

At the **CSAE Conference**, the audience was inspired by the life lessons shared by the opening keynote speaker, veteran climber and expedition leader, **Jim Davidson**. Here is a synopsis of Jim's compelling keynote, including some tips for overcoming adversity in your life.



TO SUCCEED WITH BIG CHALLENGES, ACT LIKE A PRO

> BY JIM DAVIDSON

The ice wall loomed in front of the climber. He tilted his head back and scanned the hard, overhanging ice above him. The ice cliff was 80-feet tall, maybe more. His face tightened with tension as fear crept through his mind: It looks impossible; I can't climb this. It's too steep, and I'm too scared...

If this climb were just for fun, the climber would simply go home and find something else to do. But, that wasn't an option. He was not scaling the overhanging ice wall for the fun of it. The climber was trapped deep down inside a moving glacier. Alone. He had to climb the wall, or die in the icy darkness of the crevasse.

When a harsh challenge looms before you, you might feel like the trapped climber – overwhelmed, tired, or

scared. But human beings are extremely resilient. People have rowed across huge oceans, flown to the moon, and even climbed solo up overhanging ice walls. As a life-long climber, I know about the incredible capacity for the human spirit to overcome adversity. The story of the trapped climber really happened, and that climber was me.

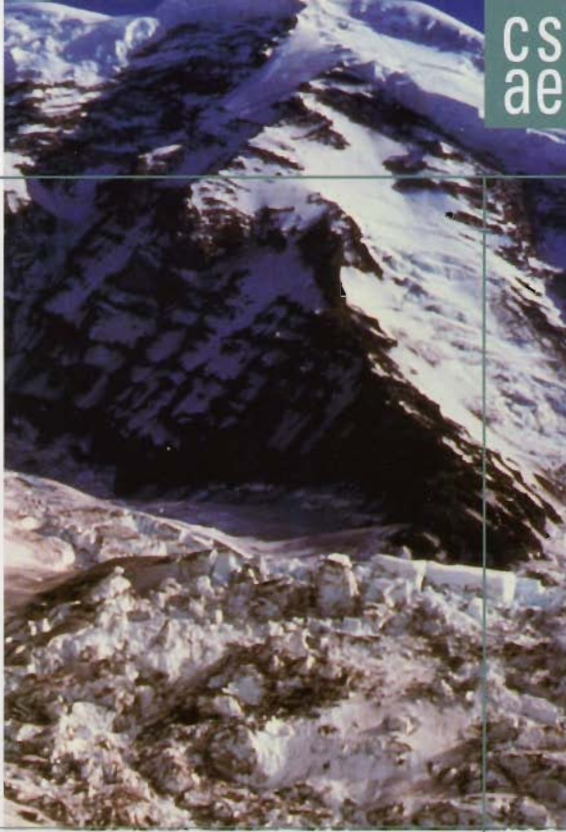
The skills and attributes that allow people to cross oceans and climb out of crevasses can be harnessed and applied to prevail over the difficulties encountered in daily life and business. This article reviews powerful techniques you can use to overcome any adversity and to succeed with the big challenges in your life.

LIFE'S CREVASSES

Climbers know glaciers have dangerous crevasses that inevitably will be encountered. The obvious, open cracks in the ice can be easily skirted around. Sometimes though, accumulated snow completely hides a giant crevasse and climbers may be unaware of the danger lurking right in front of them. It is these unexpected dangers that pose the biggest challenge.

Like a glacier, life has crevasses too. The obvious dangers are easily recognized and avoided. But sometimes, an unexpected problem can suddenly appear in front of you with little warning. In life, the hidden crevasses can be family problems,

Analyze the situation and face reality.



health concerns, and financial difficulties. The business world has crevasses like economic difficulties, tough competition, or lofty sales goals. When one of these obstacles suddenly appears before you, you may feel trapped, scared, or hopeless. While this can feel overwhelming, there is a proven strategic approach for tackling any big challenge: **ACCT like a PRO.**

ACCT like a PRO

When I faced that overhanging ice wall, it looked impossible to climb. It seemed like I didn't have enough time, equipment, skills or people to tackle such a huge challenge. Doubt, fear, and a touch of self-pity swirled in my heart and head. While these initial reactions may have been natural, they were not helpful. My experience climbing out of that deadly crevasse shows that the best way to face any daunting challenge is to "ACCT like a PRO".

*—It looks impossible;
I can't climb this.
It's too steep,
and I'm too scared...*

Figure out which factors
are within your **control.**



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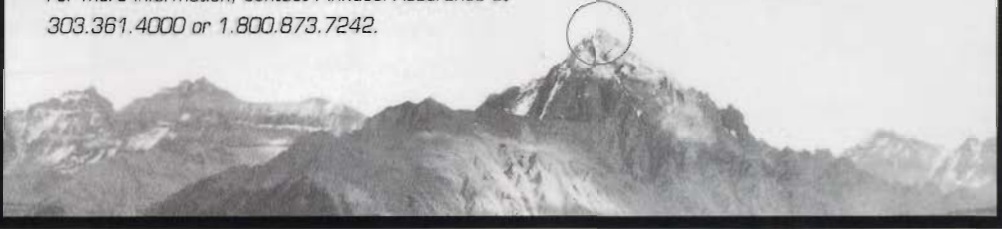
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When facing a tough challenge the FIRST STEP is to ACCT

- A = Analyze** Analyze the situation and face reality. Your analysis of the problem may at first seem daunting, but a thorough analysis of the circumstances is critical for moving forward.
- C = Control** Figure out which factors are within your **control**, and start controlling them. For example, with a tough sales goal, how many calls you make is within your control.
- C = Courage** Having **courage** does not mean being fearless. Courage is feeling fear, but acting anyway. You may find courage and strength from your own heart, from your family, or your beliefs. Tap your best energy source, and gain courage.
- T = Take Action** Taking action is critical. Feeling sorry for yourself, or wishing for different circumstances will not change anything. It is by taking action that you begin to affect the outcome, and thus improve your chances of reaching your lofty goal.

Having **courage** does not mean being fearless.



Once you ACCT, you are now taking charge of the situation and you can steer your efforts and the circumstances towards overcoming the difficulty or reaching your goal. You are no longer a forced participant in the adversity. You are an engaged player who can change the outcome.

When striving for any worthwhile goal, there will inevitably be some unexpected set backs or unforeseen complications. When these occur, the secret to success is to be a PRO:

P = Perseverance
Giving up guarantees failure, but perseverance, being willing to keep trying even though the situation seems impossible, is crucial for breaking down even the biggest obstacles.

R = Resilience
Unexpected difficulties can be surmounted through resilience – the ability to adapt and to try innovative, even outlandish tactics to reach one’s goal.

O = Optimism
Maintaining a optimistic attitude, even in the face of unfavorable circumstances, is crucial for subduing panic, and elevating the spirits of one’s colleagues, and even one’s self. Optimism is contagious.

Jim climbing high on Mount Rainier (14,410 feet), with a huge crevasse field yawning 5,000 feet below.

Taking **action** is critical.



Calendar of **EVENTS**

Thursday, October 4
Courtyard by Marriott
Denver Cherry Creek

Friday, November 2
Warwick Denver Hotel

Friday, December 7

ADVERTISERS' INDEX

- Aflac24
- Beaver Run19
- Breckenridge Resorts13
- GL Specialties14
- Grand Junction Visitors Bureau ...2
- Invesco Field at Mile High21
- Keystone Resort4
- The Lodge at Vail20
- Millennium Harvest House15
- Pinnacol Assurance7
- The Publishing Group23

CONCLUSION

Unless you intend to scale the world's high mountains, you are very unlikely to ever find yourself in a glacial crevasse. However, most of us will be inside one of life's difficult crevasses at some time. When that occurs, do not give in to self-doubt or fear. Instead, remember to ACCT like a PRO and you will overcome adversity and reach your highest goals. ■



The key to overcoming a big challenge is to ACCT like a PRO – even when its 15 degrees below zero! Jim Davidson at 19,000 feet on Mt. McKinley in Alaska.

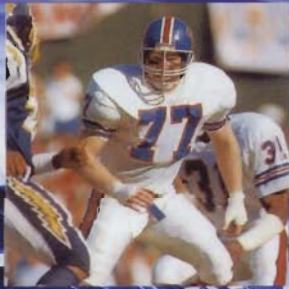
Photos courtesy of Jim Davidson and www.speakingofadventure.com

AS A PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER, JIM DAVIDSON SHARES THE LESSONS HE HAS EARNED AND LEARNED FROM 25 YEARS OF HIGH-ALTITUDE CLIMBING ACROSS THE USA AND AROUND THE WORLD. MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT WWW.SPEAKINGOFADVENTURE.COM OR 970-224-4608.

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