so many world class swimmers, but at certainly back stroke. But what we have, we have a real privilege in today's world with all the information, all the talent, the coaches, the different, for the prices of a book \$10, we have these. This is where we've got to take the time to make sure that we are really creating that strategy and plan.

Now what I like though, when we got to number five, you already had all of us at this point, John. Number five is taking that short term steps, those quick steps. This is something so many entrepreneurs are quick starts. How did you use that and your fellow Olympians, and how as entrepreneurs can we use it, as well?

John Naber: Well one thing that's really special and unique about the Olympics is they only occur once every four years. As a result, I knew well in advance on what day I was going to have to be at my absolute best at the Olympic games. I could predict four years in advance, on that particular date I had to be at my best. A good plan includes a deadline. At what point do you need to accomplish this? If I break the world record the day after the Olympics are over, I'll feel like a fool, not like the best. Although, mathematically I perhaps was the fastest.

So step five is take your big goal and break it up into smaller, bite-sized stepping stones so that I knew I had to improve let's say four seconds in the 100 meter back stroke. I had four years to do it in, so I only had to improve a second a year, or a tenth of a second a month, or a three-hundredth of a second a day, or one twelve-thousandth of a second for every hour I was in the pool training.

Now four seconds is a large chunk of time to drop off 100 meter, but one twelve-hundredth of a second is only one sixth of the blink of an eye. As a result, I could feel confident that today, in the next hour of training, I could, so something that would improve my performance by that slightest of margin. The hard part is doing it four hours a day, six days a week, 11 months a year for the course of the career. That's the trick, is to have short term stepping stones that are achievable and continual effort, constant progress towards your eventual goal.

John Bowen: John, as entrepreneurs, I mean one of the things I've learned from a good friend and coach, Dan Sullivan at Strategic Coach, putting together a 25-year plan and all I have to do is every quarter, if I'm just improving 1% each quarter, I mean the effect that has, my business is growing exponentially. It's going to allow me to be a ten-fold increase.

This is where, you know sometimes we think we have to knock it out of the park, but when we break it down to those little pieces that we can, you know it's something, yeah, we have faith, we've got our clear on our goal, our plan, but boy, we break it into bite-sized pieces, we can make that happen.

To make it happen, this is one that so many fellow entrepreneurs know this one by heart. I wanted you to tell me there's a shortcut, but the reality is number five is one that we're all familiar with. It takes hard work.

John Naber: The first five steps to the process, the dream, the faith, the goal, the plan and the stepping stones, all occurred in the privacy of my bedroom. Nobody has to see a thing. But step number six, the hard one, is called hard work. The story I tell is when I was raised in Europe, I was craving a beverage that only was sold in America, and it was root beer. When I returned to the United States, we bought a six-pack of root beer and around the neck of one of the bottles were four words that changed my life.

At the time, if you remember, bottles were not redeemable for a five-cent deposit, and the phrase around the neck of the bottle was, "No deposit, no return." Now the maker of the bottle is thinking about the nickel deposits. I'm thinking no pain, no gain. No deposit, no return. A big deposit, therefore equals a big return.

Now, hard work in the pool is not a punishment or a sacrifice or an inconvenience, now hard work becomes an investment in my future. An investment in my dream. I love the ability to work hard because it gives me a chance to distinguish myself from all the other gifted, naturally talented swimmers, but they're not willing to do the work. If you're willing to do the work, the results are bound to follow.

John Bowen: This is one of the things that we can control, too, is that there's all kinds of academic studies out there that after the age of 45, the biggest separation of really talent in

the world is hard work. You'd love to hear it's intelligence or some magical formula, but it is that hard work.

Really, none of us, certainly the younger generation, when some of us guys say, "You've got to pay your dues," they don't like that terminology but it's really this persistency, that focus on what you want to attain. We become overnight successes along the way.

John, when you, as you're sharing this, I mean your number seven is willpower. I've got to tell you, sometimes it's hard, working hard. When I was listening to you, I was there all along the way and then I'm going, "How do you do that day in and day out and have that willpower?"

Then how do you, I mean because where it's so important for all of us, each of us are reinventing ourselves constantly. Not only are you an Olympic swimmer but you went onto the network broadcasting, author, speaker, I mean fellow entrepreneur. This takes a little bit of energy beyond hard work and it's that willpower. Where does that come from?

John Naber: The thing that I noticed is that throughout Olympic history, the stories that resonate over time are not stories of individuals who coasted to an easy victory, but rather stories of individuals who triumphed over adversity, who overcame some remarkable achievement.

Greg Louganis hits his head on the diving board and falls flat in the water, and 17 minutes later he gets back on the board and gets nine and a half and goes on to win a gold. Mary Lou Retton needed a perfect 10 to win the gold and she sticks the landing. The Miracle on Ice hockey team had to overcome the Russians.

What is amazing is not that Olympic champions find a way to succeed over obstacles. What's amazing is that anybody would ever think that they're entitled to a life without obstacles. So I say most people encounter an obstacle and they say, "Whoa, how am I going to get around that? I wonder if I can overcome this." But Olympians encounter a similar obstacle and they go, "Wow, I wonder how I can get over this." The small change of mind, for Olympians, obstacles are like puzzles or riddles, and we believe there's an answer somehow, somewhere, and therefore we keep working at it.

The great stories of Olympians who triumphed over adversity like Dan Jansen. He falls down on the ice, well he just comes back again with the same attitude with, "I'm going to win," and eventually he does. Dick Fosbury invents a new way to go over the high bar because he was so committed to being successful that he wasn't going to let technique prevent him from enjoying success.

I believe that great individuals, great champions anticipate that their life will not be trouble free, and they decide in advance how they intend to attack those obstacles that will inevitably come their way. When Moses the great hurdler says, "I love those hurdles, I love going over hurdles because those hurdles keep my competition slow, and I have confidence in my ability to overcome those obstacles."

That's the secret of willpower, the attitude that says, "I don't mind obstacles, it'll think out the competition, but I'm determined to overcome each and every one."

John Bowen: I love that, John. I mean to me, as a fellow entrepreneur, this is one of the deciding factors, that it's so easy to give up along the way. I jokingly said, "Overnight success." One of my favorite restaurants not that long ago got written up and got a Michelin star and all this. I congratulated him and one of the articles talked about him being an overnight success. I'd been going to that restaurant for almost 30 years, so it's, you know and it was the same people, too. It wasn't like there was a new chef or that.

This is, sometimes as entrepreneurs we feel a little beaten up along the way. Really, the term I like, Jim Loehr of Human Performance Institute wrote a book called, The Corporate Athlete. So much of what you did as an Olympian and your fellow Olympians did to be very successful, we have to do as entrepreneurs, as business owners.

What he pointed out, and I thought it was very interesting and it goes to the willpower, is that 90% of the time John when you were an Olympian, you, well you're still an Olympian, but when you were competing, what happened was that 90% was training, 10%, probably even less than that was performance. Well as entrepreneurs, typically we're just performing all the time. We don't make the time to do that and this is something that's so critical. That willpower to continue through that is very important.

Let me go to the eighth, and then I want to come back to the overview, the similarities of entrepreneurship, but is courage. Boy, it's so easy to get sidetracked and be beaten up. I know some of my fellow entrepreneurs have had this experience. There's been days where kind of some things happen and we all get knocked down. How do we get up and have that courage to keep performing?

John Naber: I've never fought in a war, I've never carried a gun, but I understand that people in warfare circumstances, our soldiers overseas, they're told that when the guns, when the bullets your courage is going to be tested. The question isn't can you aim and hit a target. The question is can you hit a target when they're shooting back at you? It's not a question of skill and ability, it's a question of performance under pressure.

That's the unique thing about the Olympics. Because they occur once every four years, I knew well in advance on the day and hour I had to be at my best. Most entrepreneurs don't get that luxury. Most entrepreneurs don't know, which prospect, which phone call is going to produce a huge return. As a result, most entrepreneurs have to be at their best all the time.

Courage is not being better than you're capable. Courage is merely being as good as you're capable, but at the right time. That's the way I determine that. When the phone rings, treat it as if it might be the greatest customer you ever met, and treat them with that enthusiasm and that courtesy and that respect, because you want to be at your best at that very most critical time. Courage to me is just being at your best all the time.

John Bowen: No, it's great John. I mean this is one of the things that I think is so important. I just want to go over the eight again, and then come back kind of big picture. As I'm going through, what I'd like you each to think about, and this really touched me and I've got to tell you the mastermind group of 200 financial advisors I had the privilege of serving. It really resonated. We had a whole bunch of speakers, John, by far, was the number one speaker.

I was a little upset because I spoke a fair amount too there, John, but anyway we'll go over that there, but the eight. Visualize, as I'm going through these, think about your own situation. Your dream. What is it that ... John said the emotional part. Make it real and vivid, if you will. The faith. This is something that I love. Why not?

If somebody else can do it, and I'm with John, I'm not quite as tall, I'm a little bigger, 6'3" and definitely over 200 pounds. I don't like horses, but I'm not going to ... My wife love horses, but I'm not going to be a jockey. I have ridden horses. They don't go that fast when I'm on them.

There's very few things in life that you want to do that you can't do without faith, a goal. This is where most entrepreneurs at least start with a goal, but it's so easy to drop it. If we don't measure our progress, we set ourselves up for failure.

Then the strategy and plan. Boy, this is one we all talk about, but what I like John sharing is that over ... There's so many people that have led the way, and there's no reason to try to do it on your own. Have great people alongside. Not only your team, but coaches and individuals. Short term, that, those steps along the way.

This is, we talked about breaking it out into little pieces, milliseconds. I talked about quarters for entrepreneurs. The hard work. This is where you get that accelerating entrepreneurial success, that hard work.

We can differentiate ourselves so much and if you have that dream, you want to realize it, and you can enroll your team in that and your clients, wow. Willpower, to recognize that on

occasion you're going to get hit by a two by four and that's okay. You're going to power through and the courage to make your dream a reality.

John, these are lessons that are so powerful for our fellow entrepreneurs. How would you, really as they're, I'm going to encourage, I've got above me the AESnation.com. Definitely go get the transcript. There are so many pearls of wisdom John is sharing.

How do you see, you've made that successful transition from a great world class athlete, an Olympian, to a world class business owner, entrepreneur, and speaker, broadcaster, author, and all that. How do you do that, because that's so unusual?

John Naber: It's been my experience that many athletes nowadays in the professional Olympic era, they believe that once they reach their goal, that the rest of their lives should be an easy coast that I'm entitled to travel first class, I'm entitled to receive speaking bonuses for appearances, and I'm entitled to have my autograph open doors.

Well the moment they get there, like a water skier who lets go of the rope, because the rope is what pulls us forward. The goal is what pulls us forward. The attitude of entitlement, I think is a real big mistake.

My attitude is now that I'm no longer a competitive swimmer, I can use the Olympic Gold Medal Process skills in order to guarantee my success as a speaker, or as a broadcaster, or as an entrepreneur. So using those skills continues to benefit me as I go forward from that point.

One other point I really should mention. Your audience are great entrepreneurs. They probably already understand the eight steps, and even apply the eight steps to them. But if you want to be a successful leader, you have to understand that those eight steps apply to your staff, to your employees, to your customers, to your vendors. That if you understand how it works, you can appeal to their dreams, as well, and you can help them achieve their dreams by giving them those kinds of opportunities and sending them that kind of business. All of a sudden, it's a mutually beneficial process.

The biggest difference between an Olympic sport and successful entrepreneurs, is Olympic sport is a win lose proposition. For me to win, the German has to lose. But in business, as an entrepreneur, both parties have to benefit. It has to be mutually beneficial. If you can figure out what your customer's dreams are, you can help those dreams come true. I guarantee, it'll come back to your bottom line, as well.

John Bowen: John, this has been phenomenal, and really to the extent that we can help our clients, our customers and our teammates realize their dreams, I mean and become awaken that Olympian within, as you talk about. I mean that is so powerful.

Let me actually let me put you back on screen here and hold up the book again, if you would. John actually wrote a book, Awaken the Olympian Within. This is so powerful. I'm going to encourage everybody to go to AESnation.com. We'll post a link to John's website and information how to reach out to him. Phenomenal resources, can't recommend highly enough for your team, for events that you're running, workshops and so on.

John, thank you. Again, your clients, your future clients, your teammates, your business partners are all counting on you. Take these eight steps and awaken the Olympian within. Wish you the best of success.

A Second Opinion on Your Finances

A Complimentary Service from Financial Advisor Select for the Members of AES Nation

Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

Like many members of AESNation, I'm a serial entrepreneur. In addition to co-founding AESNation, I'm the founder and CEO of Financial Advisor Select, a firm dedicated to helping successful people make informed financial decisions by introducing them to top financial advisors.

If you're like many successful entrepreneurs, you and your family already have a relationship with a financial advisor. You may even work with several financial advisors. If you are completely satisfied with these relationships and confident that your finances are on track toward helping you achieve all that is most important to you, we congratulate you.

However, you may not be entirely satisfied. You may be wondering if there's a financial advisor who is better-suited to address your family's very specific financial challenges. If so, you are not alone. In today's uncertain economic climate, many successful entrepreneurs are wondering if they have the right financial advisor.

To help you find out if you are currently being served well, Financial Advisor Select is offering a complimentary second-opinion service to all qualified members of AES Nation. Simply [contact us](#) to schedule an exploratory call with one of our personal financial concierges. We will introduce you to a financial advisor who we believe has the ability to address your particular needs. The financial advisor will then meet with you and provide you with a second opinion on your finances. There is absolutely no cost or obligation to you.

[Find out more about how Financial Advisor Select can help you and your family.](#)

Why do we offer this service? Because at Financial Advisor Select, we have just one purpose: to help successful individuals and families achieve financial peace of mind by connecting them to top financial advisors in their communities. We look forward to assisting you.

Best of success,



John Bowen
Founder and CEO
Financial Advisor Select