

CONVERSION CAST

Rich Franklin: Insights From An MMA Fighter Turned Successful Entrepreneur

Our Guest:

Rich Franklin is a UFC Champion that pursued a fighting career in Mixed Martial Arts after being a high school Math teacher for 4 years. Since winning the UFC Champion title, he has taken his skills from MMA and applied them to business ventures and partnerships. He has regular speaking engagements in the motivational and health/fitness space and has most recently spoken at TedX. Rich is also Vice President of the ONE Championship organization that seeks to expand MMA in Asia.

What Makes You Stand Out?

Whether it be in business or athletics, there are certain practices that make you stand out from your competition. Rich talked about his philosophy on this subject and how his experience in MMA fighting relates to standing out in business.

Rich posed a question about what differentiates you from the other 7 billion people in the world, whether it be in MMA or any other sport or profession? What makes you the “champion” in your field?

His answer to this question is to be consistent and willing to sacrifice on top of being talented or hard working. One example he gave in relation to his career in fighting was choosing to take care of his body and sticking to his nutrition plan of eating healthy food when everyone else around him was eating hamburgers and fries. The self-discipline

required in sacrificing is a practice that will get you performing at the top level of your industry.

A seemingly paradoxical component of becoming a champion in your field is knowing when to be inconsistent in the market while practicing consistency in your values and work. Rich described this principle with the analogy of how a Pitcher in baseball has to know when to throw a fastball or curveball to defeat the Batter. The Pitcher is consistent in his practice and skill, but knows when to be inconsistent in the game to throw off his opponent. You must know how to throw off your competition while you focus on being consistent with your brand and industry.

Rich's Insights for Success:

One of the underlying reasons for Rich's success in fighting was approaching his fighting career like a business. He simply chose fights that made sense. He translated this notion to business in that you have to make decisions that make sense for your company or brand.

Since Rich's post fighting career, he has pursued many business ideas and ventures that have been successful. He shared how consistency propelled him to success with his personal brand and why this value is important for every business.

Rich touched on key behaviors that took his brand and career to where it is now. One of the most important philosophies Rich exercised was adhering to what he was interested in and passionate about. For Rich, motivation and health/fitness are core pieces of his personal brand that he has promised to keep at the forefront when pursuing business opportunities. He shared that in order to authentically grow your brand, you must choose opportunities that are consistent within the parameters of interest you set for your business. For example, Rich refuses to endorse drinking coke because it is not aligned with his lifestyle or what he teaches about health and fitness. Another example of perceived inconsistency is a Hennessy commercial featuring professional boxer Manny Pacquiao.

Rich also works with companies that are consistent with his brand. One example of this is being a promoter of Armor Gel, a holistic alternative to an antibiotic gel used for bacterial infections, cuts, and burns that can be contracted while practicing mixed martial arts.

Another way Rich practices consistency is refusing to drink and support protein powders with artificial sweeteners. He explained that if he does not stay consistent with what he preaches, his followers would get confused by his actions and ultimately his brand image.

Because Rich pursues opportunities in motivational public speaking, he is sure to deliver a message that is consistent with his brand. Sometimes Rich finds himself in a space he would not necessarily support, such as speaking at Coca Cola company events, but he emphasizes that in situations like this, he focuses on speaking about the values that will help the company/employees perform better. The key here is to keep your values at the center of your presentation to remain consistent with your brand.

Another lesson in consistency that Rich learned during the building of his brand was opening and running a health restaurant in Los Angeles. Although the restaurant was within the parameters of his vision, he learned that running a restaurant was not something he was passionate about. He eventually ended up selling the cafe, but he could confidently say the restaurant was consistent with his brand.

Rich's Nutrition Lowdown:

Rich shared insight on how to perform at a high level through nutrition and why it is crucial to overall success. Put simply, Rich stated that the result of your performance depends on how you eat. Rich works out 3 times a day on average and eats 6 times a day in order to fuel his body. Being that nutrition is twice the amount of his work, he is sure to watch what he eats to keep his body highly functioning.

The mindset that helps Rich give his body the proper nutrition is treating his body like a Formula 1 race car. In order to perform like a premium race car, maintenance (sleep and nutrition) must be practiced or the car will not run at a high level.

The problem is most people treat their body like a Honda Accord by driving it every day until it is completely worn down. Rich explains that you need to treat your body with respect first in order to see true results.

So many people want a complete overhaul when it comes to health and fitness, which is not a feasible way to change your health routine. People are accustomed to running before walking in our society, but Rich suggests to start small when it comes to nutrition. Rich's number one foundational principle to achieving better health is to start off by drinking more water before completely transforming your lifestyle. This alone can have a great impact on your health and is not as overwhelming of a task as completely changing every aspect of your current diet and shocking your system. Water is vital to living and simply supplying our bodies properly with it leads to surprisingly positive results.

