

Six Habits Of Highly Effective Wrestlers  
By STEPHEN CARTER  
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Rulon Gardner won the gold medal during the 2000 Olympic games in Greco-Roman wrestling and gave away his secrets of success at the First Annual Leadership Conference at Utah Valley State College.

UVSC (March 1) – When a farm boy from Wyoming beats a Russian wrestler who hasn't been beaten in 13 years, people want to know why.

Rulon Gardner, that farm boy who did indeed win the gold medal during the 2000 Olympic games after facing some severe competition, gave away his secret at the First Annual Leadership Conference at Utah Valley State College.

He boiled it down to Six basic steps that he suggested could help anyone achieve their goals.

The first rule, he suggested, is to believe in yourself.

As the last Of a big LDS family Of nine children on a farm in Wyoming, Gardner said he was used to being at the tail end Of everything.

"I always ended up doing most Of the work and shoveling the most manure," he said.

To add to the pile, Gardner said he was considered a slow learner in school and was constantly remanded to remedial classes that kept him back even further.

"People told me 'you're not good enough, you're not smart enough,' and I told them, 'I'm sorry, but I can't believe your opinion,'" said Gardner who has worked as a middle school teacher.

Which led to his next bit Of advice: turn negatives into positives. Instead Of letting his detractors get him down, Gardner made it his mission in life to prove them wrong, leading him to his next maxim: aim high when you're feeling low.

Gardner had plenty Of time for feeling low. Until he won his gold medal, Gardner never placed better than fourth in his post high school wrestling career. But, he said, he "enlisted the help Of others" to help him train both mentally, spiritually and physically to achieve his goals.

But even after all that positive thinking, you still have to put in your time in the gym.

"Train hard," said Gardner, "People don't like to train with me, they say I'm too intense, because I give it everything I have, even when I'm feeling sick."

But what is the purpose Of training exc ept to train to the maximum extent? Gardner postulated.

The Sixth point Gardner made was to "take care Of business," by which he meant, always focusing entirely on the task at hand. It was his focus, Gardner said, that was the deciding factor in his gold medal victory. If he had not been concentrating fully on his situation, he would have left the Olympics with a silver medal.

Some wresters are more skilled and stronger than I am," said Gardner. His strategy is to "mentally break" his opponents and wear them out.

Now Gardner is trying to follow his last piece Of advice, namely, "don't rest on your laurels."

With a gold medal under his belt, Gardner still competes in wresting competitions around the world. He said he plans to compete in the next Olympics as well.