

Ride 'Em Cowboy

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Get back on

Howard,
Project
Manager for a
Vancouver,
WA based
construction
firm that
provides
services to
commercial
facilities told



Session 3 of the Leadership Development Lab™:

"Back in 1995, I was a senior at Gladstone High School. My friend Bernie and I were talking about our dreams. I've had a dream since I was a young kid of becoming a bull rider. Bernie was all in! We'd heard of this practice arena up in Washougal, WA. Bernie and I took off that Wednesday as soon as school was out. We drove for about an hour and a half until we found Branton's Arena. I signed the waiver and rented all the equipment I needed.

"We walked through to the back of the arena, and I waited our turn. Next thing I knew, I was up, my heart racing, adrenaline pumping. I was shaking from head to toe. I got all set, pulled the rope tight, wrapped my hand, and nodded my head to the wrangler. He opened the gate. The bull bucked out of the chute the second the gate opened. I lasted one and a half jumps before I hit the ground. I had ridden my first bull!

"My childhood



Larry W. Dennis, Sr.
President

TURBO
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**Please
contact
Larry at:**

503-329-4519

or

Larry@turbols.com

**for more
information.**

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dream was checked off on my list, but I was hooked. I got on two bulls a week for the next twenty-five weeks, until I finally stayed on the full eight seconds.

"I've rodeoed all over the northwest from the Sun Dome in Yakima, WA to the Arco Dome in Sacramento, CA. Not long after that, I won my first amateur bull riding title at the Paulina, OR rodeo. A couple of months later, I started riding saddle broncs. In 1997, just two years later, I was competing as a member of the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association (PRCA) Columbia River Circuit. I rode in the bull and saddle bronc events at Rose Garden Arena in front of my hometown Portland, OR crowd.

"The lesson I learned from this experience is when I chase my dreams, even if they're misty ones from an early age, and give those dreams my all, anything is possible!



"The action I call you to take is chase your dreams by turning them into goals with tangible action plans. No matter what your goals are, give it all you've got.

"The benefit you will gain is not having to look back with regret thinking, 'What if?' Go ride that bull, get your journeyman card, ask that cutie at the coffee shop out."

As life rushes by, most people end up with a lengthy list of "what ifs," "could haves," "wish I had's," and "might have beens." Most of our failures are not *"the things we tried and failed at."* They are *"the things we fail to try."*

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